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**United States Support**  
**to the Multinational Force and Observers:**  
**Is it Time for a Change?**

by

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UNITED STATES SUPPORT TO THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE  
AND OBSERVERS: IS IT TIME FOR A CHANGE?

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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## ABSTRACT

UNITED STATES SUPPORT TO THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE AND OBSERVERS: IS IT TIME FOR A CHANGE? By MAJ Carl J. Bradshaw, USA, 91 pages.

The U.S. is struggling with its role as the world's only superpower. If the U.S. is to accept new commitments, it must reassess old ones. The Sinai Desert has been peaceful for twenty-five years. The U.S. commitment of forces to the Multinational Force and Observers (eleven-nation Sinai peacekeeping force) may preclude commitment of combat-ready forces to an area where there is a greater need for U.S. presence.

This study examines the MFO from U.S., Israeli, and Egyptian perspectives and concludes that: Israel's improved security posture should encourage acceptance of a change; Egypt combines a desire for a smaller peacekeeping force with a recent history and propensity for peace; and that there is a need for the U.S. to change its commitment. Analysis shows the current MFO is ill suited to conduct explicit and implicit missions.

The study concludes that the U.S. should immediately begin talks with Israel, Egypt, and the United Nations with the objective of modernizing the MFO. Modernization should include: making the MFO a UN peacekeeping organization to strengthen its legitimacy; withdrawing the U.S. Infantry Battalion; retracting the MFO occupied portion of southern Zone C; and increasing the size and function of the Civilian Observer Unit.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

COLBATT	Colombian Battalion
COU	Civilian Observer Unit
CP	Checkpoint
CPU	Coastal Patrol Unit
DOD	Department of Defense
FIJIBATT	Fijian Battalion
GAO	Government Accounting Office
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDF	Israel Defense Force
JSTARS	Joint Surveillance Target Acquisition Radar System
MENA	Middle East North Africa
MFO	Multinational Force and Observers
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OP	Observation Post
PDD	Presidential Decision Directive
PK	Peacekeeping
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
RC	Reserve Component
SFM	Sinai Field Mission
SFOR	Stabilization Force in Bosnia

UN	United Nations
UNDOF	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force
UNEF	United Nations Emergency Force
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organization
U.S.	United States of America
USBATT	U.S. Battalion



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

With the end of the Cold War and dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States (U.S.) is struggling with its role as the world's only superpower. The opportunities to promote interests have out-paced the military capability to protect interests. If the U.S. is to accept new commitments, it must reassess old ones.

The U.S. has supported the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) with funding and troops for sixteen years without incident. Although many of the conditions existing in 1982 have changed significantly, the commitment has not. U.S. armed force commitments have increased worldwide, while force structure has decreased. Support to the MFO may hinder efforts to promote new interests and unduly impact readiness to protect interests.

### Background and Context of the Problem

The Sinai has been the scene of three major land battles between Egypt and Israel since 1956. The Sinai Campaigns of 1956, 1967, and 1973 each ended with Israeli occupation of the peninsula. A lasting formula for peace, one that assured Israeli security and water transit rights and Egyptian sovereignty, was difficult to find.

The Sinai Peninsula in Egypt occupies a strategic location. The closing of choke points along its adjacent waterways can have a substantial impact on world trade. In the west, the Suez Canal is a major shipping route between Europe and the Gulf of Aqaba, Persian Gulf, and Asia. At the southern tip of the peninsula, the Strait of Tiran serves as

a gateway to the Gulf of Aqaba and the ports of Eilat (Israel) and Al Aqaba (Jordan).

The closing of these choke points has helped precipitate three modern wars.

Israel first occupied the Sinai in October 1956 in response to perceived threatening Egyptian moves. In order to obtain funds for the Aswan High Dam project, President Nasser of Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal and later closed the Strait of Tiran. These actions threatened Israeli, British, and French interests. In a coordinated operation, the Israeli forces attacked the Gaza strip and most of the Sinai, while British and French forces took control of the Suez Canal area. Soon, the coalition was pressured to withdraw from the Sinai by the United States and United Nations.<sup>1</sup> The Israeli withdrawal was complete by March 1957 and the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I), grandfather to the MFO, assumed peacekeeping duties.

UNEF I consisted of six thousand soldiers from ten countries.<sup>2</sup> The force monitored cease-fire provisions from seventy-two observation posts throughout the Sinai and Gaza and quietly kept peace until May 1967.<sup>3</sup>

By May 1967, tension had increased among Israel, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. President Nasser ordered UNEF I out of the Sinai and again closed the Strait of Tiran. Israel launched a preemptive strike against all three countries on June 5. By the end of the Six-Day War, Israel controlled the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza, Golan Heights, and West

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<sup>1</sup>Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L. Klausner, *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 2d ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995), 130.

<sup>2</sup>United Nations, *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peace-keeping* (New York: UN Publication, 1985), 54-55.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 72-73.

Bank. The Israelis controlled the Sinai for the next fifteen years and the Suez Canal remained closed for the next eight.

Between 1967 and 1973, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) provided observers along the Suez Canal. Ninety observers monitored activities from fifteen observation posts.<sup>4</sup> They remained even during the War of Attrition (1969-70), when the Israelis and Egyptians frequently shelled each other's positions.

On 6 October 1973 (Yom Kippur), Egypt and Syria attacked Israeli forces across the Suez Canal and Golan Heights, respectively. Israel quickly pushed back the attacks, crossing west of the canal and enlarging the Golan Heights front. The United States and Soviet Union brokered a UN cease-fire on 24 October. UNEF II, the father of the MFO, was established to help maintain the cease-fire.

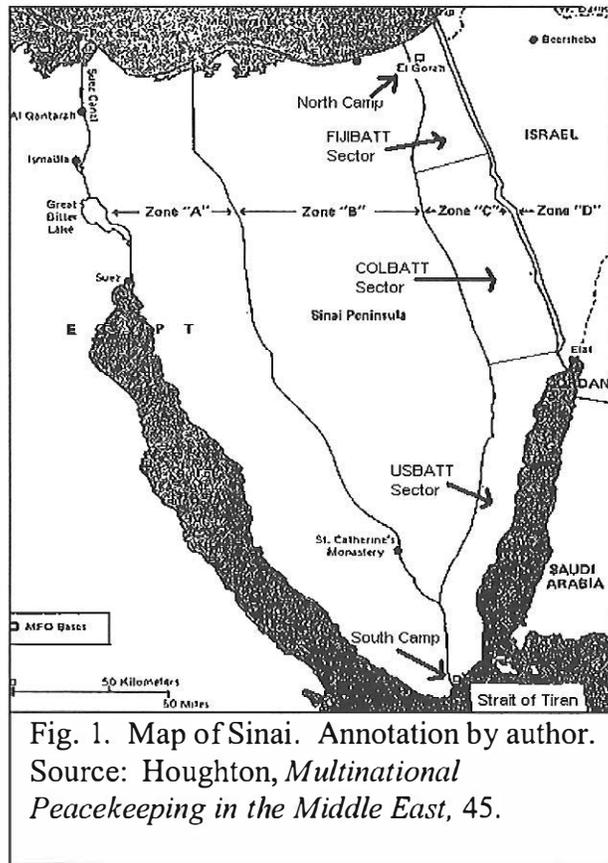
UNEF II consisted of seven thousand soldiers from twelve countries.<sup>5</sup> It not only monitored peace and occupied buffer zones, but also supervised disengagements as the Israelis began a series of small withdrawals. In March 1974, Israel withdrew from the Suez Canal. In September 1975, Israel agreed to further withdrawals and a small U.S. monitoring organization was established (Sinai Field Mission). Disagreement between the U.S. and Soviet Union over the Camp David peace process resulted in a lapse of the UNEF II mandate in July 1979.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 31.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 81-82.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 84.



As a result of the Camp David peace process, Israel and Egypt signed a historic peace treaty in March 1979. The Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of Peace ended war between the two countries, provided for the return of the Sinai to Egypt, opened all surrounding waterways to Israeli shipping, and divided the peninsula into security zones to be monitored by a United Nations security force.<sup>7</sup> Because the United Nations Security Council could not agree on provisions for a peacekeeping (PK) force, the United States,

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<sup>7</sup>Bernard Reich, ed., *Arab-Israeli Conflict and Conciliation: A Documentary History* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1995), 156-157.

Egypt, and Israel agreed to establish a Multinational Force and Observers.<sup>8</sup> On 25 April 1982, Israel completed its withdrawal from the Sinai and the MFO began operations there.

The mission of the MFO is contained in Article VI, Annex I of the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of Peace: “to supervise the implementation of this Annex [Protocol Concerning Israeli Withdrawal and Security Arrangements] and employ their best efforts to prevent any violation of its terms.”<sup>9</sup> Annex I divides the Sinai Peninsula into four zones which limit air, naval, and ground activity (see fig. 1). Limited Egyptian military presence and activities are permitted in Zones A and B. Israeli military presence and activities are limited in Zone D, a thin zone within Israel. No Egyptian or Israeli military activities are allowed in Zone C; however, limited numbers of Egyptian civilian police perform routine civil police functions in this sector. Zone C is the domain of MFO military forces.

The Treaty of Peace further details the tasks associated with the MFO mission. As appropriate, the force can operate checkpoints and observation posts and conduct reconnaissance patrols within Zone C. The MFO must, as a minimum, verify bi-monthly the provisions of Annex I throughout all zones unless otherwise requested by the parties. Upon request from Egypt or Israel, the MFO conducts verification operations within forty-eight hours and reports findings to both parties. Lastly, the MFO must ensure freedom of navigation through the Strait of Tiran.

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<sup>8</sup>Mala Tabory, *The Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai: Organization, Structure, and Function* (Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1986), 160-162.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 129.

The organization of the MFO begins with a triumvirate--Egypt, Israel and the U.S. The triumvirate provides overall direction through annual trilateral meetings and each country equally shares the financial burden for the force. Egypt and Israel are bound to the provisions of the MFO Protocol and associated amendments unless both agree to changes.

The State Department is the lead U.S. agency for the MFO. It provides an annual report to Congress, which exercises independent oversight of the entire operation.

The chain of command begins with the Director General. He is a U.S. civilian appointed by the triumvirate for a four-year term. He and his staff provide overall direction and resource support from the MFO Headquarters in Rome. A general officer commands the Force from his headquarters in the Sinai at North Camp, near El Gorah. To date, Norway, New Zealand, and The Netherlands have provided Force Commanders.

Fiji, Colombia, and the U.S. provide the bulk of the Force in the form of light infantry battalions. Together they man nearly thirty observation posts throughout Zone C. The Fijian Battalion (FIJIBATT) monitors the northern zone, while the Colombian Battalion (COLBATT) occupies the central zone. Italy provides a coastal patrol unit (CPU) of three ships to monitor freedom of navigation through the Strait of Tiran. Australia, Canada, France, Hungary, New Zealand, Uruguay and Norway provide staff and support forces.

A U.S. Battalion (USBATT) of approximately 529 soldiers occupies the southern portion of Zone C from the border of Israel to Sharm el Sheikh on the tip of the peninsula. The U.S. Army rotates light infantry units through for six-month rotations. In January 1998, the thirty-fourth rotation arrived for duty.

The U.S. also provides significant support at North Camp. The Force Chief of Staff is a U.S. Army Colonel. The 1st Support Battalion--approximately 361 soldiers serving one year individual tours--provides logistical support for the entire force. Lastly, a Civilian Observer Unit (COU), composed of approximately fifteen U.S. civilians, conducts verification missions throughout all zones.

The MFO has quietly kept the peace for sixteen years. During that same time, the world has experienced the emergence of a new security environment requiring U.S. leadership in places and ways unimaginable in 1982. U.S. security commitments have increased significantly, while the force structure to support those commitments has decreased just as dramatically. Consequently, the discriminating use of U.S. military forces is more critical than ever.

### The Research Question

The MFO has kept the peace so quietly that it is seldom studied or debated. This paper will examine U.S. support to the MFO and answer the question: Should the U.S. continue to support the MFO in its current form?

To answer this principal question, this paper will center around two subordinate questions. First, what conditions have changed that would make an adjustment of U.S. support possible or desirable? Second, are there alternative manners of support that could accomplish the same purpose at less cost without increased risk?

## Definitions

Understandably, there is some confusion over what the MFO is. The Multinational Force and Observers is a multilateral international peacekeeping organization operating under the direction of Egypt, Israel, and the United States for the purpose of keeping peace in the Sinai as prescribed by the Israeli-Egyptian Treaty of Peace of 1979 and associated amendments. It is not a United Nations organization or a general term used to describe peacekeeping forces anywhere else for any other reason during any other period.

The primary U.S. Army doctrine on peace operations is contained in FM 100-23, *Peace Operations*. This manual refers to the MFO as “a classic example of a force conducting a PK operation.”<sup>10</sup> It also defines PK as an operation that “involves military or paramilitary operations that are undertaken with the consent of all major belligerent parties...designed to monitor and facilitate implementation of an existing truce agreement and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long-term political settlement.”<sup>11</sup> The MFO clearly meets this definition.

## Limitations

Because of the MFO’s unique status as an autonomous organization reporting to the countries of Egypt, Israel and the U.S., and the political sensitivity of its reports, it

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<sup>10</sup>U.S. Army, Field Manual 100-23, *Peace Operations* (Baltimore: GPO, 1994), 4.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 4.

publishes few official documents. Secondary sources and sometimes dated information supplement the few official documents used in this study.

There may be classified security agreements between the countries involved linked to the MFO that are not public knowledge. It is the author's belief that such agreements involving the MFO are highly unlikely.

### Delimitations

At first glance, the MFO would seem to be a narrow topic. However, the Arab-Israeli conflict is an extremely complex and dynamic situation forcing the narrowest topic to quickly expand. This paper focuses on U.S. involvement in and support to the MFO from a U.S. perspective. Analysis is limited to the years 1982 through 1997. To keep the paper accessible, only unclassified sources have been referenced.

### Significance of the Study

There is very little written about the MFO. After sixteen years of significant U.S. involvement--and with extensive international changes--it seems reasonable to assess old commitments in a post-Cold War environment. U.S. resources expended to support the MFO deserve some cost-benefit analysis. The study should help illuminate problems with missions that do not have exit strategies and the difficulty of controlling an autonomous peacekeeping organization. The study also examines the context of the mission to ensure proper understanding of peacekeeping lessons learned from the MFO.

U.S. support to the MFO is also significant to the U.S. Army and its subordinate forces that participate. The commitment of forces to the MFO may preclude commitment

of forces to an area where there is a greater need for U.S. presence. The impact on operational readiness for a unit is more significant given the current size of the U.S. Army. Lastly, the personnel tempo (perstempo) throughout the Army is the highest in years and could affect morale.

## CHAPTER 2

### U.S. PERSPECTIVE

If they ask me to be part of some monitoring force, as we are in the Sinai and have been since 1978, to monitor the peace between Egypt and Israel, frankly, I would have to think about it . . . But the real secret there is for them [Israelis and Palestinians] to abide by the agreements they've made and find a way to trust each other.<sup>1</sup>

President Bill Clinton, *Presidential Debate*

For sixteen years, the Sinai desert has been one of the most stable and peaceful environments on earth. Not a single shot has been fired in hostility since 1982.<sup>2</sup> There have been no major treaty violations and the average American is unaware of the MFOs existence.<sup>3</sup> U.S. policy concerning the MFO has been as stable as the environment. What now follows is an examination of U.S. policy, geostrategic changes, and U.S. Army continuities and changes to illuminate realities and myths surrounding the U.S. commitment to the MFO and help explain why a change is necessary.

The U.S. commitment to the MFO is consistent with the National Security Strategy. First, the MFO helps promote and protect the three enduring U.S. interests in the Middle East: “pursuing a just, lasting and comprehensive Middle East peace,

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<sup>1</sup> Clinton, William J. *Presidential Debate*. San Diego, CA: Whitehouse Archives, 16 October 1996. [Whitehouse Home Page]; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/Retrieval.cgi?dbtype=text&id=7360&query=Sinai>; Internet; accessed 11 November 1997, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Government Accounting Office, Report to Congressional Requestors: GAO/NSIAD-95-113, *Peacekeeping: Assessment of U.S. Participation in the Multinational Force and Observers* (Baltimore: GPO, 15 August 1995), 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

ensuring the security and well-being of Israel, and helping our Arab friends provide for their security.”<sup>4</sup> Second, military involvement helps shape the international environment by promoting regional stability and reducing the possibility of conflict.<sup>5</sup> Lastly, the U.S. made a commitment to Egypt and Israel in 1981 to “find acceptable replacements for [and] ensure the maintenance of an acceptable MFO.”<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, this U.S. commitment is open-ended, which makes it inconsistent with current U.S. policy.

In 1993, President Clinton ordered a review of U.S. peacekeeping policy. The result was his issuance of Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD-25), *The Clinton Administration’s Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations*.<sup>7</sup> The policy states, “Peace operations should not be open-ended commitments but instead linked to *concrete political solutions*; otherwise, they normally should not be undertaken.”<sup>8</sup> Most would agree, a Treaty of Peace, coupled with an undisputed border and validated by sixteen years of peace is fairly concrete.

The new policy on the management of peace operations reveals another inconsistency. PDD-25 states, “The Department of Defense will assume new

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<sup>4</sup> The White House, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Baltimore: GPO, 1997), 26.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Mala Tabory, *The Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai: Organization, Structure, and Function* (Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1986), 160.

<sup>7</sup> Department of State, *The Clinton Administration’s Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations (PDD-25)* (Washington D.C.: Bureau of International Organization Affairs, May 1994).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

responsibilities for managing and funding . . . all operations in which U.S. combat units are participating.”<sup>9</sup> This clear mandate is designed to maintain a military chain of command and closer scrutiny of the use of combat forces. However, the management of forces provided to the MFO remains the responsibility of the State Department. This arrangement has contributed to what Adam Garfinkle, Director of the Middle East Council at the Foreign Policy Institute, terms “historical inertia.”<sup>10</sup>

By way of explanation, Garfinkle writes, “The foreign policy of a bureaucratized great power is a little like a semitrailer: you need a good deal of space and a great deal of skill to turn one around.”<sup>11</sup> Both the Defense and State Departments seem to have reverted to natural bureaucratic tendencies concerning the management of combat forces supporting the MFO. For DOD, it is sometimes a matter of out-of-budget, out-of-sight, and out-of-mind. The U.S. commitment to the MFO is not a joint operation and a regional commander-in-chief does not supervise it. It is solely an Army function largely delegated to the XVIIIth Airborne Corps for execution. This precludes the natural tendency to question deployments from various services or at the Joint Chiefs of Staff level because only the Army is involved. The lack of DOD management responsibility, and thereby interest, for the MFO can only contribute to continued “historical inertia.”

The State Department has also demonstrated its traditional bureaucratic role. The State Department tends to advocate a more liberal use of military force. Recall the fairly

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>10</sup> Adam Garfinkle, “The U.S. Imperial Postulate in the Middle East: Agenda 2000,” *Orbis* 41, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 17.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

public debates between Secretary of State George Shultz and Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger on the use of military force in the eighties that eventually led to the Weinberger Doctrine. Recently, the indefinite commitment of ground forces to peacekeeping in Bosnia received the support of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. As long as there is a perception that U.S. military presence provides easy solutions to diplomatic problems, the Department of State will have little incentive to promote any redeployment, particularly one it has direct control over.

“Historical inertia” is truly a powerful force. It has not only kept the composition of the MFO almost completely static, but also has encouraged the State Department to link any change to “sustained regional peace.”<sup>12</sup> At the same time, U.S. Army officials have concerns about the level of participation and lack of an end date.<sup>13</sup> The thought that peace can be kept only by a force similar to the original organization is testimony to the existence of “historical inertia” and demonstrates a general disregard for changes to the geostrategic environment since 1982.

The MFO is the only peacekeeping organization with a large U.S. commitment to survive the end of the Cold War. Clearly, the MFO has always been considered more than just a peacekeeping organization. However, its importance beyond peacekeeping to the U.S. has diminished significantly. “The end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the Gulf War dramatically altered the dynamics of superpower rivalry

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<sup>12</sup> GAO Report 95-113, 22.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

in the region.”<sup>14</sup> Rivalries are no longer fueled by Cold War postulates and the dissolution of Soviet military prowess and hegemony in the region has significantly decreased the likelihood of externally supported conflicts. Also, the existence of a sizeable combat force in Egypt is now irrelevant to protection against Soviet encroachment.

Compared to its position in the early days of Sadat, there is no question where the U.S. stands with Egypt today: Egypt is a strategic partner of the United States.<sup>15</sup> The U.S. provides \$2.1 billion (thirty-eight percent of its entire expenditure) in security assistance annually to Egypt.<sup>16</sup> Under the Foreign Military Sales program, the U.S. has provided F-4 and F-16 aircraft, M1A1 tanks, AH-64 helicopters, and other advanced technology equipment.<sup>17</sup> The U.S. and Egypt have conducted combined Bright Star training exercises biannually since 1981.<sup>18</sup>

The U.S. would not support Egypt militarily if it--or Israel--felt it jeopardized Israeli security. If there is little concern about the threat Egypt poses to Israel's security, why is a peacekeeping force necessary? It appears illogical to arm two states that require

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<sup>14</sup> Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L Klausner, *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995), 237.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Defense, *United States Security Strategy for the Middle East* (Baltimore: GPO, May 1995), 24.

<sup>16</sup> Duncan L. Clarke, “U.S. Security Assistance to Egypt and Israel: Politically Untouchable?” *The Middle East Journal* 51, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 200-201.

<sup>17</sup> Department of State, *Background Notes: Egypt, March 1995* (Baltimore: GPO, 1995), 4.

<sup>18</sup> Sean D. Naylor, “Desert Exercise Gains Popularity,” *Army Times*, 8 December 1997, 11.

the presence of combat forces to maintain peace. This paradox of policy can be understood with one simple explanation: “Egypt can no longer be regarded as a confrontation state.”<sup>19</sup> Egypt further demonstrated its strategic reliability during the Persian Gulf War.

The Persian Gulf War significantly altered the Middle East geostrategic environment for the U.S. Any credibility loss due to the Iranian revolution, withdrawal from Lebanon, or Iran/Contra fiasco has been restored. Mideast states know the U.S. will not accept the alteration of borders and will fight to support its strategic partners. The increased presence of U.S. forces in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates has made the Sinai presence insignificant and obsolete to extra-Sinai discussions.<sup>20</sup> In fact, the belief that U.S. forces in the Sinai were ever more than an observer force for the MFO is among several myths associated with U.S. presence there.

In the early 1980s, when only the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions provided infantry battalions to the MFO, many believed the USBATT could serve as “a nucleus of the rapid deployment joint task force.”<sup>21</sup> Today, many believe the USBATT provides a forward presence, but it really has the opposite effect; making troops in the region among the last available to respond elsewhere in the region.

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<sup>19</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman, *After the Storm: The Changing Military Balance in the Middle East* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 13.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Defense, *United States Security Strategy for the Middle East* (Baltimore: GPO, May 1995), 27.

<sup>21</sup> Nathan A. Pelcovits, *Peacekeeping on Arab-Israeli Fronts: Lessons From the Sinai and Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), 71.

After sixteen years of events as unconventional as the bombing of the Marine Barracks in Lebanon and as conventional as the Persian Gulf War, U.S. forces from the MFO have not been used to respond elsewhere. Obviously, such a response could have grave consequences for future invitations to provide peacekeeping forces and damage U.S. credibility. As a result, U.S. forces supporting the MFO are not available for any other contingencies.

Another myth is that any decrease in support for the MFO by the United States will cause it to disintegrate. While U.S. participation has always been a principal consideration for Egypt, Israel, and participatory countries, there is little evidence that a diminished U.S. presence would undermine the MFO as a viable force.

First, the continued participation of ten foreign countries is well above the minimum threshold of four established by the U.S. Congress.<sup>22</sup> Second, participating countries made the difficult decisions to join in the beginning when the probability for sustained peace was smaller, and when participation assured alienation from Arab nations that condemned Egypt's decision.<sup>23</sup>

Third, the pool of eligible countries to draw from has increased significantly. Originally, eastern bloc, African, and countries without diplomatic relations with Israel were excluded.<sup>24</sup> The reasons for the first two exclusions have eroded, while the number

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<sup>22</sup> *Participation of United States personnel in the Multinational Force and Observers, U.S. Code, Title 22, chap. 49, sec. 3422 (1981).*

<sup>23</sup> Tabory, 21-23.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

of countries with diplomatic relations with Israel has increased significantly. As a result, there has not been any difficulty finding replacements.

When Australian troops left in 1985, Canadians replaced them. When Britain departed in 1992, Australia filled the void. It is somewhat telling that Britain, normally a staunch supporter of U.S. policy in the Middle East, withdrew in 1992 with little to no impact. In 1995, the first former communist country to participate, Hungary, replaced departing Dutch troops.

Finally, each country participates for different reasons not always directly linked to the level of U.S. participation or to the perceived need for a peacekeeping force in the Sinai. The first three countries to join the MFO--Fiji, Colombia, and Uruguay--are considered "developing nations" and thereby have all costs paid and are reimbursed approximately \$1,000 a month per soldier.<sup>25</sup> Fiji, a country with budget and trade deficits, rotates its three infantry battalions between Lebanon, Egypt, and home and is glad to have the international community pay for most of its defense budget. Hungarian Defense Minister George Keleti said his country's participation "shows that it is ready to join NATO and fulfill other international duties," a prophecy recently accepted and recognized in President Clinton's State of the Union Address.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Report to Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations: B-204588, ID-81-62, *U.S. Role in Sinai Important to Mideast Peace* (Baltimore: GPO, 9 September 1981), 5; and Tabory, 21; and GAO Report 95-113, 21.

<sup>26</sup> "Hungarian Troops Deployed in Sinai," *Jewish Bulletin of Northern California*, 29 September 1995, 1. Available from <http://www.jewish.com/bk950929/iworld.htm>; Internet; accessed 14 November 1997.

<b><u>MFO Contributions</u></b>	
<b><u>Country</u></b>	<b><u># Personnel</u></b>
United States	917
Colombia	358
Fiji	339
Italy	83
Uruguay	64
Hungary	59
Canada	28
Australia	26
New Zealand	24
France	17
Norway	4

Fig. 2. MFO Contributions. Source: Winnewisser, "Multinational Force and Observers Information Briefing," 10.

Italy, the first European country to join the MFO, receives subsidized naval training as the MFO's coastal patrol unit, while France benefits from subsidized fixed-wing aircraft training by performing daily missions. The remaining countries provide mainly token and symbolic staff personnel (see fig. 2).<sup>27</sup> Although the support of these countries is not inconsequential, it is hardly critical at a time when the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of Peace is almost universally accepted. Because of the various reasons leading each country to support the MFO, it is unlikely that a change in the level of U.S. support would cause the MFO to dissolve.

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<sup>27</sup> William Winnewisser, "Multinational Force and Observers Information Briefing," Powerpoint Presentation, U.S. Military Observer Group-Washington, 1998, 10.

The United States receives very little residual benefits from its participation in the MFO. As the only participating country that also contributes financially to the MFO, nothing it does is cost-free. For USBATT personnel, even multinational interaction--a potential benefit--is minimal because it operates only in its own sector. MFO standing operating procedures and equipment are used, but they have no applicability outside the Sinai or in future coalition war. The benefits from operating in a desert environment are also minimal because all operations are conducted from fixed sites in a static environment. The existence of the National Training Center, Bright Star Exercises in Egypt, and Intrinsic Action exercises in Kuwait (all new since 1980) offer much better desert training environments.

The 1995 GAO Report on the MFO states the success of the MFO is based partly on the existence of "a benign operating environment."<sup>28</sup> As described by Major Myles Altimus, an executive officer deploying to the Sinai, in an *Army Times* interview: "What [the soldiers] do is sit out there on these observation posts and they watch the sand, basically."<sup>29</sup> The isolated and unique operating environment in the Sinai minimizes the value of such a deployment. Not only is the experience not applicable to war, but also as DOD officials point out in GAO Report 95-113, it "is not applicable to more hostile peacekeeping environments."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> GAO Report 95-113, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Katherine McIntire Peters, "Reserve Component's Value is Tested in Sinai Mission," *Army Times*, 30 January 1995.

<sup>30</sup> GAO Report 95-113, 4.

## **METL Comparison**

### **Selected Wartime METL**

- Perform Air Assault
- Assault
- Defend
- Attack/Defend Built Up Areas

### **Selected MFO METL**

- Conduct Relief in Place
- Observe/Report Treaty Provisions
- Protect the Force
- Support TF Families

Fig. 3. METL. Source: Flynn, "Battle Focused Training for Peacekeeping Operations: A METL Adjustment for Infantry Battalions," 16; 18.

A deployment to the Sinai has a significant impact on a light infantry unit's ability to conduct its wartime mission. Because the unit's mission changes to support the MFO, it normally must change its Mission Essential Task List (METL). The unit must focus its training so that it can accomplish METL tasks to standard. Task Force 3-187, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) served with the MFO from July 1995 to January 1996. Figure 3 provides an example of how that unit changed its METL to suit the Sinai mission.<sup>31</sup> This comparison illuminates the inherent contradiction between training for peacekeeping operations and maintaining wartime readiness levels.

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<sup>31</sup> Michael J. Flynn, "Battle Focused Training for Peacekeeping Operations: A METL Adjustment for Infantry Battalions" (School of Advanced Military Studies Monograph, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1997), 16; 18.

Task Force 1-327, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) returned from the Sinai in January 1998. Testifying before the House National Security Committee, the unit's commander, Lieutenant Colonel Kevin R. Wendel, stated the mission was accomplished "with a high cost on war-fighting readiness."<sup>32</sup> He further stated, "Air assault training, the battalion's chief wartime mission, ceased six months before the Middle East mission. It takes up to six months after returning to regain the unit's combat edge."<sup>33</sup>

Infantry battalions require a minimum of three months to conduct pre-deployment training and a minimum of four months to conduct post-deployment training.<sup>34</sup> Because there is always a unit preparing to deploy, a unit in the Sinai, and one conducting post-deployment training, the MFO commitment impacts on the combat readiness of the equivalent of an entire light infantry brigade at any given time. The nature of the mission and the impact on unit readiness led the Army to experiment with the use of reserve component (RC) forces in 1995.

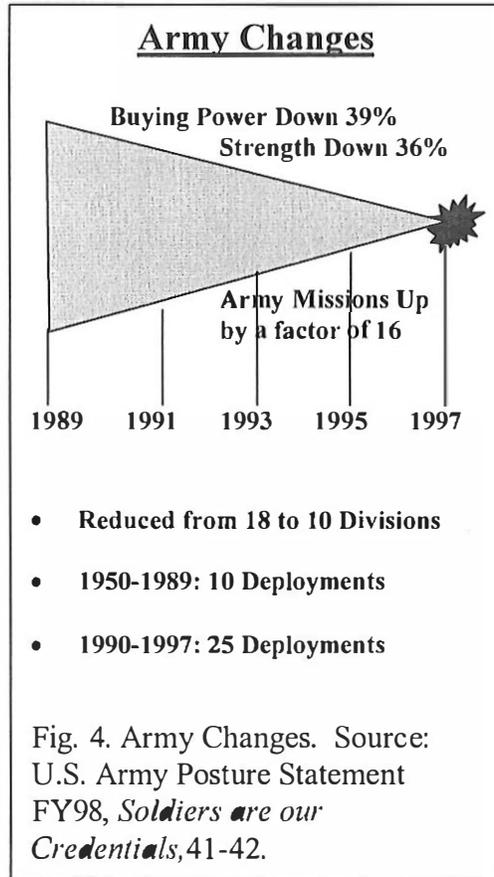
It was hoped that RC forces could help rid the active Army of what is now seen as a less-than-desirable mission. The U.S. Army has come a long way from tasking only highly-trained, contingency forces like the 82nd and 101st Airborne Division units to support the MFO (early to mid eighties), to testing the use of predominately reserve component forces. Although it was a cry for help by the U.S. Army, the public debate revolved mostly around the ability of RC soldiers and units to conduct real world

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<sup>32</sup> Rick Maze, "Word From the Field: We are really Hurting," *Army Times*, 23 March 1998, 8.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> GAO Report 95-113, 15-16.



missions. The test proved successful, but was cost prohibitive. The incremental cost to the U.S. basically doubled from approximately \$18 million a year to \$36 million, largely due to the extra salary needed to bring RC soldiers onto active duty.<sup>35</sup> As a result, there are no plans to form another predominately RC battalion to provide some relief for the increasing perstempo of the active force.

A major change for the U.S. Army since the early 1980s has been the increase in perstempo. A 1996 GAO Report shows the percentage of personnel deployed has almost

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 20; and Katherine McIntire Peters, "The Army's \$18 Million Gamble," *Army Times*, 1 May 1995.

doubled between 1987 and 1995.<sup>36</sup> In August 1997, over 33,100 soldiers were conducting temporary operations or training exercises in ninety-four countries.<sup>37</sup> A smaller cousin of the MFO (350 U.S. soldiers) has been operating in Macedonia since 1993. Many soldiers are deploying three to four times more than during the Cold War.<sup>38</sup> All this, during a period of decreasing budgets and force structures (see fig. 4).

Recognizing this high perstempo, the Army Chief of Staff, General Dennis Reimer, ordered a new policy that assures soldiers one month at home for every month deployed on contingency duties.<sup>39</sup> This unprecedented move to manage individual soldiers' temporary deployments from the Department of the Army level is testimony to the perceived negative impact on morale that increased post-Cold War deployments are having. As stated in a recent *Army Times* editorial, "The highest level of attention has been paid in recent years on how to cut the force. That same level of effort is now required to cut the demand."<sup>40</sup>

With the recent U.S. policy decision to continue the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia indefinitely, it seems the perfect time to reassess post-Cold War commitments. A

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<sup>36</sup> Government Accounting Office, Report to Congressional Requestors: GAO/NSIAD-96-105, *A Clear Policy is Needed to Guide Management of Frequently Deployed Units* (Baltimore: GPO, 8 April 1996), 2.

<sup>37</sup> Department of the Army, U.S. Army News Release No. 97-86, *Current U.S. Army Training and Operations Update* (Baltimore: GPO, 4 September 1997), 1.

<sup>38</sup> John Hillen, "Superpowers Don't Do Windows: America's Alliance Anxieties," *Orbis* 41, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 244.

<sup>39</sup> George C. Wilson, "Directives for 'Month at Home' Set for January," *Army Times*, 29 December 1997, 2.

<sup>40</sup> Donna M. Peterson, "High Optempo has Corrosive Effect," *Army Times*, 17 November 1997, 35.

recent *Army Times* article describes the search for Army units to relieve the operational burden on U.S. Army units in Europe.<sup>41</sup> Again, the MFO commitment causes the extraction of an entire infantry brigade from duty elsewhere, the same size unit required in Bosnia. Increased worldwide deployment of U.S. military forces has added to the intangible cost of past deployments and commitments.

By any standards, the purely financial cost of supporting the MFO is not exceptional. At an additional cost of only \$18.6 million a year (compared to \$2.5 billion a year for Bosnia), the initiative to lessen any U.S. commitment is not likely to come from Congress.<sup>42</sup> However, the analysis presented so far demonstrates that changes to the geostrategic environment, coupled with a smaller U.S. Army, have increased the cost in combat readiness and soldier morale while simultaneously decreasing any international or regional benefits.

Many would say it is a small price to pay for peace. One would have to be against peace in the Middle East to risk upsetting such a delicate balance by making any significant changes to the highly successful MFO. This statement assumes the MFO in its current form is the only way to sustain peace and that the MFO is the principal reason there is peace between Egypt and Israel. An examination of Israel--the paramount reason

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<sup>41</sup> Sean D. Naylor, "Some Units Unlikely Candidates for Bosnia Rotation," *Army Times*, 2 February 1998, 13.

<sup>42</sup> GAO Report 95-113, 20; and Government Accounting Office, Report to Congressional Requestors: GAO/NSIAD-97-183, *Bosnia: Cost Estimating Has Improved but Operational Changes Will Affect Current Estimates* (Baltimore: GPO, 28 July 1997), 1.

the U.S. continues to support the MFO--will help illuminate more of the factors outside the MFO that contribute to continued peace.

## CHAPTER 3

### ISRAELI PERSPECTIVE

The limited forces arrangement in the vast Sinai desert provided Israel with a sufficiently large strategic buffer should any force emerge in Egypt with the intentions of violating the peace . . . Israel would have had to rely on the strategic depth of the Sinai to deter another war.<sup>1</sup>

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, “Netanyahu’s Peace Vision”

Security, because it is necessary for self-preservation, is Israel’s principal domestic concern and challenge. Israelis will always err on the side of caution. The MFO is a low-cost organization stationed only in Egypt that enhances Israel’s security. Israeli officials believe “any significant reductions in U.S. forces could send a signal of lessened U.S. commitment during current and future regional peace initiatives.”<sup>2</sup> One should not expect suggestions from Israel to change the U.S. commitment to the MFO anytime in the near future.

The normalization of relations between Israel and Egypt is a long way from becoming a reality. However, Israel and Egypt have not sustained nearly twenty-five years of peace in a vacuum, or predominately because of the MFO (as the above epigraph illustrates). Since 1982, Israel has enhanced its security posture significantly through improvements in all the instruments of power--diplomatic, military, informational, and economic. This section will highlight some of these changes to demonstrate the deterrent

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<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Netanyahu, “Netanyahu’s Peace Vision,” *Middle East Insight* XII, no. 4-5 (May-August 1996): 24-25.

<sup>2</sup> GAO Report 95-113, 22.

effect these improvements provide and to show why Israel should accept a decreased U.S. role in the Sinai.

First, Israel must consider the nature of the Sinai and Egypt's treaty compliance record. Netanyahu's opening quote refers to the "strategic depth" the Sinai provides which Israel does not enjoy on other borders. This is only because Egypt has complied with the limited force provisions of the Peace Treaty consistently since 1982. Only one Egyptian mechanized infantry division (in Zone A) is within 150 miles of Israel and other significant combat forces would have to cross the Suez Canal.<sup>3</sup>

Adding to the prospect for continued peace is the fact that there is absolutely no dispute concerning the border between the two countries. An international arbitration panel settled the final border dispute when Egypt was given sovereignty over an area known as Taba in 1988. Finally, every day of peace adds to the expectation of continued peace and the legitimacy of the peace treaty.

It is important to remember that there wasn't widespread support, particularly among Arab nations, for the Israeli-Egyptian Treaty of Peace in 1979. Egypt was evicted from the Arab league. Israel and the U.S. wanted a diverse and strong MFO to help provide legitimacy and resilience to the agreed peace. Egypt's acceptance back into the Arab League in 1989, and later the move of the League's headquarters back to Cairo, was in many ways an overt Arab acceptance of the Peace Treaty and therefore has decreased the need for symbols of legitimacy.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Tabory, 128.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Background Notes: Egypt, March 1995* (Baltimore: GPO, 1995), 2.

Israel has made dramatic improvements in diplomatic relations since 1982. Although the U.S. has always been a major supporter of Israel, the close current relationship was solidified during the Reagan years. During the Reagan administration, the U.S. and Israel signed a number of strategic cooperation agreements. “In 1986, George Shultz reportedly told AIPAC Director Tom Dine that he felt so strongly about Israel’s strategic importance that he wanted to build institutional arrangements so that...if there is a [future] Secretary of State who is not positive about Israel, he will not be able to overcome the bureaucratic relationship between Israel and the US that we have established.”<sup>5</sup> These series of agreements culminated in a 1988 agreement, which reflected America’s “enduring commitment to Israel’s security.”<sup>6</sup> Although it is not technically an alliance, the strategic partnership between the two countries provides the same deterrent effect that an alliance does.

Despite the recent slowing of the Oslo process, the agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) have improved Israel’s security posture. The destruction of Israel is no longer part of the PLO mandate and most Israelis are ready to accept some form of a Palestinian state.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, Israel can now negotiate directly with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) over issues concerning the final status of peace. This has diminished considerably the obligation of other Arab nations to

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<sup>5</sup> Karen L. Puschel, *US-Israeli Strategic Cooperation in the Post-Cold War Era: An American Perspective* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 94.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Security Strategy for the Middle East*, 24.

<sup>7</sup> “Getting Back on Track,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies Watch* no. 178 (28 May 1997): 1.

negotiate on the behalf of Palestinians.<sup>8</sup> Just recently, Israel's Defense Minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, met with King Hussein of Jordan to discuss increased security ties even after PNA President Yasir Arafat returned from Washington with disappointing news about Israeli pull backs from the West Bank.<sup>9</sup>

On 26 October 1994, Egypt ceased to be the only Arab nation to make peace with Israel. The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty not only ended a state of war between the two countries, but also set the stage for increasing normalization of relations. The Peace Treaty and subsequent agreements cover such areas as full diplomatic relations, counter-terrorism, water rights, refugee issues, tourism, energy, transportation, trade, and economic cooperation.<sup>10</sup> Particularly important, are plans for cooperation in the Eilat-Aqaba area at the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. This interdependence makes it much less likely that Egypt would ever consider closing the Strait of Tiran again (major cause of past wars). As Defense Minister Mordechai recently put it: "In my eyes, peace with Jordan is a strategic asset."<sup>11</sup>

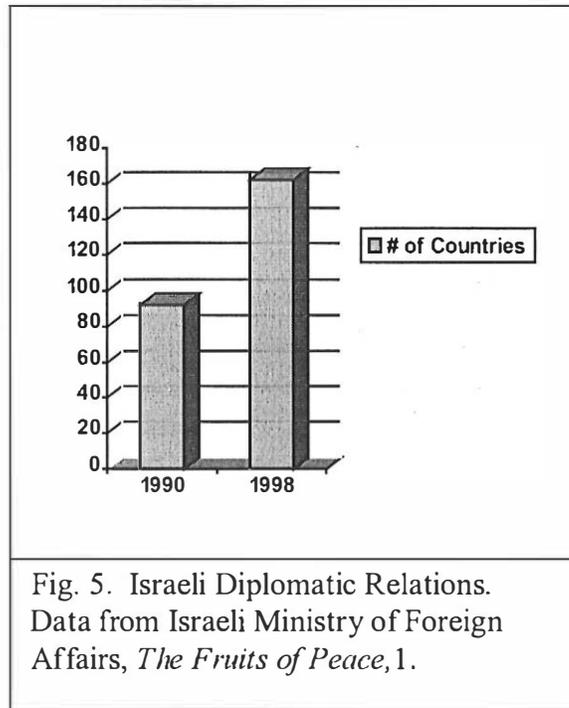
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<sup>8</sup> Shibley Telhami, "The Arab-Israeli Peace Process: Assessing the Costs of Failure; Part I, The United States and Middle East Peace: The Troubled Assumptions" (U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute monograph, U.S. Army War College, 1997), 6.

<sup>9</sup> Ariel O'Sullivan, "Hussein and Mordechai Decide to Strengthen Security Ties," *Jerusalem Post*, 27 January 1998, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Robert H. Pelletreau, "Developments in the Middle East," *Statement before the House Committee on International Relations* (Washington D.C.: State Department, 25 September, 1996), 3.

<sup>11</sup> O'Sullivan, 1.

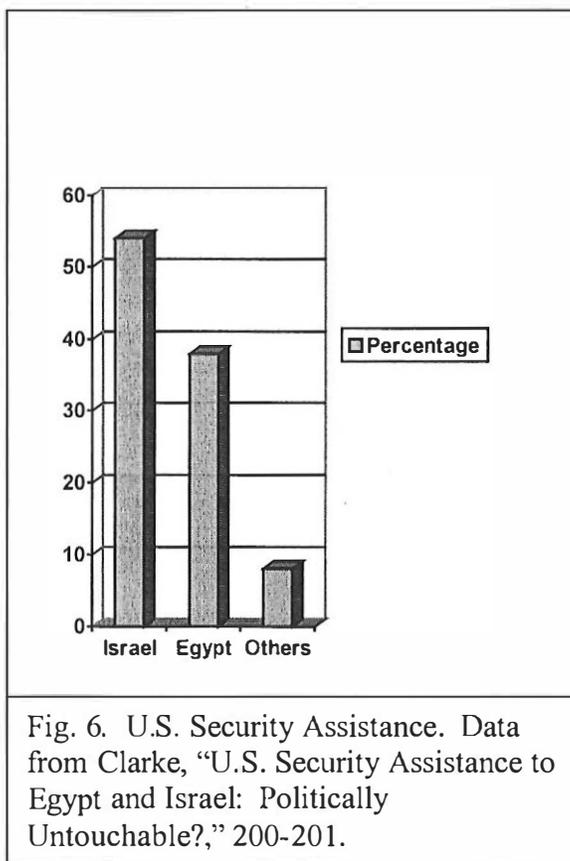


Israel now has diplomatic relations with 162 countries, an increase of 70 since 1991 (see fig. 5).<sup>12</sup> Israel's new diplomatic relations include China, Russia, India, and the Vatican. Israel has diplomatic ties with several Arab nations: Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain. It also has diplomatic ties with ten non-Arab Muslim countries: Albania, Gambia, Nigeria, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and most significantly Turkey.<sup>13</sup>

In February 1996, Israel signed two defense pacts with Turkey. These are the first defense agreements between Israel and any other muslim state. The agreements call for joint military maneuvers, the use of Turkish airspace by Israeli aircraft, Turkish pilot

<sup>12</sup> Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *The Fruits of Peace*, Available from <http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/peace/fruits.html>; Internet; accessed 8 February 1998, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.



training by Israelis, and millions of dollars in military equipment sales from Israel to Turkey.<sup>14</sup> Assailed by Egypt and Syria, these agreements, and other understandings with Arab and Muslim countries, have significantly increased the security posture of Israel and even threatened to alter the military balance in the Middle East.

Israel is widely recognized as the dominant military power in the region.<sup>15</sup> The Department of Defense's *United States Security Strategy for the Middle East* states: "Israel's high technology weaponry, the superior education, training, and motivation of

<sup>14</sup> Umit Enginsoy, "Mediterranean Maneuvers to Proceed Despite Protest." *Army Times*, 22 September 1997, 32.

<sup>15</sup> "Israel Security Assessment." *Jane's Sentinel* (1997), 3.9.4.

its defense forces, and its better battle management capabilities ensure that Israel will be able to deter potential adversaries from launching wars against it, or help it win if another war occurs. The United States is, of course, firmly committed to ensuring that Israel can preserve this qualitative military advantage.”<sup>16</sup>

The U.S. commitment to Israel’s security can be seen in many forms. Israel enjoys more U.S. security assistance--\$3 billion--than all other countries combined (see fig. 6).<sup>17</sup> In addition, Israel is receiving \$700 million in U.S. defense equipment such as F-16 fighters and UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters as part of U.S. military reductions.<sup>18</sup> Israel seems to be “more capable of absorbing and operating advanced military technology than any other Middle Eastern state.”<sup>19</sup>

Israel benefits from many advance technology programs with the U.S. It will soon accept delivery of twenty-five F-15I fighter jets, which will increase its long-range strike capability.<sup>20</sup> Both countries are involved in several joint defense and aerospace projects including ballistic missile defense projects.<sup>21</sup> In 1996, Israel began receiving near real-time satellite early warning data from U.S. intelligence systems.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Security Strategy for the Middle East*, 16.

<sup>17</sup> Clarke, 200.

<sup>18</sup> “Israel Security Assessment,” 3.8.7.

<sup>19</sup> Cordesman, 13.

<sup>20</sup> “Israel Security Assessment,” 3.8.7.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

### Israeli Intel Capabilities

- Electro-Optical
- Electronic Intelligence (ELINT)
- Signals/Communications(SIGINT)
- Thermal Signature
- Forward-Looking Infrared Radar
- Side-Looking Airborne Radar
- Remotely Piloted Vehicles
- Balloon Aerostat Intelligence

Fig. 7. Israeli Intelligence Capabilities.  
Source: Pelletiere, "The Peace Process,  
Phase One", 2.

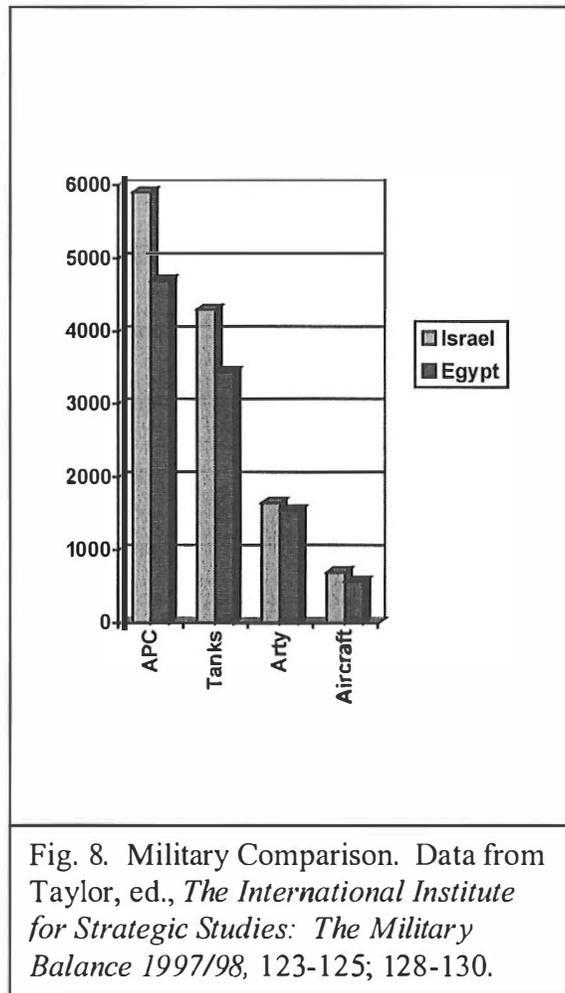
Israel has developed its own technologically superior intelligence gathering capability. It now has a variety of ground, airborne, and satellite systems (see fig. 7). Its Phalcon system is similar to the U.S. JSTARS system and can track 100 ground targets out to 250 miles.<sup>23</sup> It also has similar systems it can mount on fighter reconnaissance aircraft with a range out to fifty miles.<sup>24</sup> Lastly, not only does Israel have access to U.S. and commercial satellite-gathered intelligence, but it has also developed its own OFEQ-3 satellite system.<sup>25</sup> This increased intelligence capability should provide ample warning in the event deterrence fails.

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<sup>23</sup> Stephen C. Pelletiere, "The Peace Process, Phase One: Past Accomplishments, Future Concerns; Part V: Early Warning" (U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute Monograph, U.S. Army War College, 1997), 1.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.



It is widely believed that Israel possesses a major deterrent in the form of nuclear weapons.<sup>26</sup> Estimates on Israeli stockpiles range from as little as 60 to as many as 300 nuclear weapons.<sup>27</sup> Delivery means include the Jericho-1 and Jericho-2

<sup>26</sup> Terence Taylor, ed., *The International Institute for Strategic Studies: The Military Balance 1997/98*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 129.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.; and Anthony H. Cordesman, "Database: Stability and Instability in the Middle East, Vol III," *Center for Strategic and International Studies* (1997), 1. Available from <http://www.csis.org/mideast/stable/3h.html>; Internet; accessed 8 February 1998; and "Israel Security Assessment," 3.10.9.

surface-to-surface ballistic missiles with ranges of 500 km and 1,500 km, respectively.<sup>28</sup> Other reported nuclear munitions include airdropped bombs, mines, and tactical artillery shells.<sup>29</sup> Even if Israel does not possess any nuclear weapons, the widespread belief that it does provides added deterrence to any invasion attempts. But it is unlikely that Israel would need to resort to the use of nuclear weapons, because of its conventional military superiority in the region.

Israel's conventional military capability has helped to deter major attacks for almost twenty-five years. Figure 8 depicts Israeli quantitative superiority over the Egyptian military.<sup>30</sup> However, the chart can not depict the qualitative advantage Israel possesses after years of spending three to four times as much money on defense as Egypt. In 1982, Israel's defense expenditures were \$6.1 billion compared to an expenditure of \$2.1 billion by Egypt.<sup>31</sup> In 1996, Israel's defense expenditures were \$9.6 billion compared to an expenditure of \$2.7 billion by Egypt.<sup>32</sup>

What if Egypt and Syria were to combine their efforts again as they did during the 1973 Yom Kippur War? An Israeli background piece produced by the U.S. Army's Foreign Military Studies Office states: "The IDF [Israel Defense Force] is capable of

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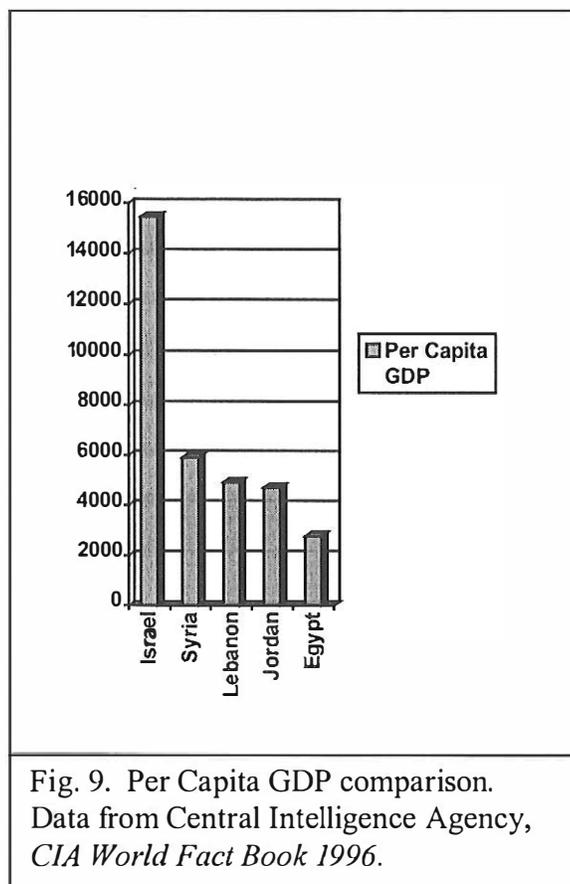
<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> "Israel Security Assessment," 3.10.9.

<sup>30</sup> Chipman, 124-25 and 129.

<sup>31</sup> Cordesman, *After the Storm: The Changing Military Balance in the Middle East*, 184.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 123 and 128.



defeating any combination of Arab forces arrayed against Israel.”<sup>33</sup> The Israeli military advantage has continually increased since it was able to defeat the two former Soviet surrogates in 1973.

At the same, the loss of Soviet support has significantly hurt potential Israeli enemies in the region. Equipment provided by the former USSR is growing old and Russian support is nonexistent. Economic reality can lead to military decay. Without a strong economy Israel would not be able to sustain its high level of defense expenditures and significant military advantage.

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Army Foreign Military Studies Office, *Background Information-Israel*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office, 1997), 3.

Prime Minister Netanyahu, a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology business school, understands as well as anyone the importance of economic prosperity to the growth and strength of Israel. Israel is in a fairly good position to become what Netanyahu terms, “the Silicon Valley of the Eastern Hemisphere.”<sup>34</sup> With the recent influx of Russian immigrants, Israel has two times as many engineers per capita as the U.S.<sup>35</sup> The five billion dollar annual export of high-tech goods is providing Israel’s economy a boost.<sup>36</sup>

Although Israel has its share of economic problems (inflation, and trade and budget deficits), it enjoys an unusually high standard of living compared to its neighbors (see fig. 9).<sup>37</sup> Israel recognizes and accepts its own economic ascendancy. Just recently, Israel’s finance minister, Yaacov Neeman, proposed to eliminate the annual \$1.2 billion U.S. economic support grant over the next decade.<sup>38</sup> It is unprecedented for Israel to ask for less money and this offer demonstrates the confidence Israel has in its economy.

Israel’s emergence in the high-tech field, the peace process, and the end of the Cold War has furthered its economic standing in the region. The secondary (them or us)

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<sup>34</sup> CNN, “Israel as High-Tech Hub,” CNN Interactive Custom News, 1998. available from <http://www.cnn.special/1998/Netanyahu/high-tech/index.html>; Internet; accessed 15 February 1998.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *CIA World Fact Book 1996* (Baltimore: GPO, 1996); available from <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/nsolo/factbook/asia.htm>; Internet; accessed 15 February 1998.

<sup>38</sup> Thomas Olmestad, “Israel to U.S.-Let’s Make a Deal,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 9 February 1998, 48.

Arab boycott of Israel was abolished in 1994.<sup>39</sup> New markets have opened in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. Exports to Asia increased by 52 percent, 49.6 percent, and 25.8 percent in 1992, 1993, and 1994, respectively.<sup>40</sup> There have been some improvements in economic relations with Egypt and trade with Morocco has expanded.<sup>41</sup> Most significant, are the gains in economic cooperation with Jordan.

Robert H. Pelletreau, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, called the peace between Israel and Jordan a “model for regional peace and reconciliation.”<sup>42</sup> Recently, several economic projects between the two countries have progressed. In November 1997, flights carrying passengers bound for Israel landed for the first time in Aqaba, Jordan at the joint Israeli-Jordanian “Peace” airport.<sup>43</sup> That same month the U.S. approved a joint duty-free industrial zone for the two countries.<sup>44</sup> Private cooperative ventures in manufacturing and agriculture are also increasing.<sup>45</sup> The announcement of these joint economic projects came at the 1997 Middle East-North Africa (MENA) Economic Summit.

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<sup>39</sup> Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Pelletreau, 3.

<sup>43</sup> Madeleine K. Albright, “Remarks at Signing Ceremony for Qualified Industrial Zone Agreement Between Israel and Jordan,” *A Release by the Office of the Spokesman, U.S. Department of State* (Washington, D.C.: State Department, 16 November 1997), 1.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Pelletreau, 3.

Israel's inclusion in the annual MENA economic summit is another example of its acceptance amongst the Arab world. Over 50 countries and 1,000 business leaders normally participate.<sup>46</sup> However, seldom is any change in Israel's status universally accepted. As was seen with the Israel-Turkey defense pact, Egypt often views Israeli security and economic gains with skepticism, overt criticism, or diplomatic defiance. This discussion will bear further analysis in the next section of this thesis. For now, it is only important to recognize that Israel's informational and economic advancements in the nineties have increased its standing in the region and will shortly begin to influence the interests of countries such as Turkey and Jordan, which didn't even recognize Israel in the eighties.

The geopolitical changes in the world and Middle East have been dramatic over the past few decades. Israel's security posture has improved just as dramatically. All of the enhancements to Israel's diplomatic, military, informational, and economic power have made it less likely that it will face a major ground threat ever again. Although some ameliorations have had an indirect impact on relations with Egypt, many have had a direct and lasting impact. An analysis of the Egyptian geopolitical perspective should help ease Israeli concerns and further demonstrate why a U.S. change is necessary.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 4.

## CHAPTER 4

### EGYPTIAN PERSPECTIVE

The October War generated large-scale effects in the regional and international scenes and left profound effects in Egypt. Certainly it was a dividing line between two eras of the history of national action. The 6 October War altered Egypt's priorities, making peace and stability the two goals that most deserve attention and interest. It made development Egypt's focal point and led to a preoccupation to compensate for the horrific drain on its resources for over half a century as a result of successive wars that left a difficult legacy rife with problems.<sup>1</sup>

President Hosni Mubarak, *Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network*

Recently, on the twenty-fourth anniversary of the October War, President Mubarak made the above statement.<sup>2</sup> As a descendant of the Nasser regime, his unusual admission of Egypt's internal reality is in stark contrast to the hope and rhetoric of a now lost pan-Arab ideology. However, the legacy of problems Mubarak inherited remains, as does the expectation of continued Egyptian regional leadership.

Peace with Israel has not brought prosperity, while normalization of relations with Israel could threaten Egyptian leadership. Hence, the "cold peace." At the same time, the post World War II Egyptian experience demonstrates that the path to prosperity is not through war. So while the prospect of a "warm peace" between the two countries in the near future is dim, the possibility of war is just as remote. This chapter examines the resilience of Egypt's peace with Israel, Egyptian policy on the MFO, recent

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<sup>1</sup> Hosni Mubarak, "Speech Marking the 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the October War," *Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network*, 0905 GMT 5 Oct 97, as translated in FBIS-FTS-19971005000423, no. 1, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

developments in the Sinai desert, current relations with Israel, and the threat posed by Islamic extremism.

Can Egypt and Israel continue to sustain peace? A look to the past should help demonstrate the resiliency of the peace agreement. Since the Peace Treaty was signed on 26 March 1979, peace has not only withstood the test of time, but also the challenge of several disagreeable events. First, Egypt withstood Arab intimidation when it was evicted from the Arab League and Islamic Conference in 1979. In 1980, Israel officially annexed all of Jerusalem, much to the chagrin of Anwar Sadat.

Peace survived major possible setbacks in 1981. Only days after meeting with Sadat, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin had an Iraqi nuclear reactor targeted and attacked.<sup>3</sup> Next, the assassination of Sadat by Islamic militants on October 6, posed a serious challenge to peace. The message outside and inside Egypt was clear and Mubarak did not have ownership of the agreement, as did Sadat. But Mubarak quickly reaffirmed Egypt's commitment to peace, allowing Israel to focus elsewhere.

Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 was a major embarrassment to Egypt. Coming only two months after Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai, former Egyptian foreign minister Ibrahim Kamel suggested the invasion was affirmation that Israel's peace with Egypt was an attempt to "neutralize Egypt and impose its hegemony on the region."<sup>4</sup> Much of Egyptian society protested Mubarak's stance on Israel, but he realized then, as

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<sup>3</sup> Barbara Kellerman and Jeffrey Z. Rubin, ed., *Leadership and Negotiation in the Middle East* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1988), 104.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

he does now, that abandonment of Camp David would be too costly.<sup>5</sup> This pragmatic approach to Israel can also be seen in Egypt's support to the Palestinians.

Egypt has always been one of the principal supporters of the Palestinians. "For example, most Egyptians were socialized to regard their country as the central supporter of Palestinian demands."<sup>6</sup> Even so, peace with Israel was not effected by the Israeli attack on Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Headquarters in Tunis in October 1985. The Palestinian uprisings in the occupied territories (Intifada) from 1987 to 1993 did little to challenge Egypt's commitment to peace. Lastly, Israel's current pugnacious stance with the Palestinians is once again demonstrating the resiliency of Israeli-Egyptian relations.

Many of the aforementioned events have strained Israeli-Egyptian relations. However, they have also tested, on many levels, Egypt's commitment to peace. Egypt's pragmatic acceptance of peripheral challenges to peace, coupled with sixteen years of meticulous adherence to the Treaty of Peace are factors that cannot be ignored. Because of its demonstrated commitment to peace, Egypt has requested changes to the Treaty and composition of the MFO.

Egypt wants to make changes to portions of the Sinai peace agreements. First, Egypt wants to make changes to the limited force arrangements contained in the Treaty of Peace. Although seemingly innocuous, Egypt wants to replace civilian police operating

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 104.

in Zone C with military police.<sup>7</sup> The limited force arrangements are probably the most important security aspect of the treaty and Israel has denied the Egyptian request on several occasions. However unsound this request may seem, it should not be lost that it was made in the proper forum at low-key liaison meetings and not as bargaining chips on peripheral issues. More reasonable, has been Egypt's request to minimize the size of the MFO.

Egypt has sovereignty and cost issues with the MFO. It would prefer a small United Nations observer force.<sup>8</sup> This change not only indicates Egypt's growing trust of Israel, but also indicates Egyptian intentions. Egypt knows it basically controls Israeli aggression by its own actions. If it follows the Peace Treaty provisions, there is no need to fear Israeli reprisals. Therefore, only a small observer force (not a military peacekeeping force) that can verify treaty adherence is necessary. Egypt's defacto concession of little to no Israeli threat and Israel's insistence on the status quo are the reason previous and subsequent analysis in this thesis revolve around possible Egyptian aggression.

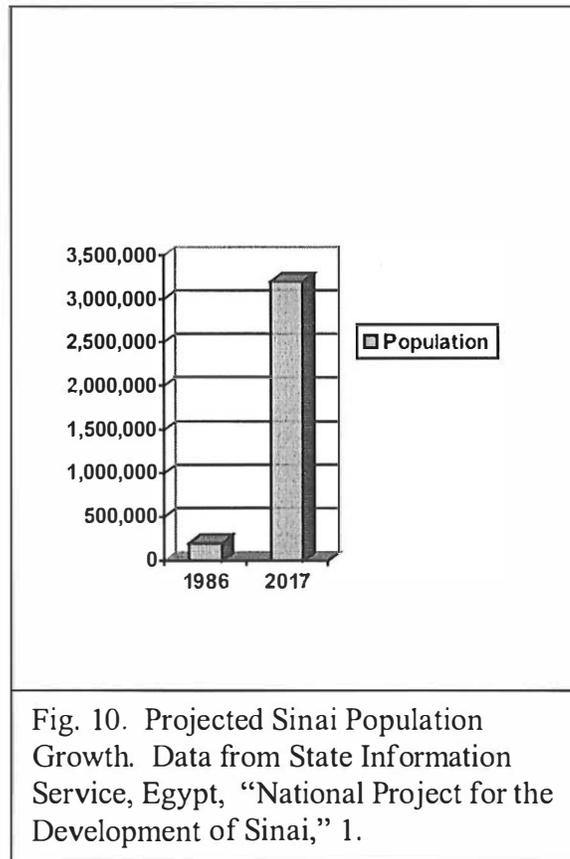
It is unlikely that Sadat expected a peacekeeping force to remain indefinitely. President Carter predicted the force would be necessary for two to eight years.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ze'ev Schiff, "Cairo Seeking Treaty Amendment to Station Troops in Sinai," *Tel Aviv Ha'arets*, 7 Jan 97, as translated in FBIS-FTS-19970107000488, no. 1, 1.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 2; GAO Report 95-113, 22; and Joshua Sinai, "United Nations' and Non-United Nations' Peace-Keeping in the Arab-Israeli Sector: Five Scenarios," *The Middle East Journal* 49, no. 4 (Autumn 1995): 641.

<sup>9</sup> Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), 280.



Sixteen years after accepting a peacekeeping force on its soil as a condition to regain sovereignty over the Sinai, it is understandable that Egypt desires some adjustments. This is increasingly important because of Egyptian plans to develop the Sinai.

Egypt plans to invest heavily in the Sinai Peninsula. Over the next twenty years, the National Project for Development of Sinai will manage the investment of \$22 billion.<sup>10</sup> Compared to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the U.S. would have to invest the equivalent of \$2.5 trillion in one of its regions to match this plan. Egyptian Prime

<sup>10</sup> State Information Service, Egypt, "National Project for the Development of Sinai," (Cairo: Ministry of Information, 11 November 1997). Available from <http://www.uk.sis.gov.eg/public/sinai/html/text02.htm>; Internet; accessed 21 February 1998, 1.

Minister, Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri stated, “The government is determined to embark on the twenty-first century with solid footsteps and integrate into the world economy...the most feasible way to achieve this goal is to exit from the narrow Nile Valley and move to the south of the valley and Sinai.”<sup>11</sup> As part of the plan, three million Egyptians will resettle into the Sinai Peninsula (see fig. 10).<sup>12</sup>

Most remarkable, is Egypt’s plan for tourism in the Sinai. The beautiful Gulf of Aqaba and Red Sea, majestic desert mountain setting, and temperate climate provide a unique vacation setting. Egypt will invest \$2.37 billion over the next twenty years. Compared to GDP, the U.S. would have to invest the equivalent of \$267 billion to match this plan.<sup>13</sup> Hotel room capacity (200 rooms in 1986) will increase ten-fold from approximately 4567 to 42,967 in 2017.<sup>14</sup> There is no reason why the Sinai could not become the “Cancun of the Middle East.” Currently, four major hotel chains have resorts in southeastern Zone C (USBATT Sector)--Hilton (3), Marriott, Sheraton, and Holiday Inn. Such investments by major corporate hotel chains are unheard of in the demilitarized zones of Kashmir, Korea, Cyprus, Syria, and Lebanon.

It may seem difficult to believe, but the presence of combat peacekeeping forces in the USBATT sector along the Gulf of Aqaba may be doing more harm than good for the cause of peace. The last thing tourists want while vacationing is to feel like they are

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<sup>11</sup> Kamal al-Janzuri, “Egypt: A Tiger of the River Nile,” *Cairo MENA*, 1044 GMT 9 Sep 97, as translated in FBIS-FTS-19970909000580, no. 1, 2.

<sup>12</sup> State Information Service, Egypt, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

in a war zone. The large military presence is a tourist turn-off and can only hurt development in the Sinai. Obviously, the more development that takes place in the Sinai, the more Egypt would have to lose if it were to go to war with Israel. Sinai development is the single greatest insurance policy against war and anything that hinders it should be scrutinized.

There is no stronger testimony to the stability of the Sinai Peninsula than the growing tourism industry and it is further enhanced by symbolic events held there during the last few years. In February 1995, Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown attended an economic development meeting which included senior Egyptian, Israeli, Jordanian, and Palestinian trade officials. The meeting was held in Zone C of the Sinai in the previously disputed area known as Taba. In September of that year, the Taba interim agreement (Oslo II Accords) was initialed in Taba and was later signed in Washington D.C.<sup>15</sup> In May 1997, Netanyahu and Mubarak met in the Sinai to discuss the peace process.

The most significant symbolic Sinai event was the Summit of the Peacemakers held in Sharm el Sheikh in March 1996. The leaders of 29 countries (including Israel) gathered to discuss peace and terrorism. President Clinton attended and said, "This summit is unprecedented in the history of the Middle East. It would have been inconceivable just a few short years ago. It stands as proof and promise that this region has changed for good."<sup>16</sup> Egypt's shift away from Cairo to the Sinai for high-level peace

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<sup>15</sup> Don Peretz, *Library in a Book: The Arab-Israeli Dispute* (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 1996), 126.

<sup>16</sup> William J. Clinton, "Remarks by the President in Opening Statement of the Summit of the Peacemakers," *White House Press Release* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 13 March 1996), 1.

discussions showcases the Sinai not only symbolically, but directly as a place of peace. It demonstrates that peace between Israel and Egypt has reached a mature level of legitimacy.

The peace between Israel and Egypt is strong, but relations have remained tenuous. Although there has been cooperation on several minor transportation, trade, tourism, and environmental projects, it has not resulted in normalized relations. In fact, Israel and Jordan have accomplished more in three years than Israel and Egypt have in twenty.

The same events that have tested each country's commitment to peace have also served to push them further apart. There is a significant divergence of interests between the two countries. Egypt considers Israel's nuclear program a major threat to regional stability. Egypt demands a comprehensive peace settlement between Israel and Lebanon, Syria, and the PNA. Due to a lack of progress with the Oslo process, Egypt boycotted the November 1997 MENA economic conference in Doha, Qatar. However, the underlying reason for this boycott goes well beyond the rights of Palestinians.

A comprehensive peace settlement between Israel and all its neighbors, itself a long way off, may not be enough to warm relations between Egypt and Israel. Following the 1994 MENA economic summit in Casablanca, the Egyptian press reported that Shimon Peres had made this statement: "Egypt led the Arabs for 40 years and brought them to the abyss; you will see the region's economic situation improve when Israel takes

the reins of leadership in the Middle East.”<sup>17</sup> Understandably, Egyptian reaction was caustic.

Fawaz Gerges, Visiting Fellow at the Center of International Studies, Princeton University, explains: “The main point of contention is the character and composition of the new Middle East order and the roles of Egypt and Israel in it. Their competing visions struggle to shape the region’s dynamics in their own images. Israel hopes to construct a new regional order that is Middle Eastern instead of Arab, in which Israel would be the dominant economic power . . . Such an eventuality, which would undermine Egypt’s leadership of the Arab world and inflict material and political damage at home, would tip the balance of power in favor of the Islamists and threaten the very survival of the Egyptian government.”<sup>18</sup>

The prospect of peace turning Israel into a “Hong Kong of the Middle East” is not particularly appealing to Egypt. The threat of Israeli regional hegemony is the principal divisive issue influencing Israeli-Egyptian relations and it will linger even after any comprehensive peace settlement is achieved. However, it is not the only force that encourages long-term estranged relations between the two countries.

The seeds of distrust and hostility are planted in Egypt every day. In *U.S. News and World Report*, Fouad Ajami writes, “There has been no discernible change in the Arab attitudes toward Israel and little preparation in the Arab world for the

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<sup>17</sup> Fawaz A. Gerges, “Egyptian-Israeli Relations Turn Sour,” *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 3 (May/June 1995): 70.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 69 and 77.

accommodation the peace promised.”<sup>19</sup> Egyptian children are not shown maps with Israel on them.<sup>20</sup> They are not taught to treat Israel as a legitimate neighbor. The Egyptian media and Egyptian officials are famous for making inflammatory remarks toward Israel. This social indoctrination will effect movement toward normal relations with Israel for generations to come.

Is there a danger that Egypt might abrogate the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of Peace or its security provisions? Such an occurrence is seldom mentioned and never predicted. For reasons discussed earlier, there is too much to lose and too little to gain. Loss of U.S. support and international condemnation would severely damage Egypt’s position as arbiter between the west and the Arab world, a position that brought Egypt significant debt relief following the Persian Gulf War.

Egypt could not play superpower rivalries against each other or expect to improve an already restored favorable Arab status. The cost of military action would cripple economic development, not to mention the political and financial cost of an almost certain military defeat. Revenue from the Suez Canal and Sinai oil and tourism would be jeopardized. Lastly and perhaps most importantly, President Mubarak and the military

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<sup>19</sup> Fouad Ajami, “The Peace of Kings and Pharaohs: On the ‘Arab Street,’ Rejection of Israel Remains the only Constant,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 17 February 1997, 10.

<sup>20</sup> Mortimer B. Zuckerman, “Egypt: A Fair-Weather Foe,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 24 March 1997, 76.

establishment are committed to the peaceful resolution of all Arab-Israeli issues.<sup>21</sup> A policy seldom espoused by Islamic militants.

Egypt has experienced an Islamist insurrection since 1992 with an objective of replacing Mubarak's secular government through violent means with Muslim rule. The Islamic Group has waged a struggle that has killed more than 1,100 Egyptians.<sup>22</sup> However, Islamic militancy in Egypt is not likely to pose a threat to Egyptian-Israeli peace.

The 17 November 1997 terrorist attack at Luxor, which killed sixty-two, was an act of desperation in an otherwise decreasing trend of violence.<sup>23</sup> Inconsistent pronouncements after the slaughter by the now fragmented Islamic Group shows that the Egyptian security services are successfully disrupting movement leadership.<sup>24</sup> Also, Egyptian moves to improve its economy are beginning to eradicate the source of the violence.<sup>25</sup>

Egypt has never experienced a revolution and as Judith Miller, Fellow at the Twentieth Century Fund, points out, "Most students of Egypt believe that for reasons of history, geography, and national and religious culture, Egypt will never see an Iranian-

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<sup>21</sup> Gerges, 78; and Barbara Kellerman and Jeffrey Z. Rubin, ed' *Leadership and Negotiation in the Middle East* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1988), 106.

<sup>22</sup> Alan Cooperman, "Egypt's Victory Over Terrorism Evaporates," *U.S. News & World Report*, 29 September 1997, 41.

<sup>23</sup> Alan Cooperman, "Horror Along the Nile: Where a Pharaoh Walked, Terrorists Strike," *U.S. News & World Report*, 1 December 1997, 45; and Robert Springborg, "Egypt: Repression's Toll," *Current History* (January 1998): 32.

<sup>24</sup> Cooperman, "Horror Along the Nile," 45.

<sup>25</sup> Springborg, 37.

style revolution involving the masses.”<sup>26</sup> Even a successful assassination attempt on Mubarak would not likely bring an Islamic extremist to power.

Mubarak is grooming his son Gamal to succeed him and the military or security services are likely to fill any void he doesn't fill.<sup>27</sup> Judith Miller suggests in her book *God Has Ninety-nine Names* that a future military successor might have to embrace Islamic fundamentalism in order to maintain legitimacy.<sup>28</sup> Such a person would still have to face the geopolitical realities involved in aggression against Israel and try to gain the support of an unwilling military. Judith Miller also wrote that even key leaders of the Islamic literalist movement “have adopted coldly pragmatic responses to what now seems virtually inevitable--peace between Israel and most Arab states.”<sup>29</sup>

It is unlikely an Islamic militant will come to power in Egypt and if one did, war with Israel would not be inevitable. Adam Garfinkle writes, “Despite near constant worry about Egypt, few scholars of Egypt fear that the regime will fall to Islamic militants.”<sup>30</sup> The remote possibility of such an occurrence is not a reason to maintain a peacekeeping force in the Sinai indefinitely. Nor is the lack of normal relations between

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<sup>26</sup> Judith Miller, *God Has Ninety-nine Names* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 21.

<sup>27</sup> Springborg, 34; and Michael Collins Dunn, “Fundamentalism in Egypt,” *Middle East Policy* 2, no. 3 (1993): 77.

<sup>28</sup> Miller, *God Has Ninety-nine Names*, 82.

<sup>29</sup> Judith Miller, “Faces of Fundamentalism,” *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 6 (November/December 1994): 139.

<sup>30</sup> Adam Garfinkle, “U.S.-Israeli Relations After the Cold War,” *Orbis* 40, no. 4 (Fall 1996): 571.

Israel and Egypt. Geopolitical reality and any rational cost-benefit analysis using the evidence provided thus far suggests that Egypt is not likely to make war with Israel again. A review of likely MFO reactions in the event the Egyptian government someday decides there is good reason to resume hostilities, will further illuminate the dichotomy between its structure and mission.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE ROLE OF THE MFO

There is no need for the United States to undertake an expensive, risky, and open-ended commitment of troops to carry out the relatively minor (and not inherently military) task of serving occasionally as a third-party referee on compliance issues.<sup>1</sup>

Frank Gaffney, Jr., “The Peace Process, Phase One”

The Multinational Force and Observers symbolizes many things to many entities. To Egypt it is a necessary compromise for getting back the Sinai and is considered a continued encroachment on its sovereignty.<sup>2</sup> To Israel it is a security force and possible bargaining chip for future Egyptian peripheral accommodations.<sup>3</sup> To the U.S. Congress it “will assist Egypt and Israel in fulfilling the Camp David accords and bringing about the establishment of a self-governing authority in order to provide full autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza.”<sup>4</sup> The State Department sees it as “an instrument of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East that should remain until sustained regional peace is achieved.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred B. Prados, Stephen H. Gotowicki, and Stephen C. Pelletiere, “The Peace Process, Phase One: Past Accomplishments, Future Concerns,” (U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute Monograph, U.S. Army War College, 1997), V-3.

<sup>2</sup> Robert B. Houghton and Frank G. Trinkka, *Multinational Peacekeeping in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: Department of State Foreign Service Institute, GPO, 1984), 42.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Participation of United States personnel in the Multinational Force and Observers. *Title 22 United States Code*. Chap. 49, sec 3421 (1981).

<sup>5</sup> GAO Report 95-113, 22.

Despite all of these lofty goals, the MFO is today what it has always been--an under-worked peacekeeping force in a remote desert environment.

Before further analysis about what the MFO role is in the Middle East peace process, it is important to understand what the MFO does not do. It is not calming a recent crisis. There is no ethnic separation required. There is no requirement for peace enforcement. It is not involved in nation building or humanitarian assistance. The MFO does not monitor any refugee camps or control movements in sector. Lastly, there is no immediate threat of needing to separate hostile belligerent forces.<sup>6</sup> All of these factors should influence the size and structure of the MFO.

It is widely believed that the MFO directly or indirectly serves the following purposes: political support for the peace process from participatory countries, monitoring of the treaty security provisions, deterrence against aggressive actions, early warning of hostile intents, and when all else fails--physical security. However, the current MFO structure and mandate do not support these imperatives well.

The political support for the peace process argument has become somewhat moot. The Arab world has long since accepted Egypt's peace with Israel. Maximum U.S. participation is no longer necessary to demonstrate its desire for peace between two of its strategic partners. The \$5.1 billion of annual U.S. security assistance to the two countries is a much bigger symbol of support for peace than the number of troops provided to the MFO. Ironically, U.S. combat forces have little to do with the MFO's most significant contribution--monitoring of the treaty security provisions.

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<sup>6</sup> Some examples taken from Prados, III-4.

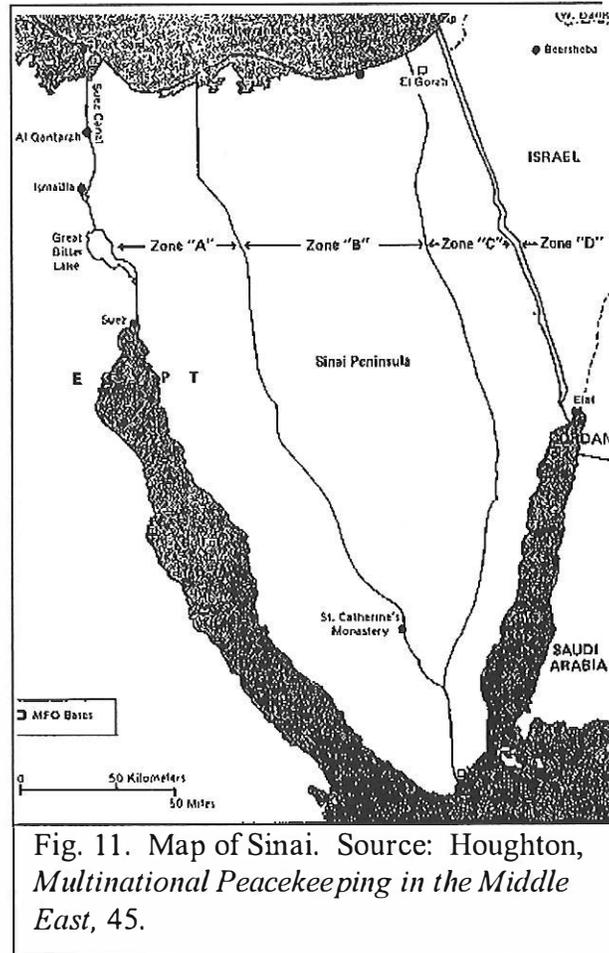


Fig. 11. Map of Sinai. Source: Houghton, *Multinational Peacekeeping in the Middle East*, 45.

The MFO observes and reports violations to the Treaty of Peace. This amounts to monitoring compliance with the limited force arrangements in each sector and the free navigation of vessels through the Strait of Tiran. The Italian contingent, based out of Sharm el Sheikh, has primary responsibility for ensuring compliance on the latter agreement.

MFO ground forces occupy only Zone C (see fig. 11). The fifteen-man Civilian Observer Unit (COU) verifies compliance with limited force arrangements in the other three zones. It is somewhat perplexing that the most important MFO mission is handled by one of its smallest elements. It is very unlikely that the forces in Zone C will ever

play an important part in monitoring limited force agreements. If the Egyptian military ever deploys close to Zone C with forces that violate the peace treaty, Israel would undoubtedly take preemptive offensive measures and the MFO would cease to be effective. Such an occurrence deserves closer examination.

First, consider two scenarios that are most often referred to as catalysts for another Egyptian-Israeli conflict. One involves a change of Egyptian leadership and the other concerns a reversal of the Oslo process--the two most common threats to continued Israeli-Egyptian peace. The National Defense University's Institute of National Security Studies portrays events this way: "Though unlikely, instability in Egypt--driven by political extremism, rapid population growth, and seemingly insoluble economic problems--could lead to a change of government, a coup, or a revolution. A new government or regime (whether Islamist or secular nationalist in orientation) might decide to violate Egypt's peace treaty with Israel by exceeding permitted force levels in the Sinai, or it might abrogate the treaty outright. Either step would raise tensions and could spark a major crisis with Israel."<sup>7</sup>

The next possible catalyst to conflict is external to Egypt. It predicts a domino effect from a lack of progress in the Israeli-Palestinian track:

The Israeli-Palestinian "front" will again erupt in violence. This violence will be at a level higher than that of the *Intifada*, but lower than the late September 1996 firefights between the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and the Palestinian police. It will likely settle into a pattern of individual random but pervasive violence such as marked the latter days of the Intifada--strangers stabbed on street corners, employers murdered at the work site, busses wheeled off the road. Spectacular terrorist bombings will be carried out, but it will be the

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<sup>7</sup> Hans Binnendijk, ed. "1997 Strategic Assessment: Flashpoints and Force Structure" (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Security Studies, 1997), 8.

“down and dirty” front doorstep violence that will most affect the Israeli population.

If Palestinian Zone A cities remain intact, they will become Bantustans festering with frustration and launching pads for terrorism, just as some Israelis fear an independent Palestinian state will be. Zone B villages will see renewed oppressive occupation which will further undermine what traditional social structure remains on the West Bank, corrode Israeli society, and degrade IDF combat readiness, Israeli reoccupation of Zone A cities, which would require the disarming of the Palestinian police, will lead to a very bloody conflict.

Collapse will cause an increase in tension on the Golan Heights and military activity in southern Lebanon. Terrorism carried out by Hizballah and secular radical groups will increase. I do not believe that a definitive end to the Israeli-Syrian track will inevitably lead to war on the Golan; Lebanon will remain Hafez al-Asad’s battlefield of choice.

Israel’s peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan will wither away or be actually renounced. Egyptian-Israeli military tensions will increase as Israel reacts to the fact that a majority of Egypt’s large, well-equipped standing army continues to be oriented toward Israel.<sup>8</sup>

These scenarios, as unlikely as they might be, are arguments for maintaining a significant peacekeeping force in the Sinai. With analysis of the political and monitoring aspects of the MFO mission complete, it is time to consider the remaining three purposes: deterrence, early warning, and security.

For deterrence to work, it must instill a fear that there are serious repercussions for adopting a particular course of action. The presence of the MFO is probably one of the last things Egypt would consider before attacking Israel. A simple review of history provides a prescription for probable Egyptian actions. In 1967, Nasser simply ordered UNEF I to leave the Sinai. To achieve surprise in 1973, Sadat chose course of action number two--go around peacekeeping forces. This course of action is even easier now that forces are so spread out. Both situations involved defiance towards the entire

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<sup>8</sup> Telhami, 3-4.

international community--the United Nations; a deterrent effect the MFO does not provide.

The MFO is the most ill-suited peacekeeping force ever deployed in the Sinai to provide Israel with early warning of a pending attack. The Sinai Field Mission, consisting of only 150 observers was much more capable with its electronic monitoring devices. Ground forces are positioned to the east in Zone C and do not provide any serious intelligence or early warning capability outside of that sector. The COU is only required to conduct bimonthly verification missions; sufficient time to build up combat forces.

Israel relies on U.S. and Israeli intelligence for early warning and relies on the MFO only for long-term, and inherently additional, verification. In its *Multinational Force and Observer Information Briefing*, the U.S. Military Observer Group-Washington (U.S. Army lead agency on the MFO) states, "Both [Israel and Egypt] employ monitoring assets independent of and far greater than MFO."<sup>9</sup>

If deterrence and early warning fail, could the three combat infantry battalions slow or stop an impending confrontation? The forces in Zone C are not equipped or positioned to stop any significant mechanized or armored forces. The size and composition of the MFO were based on previous Sinai peacekeeping forces that possessed such a capability. For example, UNEF I and II had six and seven thousand troops, respectively. However, compromise to establish the MFO left it smaller and

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<sup>9</sup> Winnewisser, 7.

powerless.<sup>10</sup> Three light infantry battalions are no matches for mechanized and armored combat forces. Thus, the concept of a defensive peacekeeping force was lost in consensual negotiations while at the same time continuing the requirement for combat forces.

The geopolitical realities of the MFO cannot be ignored. The previous analysis demonstrates that the current MFO structure and mandate does not serve direct or indirect purposes well. This is not surprising considering the numerous changes in the world and regional environments over the past two decades. The present combat force commitments now serve as hollow reminders of a bygone threat and capability; a dinosaur of political chess. But there is more than one way to win at chess.

The Middle East is an important, dynamic, and challenging region. Few precepts certain today are applicable tomorrow. The United States position in the Middle East and its worldwide commitments are dramatically different from the days of Camp David. Arab acceptance of Egypt's peace with Israel and Israel's growing regional power lessen any chance of Egyptian retraction of peaceful resolutions to contemporary or perennial disagreements. The Egyptian commitment to peace has been unyielding and the need to develop its economy and the Sinai Peninsula have gained unprecedented importance.

At the same time, U.S. and Israeli goals linked to acceptable change in the MFO have become somewhat unrealistic. Too many previously discussed and unrecognized factors encourage peace between the two countries. Regional peace, a worthy prospect

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<sup>10</sup> Houghton, 42.

under any circumstance, is an unusually hefty entreaty for a force not capable of providing such influence.

Few institutions that have not evolved in the past sixteen years can sustain any significant criticism. The current animosity existent between Israel and Egypt is deep-seeded and will last well into the unforeseeable future. A force that is sustainable for forty-eight years, not eight or even sixteen, is needed. Given current capabilities, location, and geopolitical realities, the next chapter will extrapolate from the previous analysis, some alternate options for the MFO that will improve upon its successful past.

## CHAPTER 6

### ALTERNATIVES TO THE STATUS QUO

Above all, Egypt and Israel want the MFO to succeed because they want peace. This is the single most important factor in the MFO's success. From a technical point of view, the MFO's mission could probably be accomplished with a smaller group.<sup>1</sup>

Department of State Publication, *Multinational Peacekeeping in the Middle East*

By most accounts the MFO has been an undeniable success. Previous analysis has shown that the MFO is only one small reason Egypt and Israel choose peace. Therefore changes to the MFO should not invoke hostilities. Although their commitment to peace has been tested, the MFO's contribution when hostilities are imminent has not. There is always room for improvement and improvement suggests more benefits at less cost. It is the purpose of this chapter to provide feasible, suitable, and acceptable alternative security arrangements from which all participants will benefit.

It is important to understand that the following recommendations do not suggest any changes to the Treaty of Peace. Respect for and adherence to the principles of the Treaty is why peace has endured. In fact, while some of the suggestions may seem radically different, they are actually conservative in that they are more consistent with the Treaty than the MFO protocol signed two years later.

Many of the Treaty principles have undeniable and enduring value. The commitment to peace and respect for each country's territorial sovereignty is paramount. The freedom of navigation provisions for Israeli shipping and the limited force

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<sup>1</sup> Houghton, 51.

arrangements are also extremely important. The liaison system required by the Treaty of Peace and maintained by MFO offices in Cairo and Tel Aviv has proven invaluable.<sup>2</sup> Lastly, the provision for a United Nations (UN) force to supervise the implementation of the peace agreement made Israeli withdrawal possible. The UN force substitute (MFO) is still a significant confidence building apparatus. This leads to suggestion number one.

First, the U.S. should enter into negotiations with the interested parties and the UN to place the MFO under the responsibility and supervision of the UN. Although this would meet with certain Israeli objection, it is important to remember that this is what Israel agreed to in the Treaty of Peace.<sup>3</sup> It is also important from a purely U.S. perspective.

Cold War postulates prevented the formation of UNEF III, while today's multipolar world requires it. Since Desert Shield, the U.S. has sought UN backing and cooperation to unprecedented levels. Steven Kull of the University of Maryland's Center for International and Security Studies points out that Americans "strongly prefer to have UN backing."<sup>4</sup> The UN provides unique legitimacy in an increasingly interdependent world. The diplomacy invoked during the Persian Gulf War and the recent weapons inspector crisis with Iraq demonstrates the U.S. desire to gain UN consensus. In fact, this desire is not new.

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<sup>2</sup> Government Accounting Office, Report to Congressional Requestors: GAO/NSIAD-95-113, *Peacekeeping: Assessment of U.S. Participation in the Multinational Force and Observers* (Baltimore: GPO, 15 August 1995), 25.

<sup>3</sup> Pelcovits, 83.

<sup>4</sup> Steven Kull, "Message of Town Hall Meeting," *Army Times*, 9 March 1998, 54.

From the beginning, it was assumed that the UN would take on peacekeeping responsibilities in the Sinai. When that didn't happen, the U.S. reluctantly put the MFO together. However, even after the MFO protocol was signed in August 1981, it was still widely believed that the UN would some day assume the responsibility for Sinai peacekeeping.

In a 1981 report to the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Acting Comptroller General of the U.S. stated: "The agreement [Treaty of Peace] calls for a UN peacekeeping force, if possible. Although it has been impossible to obtain UN approval, this should still be the ultimate objective for a peacekeeping force. The Congress may want to emphasize to executive branch decision-makers that efforts to involve the UN should continue, aimed at eventually replacing the MFO with a UN peacekeeping force."<sup>5</sup> Although the suggestion of UN involvement may be a radical departure from the status quo, it is actually a step back toward the original Treaty of Peace.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of UN involvement? The only disadvantage is the possible loss of control by the U.S., Egypt, and Israel. However, U.S. veto authority, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC), mitigates this disadvantage.

UN involvement would show a strong commitment by the entire international community to the Treaty of Peace. Currently, only fifteen countries provide direct support to the MFO. Not only does this detract from the legitimacy of the mission and

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<sup>5</sup> Report to Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations: B-204588, ID-81-62, *U.S. Role in Sinai Important to Mideast Peace* (Baltimore: GPO, 9 September 1981), 6.

lessen deterrence, but it also narrows the financial burden for the force even though the entire international community actually benefits from the sustained peace.

If Israel or Egypt did decide to commit serious treaty violations, the U.S. would be in an extremely precarious position. France is the only other participating country that is a permanent member of the UNSC and it increasingly has divergent Middle East interests with the U.S. The U.S. would be caught between two of its strategic partners in a no win situation, without the UN to blame or help. The UN presumption to respond is dampened by its lack of involvement in the Peace Treaty and its security provisions.

Conveniently, there would be no need to establish another bureaucratic UN headquarters to manage the added peacekeeping responsibilities. The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) has operated from Jerusalem since 1948. Originally established to supervise the truce in Palestine, it “has performed various tasks entrusted to it by the Security Council.”<sup>6</sup> It provides assistance to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on the Golan. It also maintains a site near the Suez Canal in the Sinai. Twenty countries, including all permanent members of the Security Council except the United Kingdom, provide over 150 military observers to UNTSO. It also has an international civilian staff.

A Treaty of Peace reformation would provide two other UN-linked benefits to the U.S.--an endstate and lessened U.S. troop requirements. In the Treaty of Peace, the peacekeeping force could be removed by mutual agreement between Egypt and Israel or

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<sup>6</sup> United Nations, *United Nations Truce Supervision Organization* (New York: UN Publication, 1998), 1. Available from <http://www.un.org/depts/dpko/missions/untso.htm>; Internet; accessed 26 January 1998.

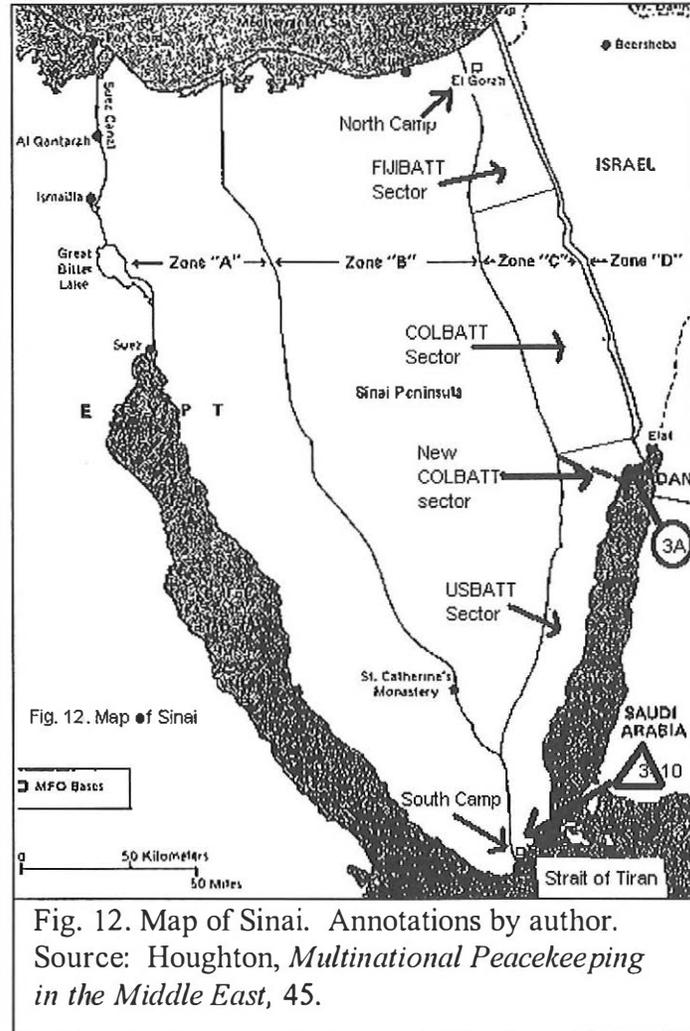
“with the affirmative vote of the five Permanent Members” of the UNSC.<sup>7</sup> The MFO Protocol discarded the role of the UNSC, leaving it to the “mutual agreement” of Egypt and Israel to change any security provisions of the treaty or protocol. In effect, the MFO Protocol withdrew a U.S. vote and replaced it with the ability of Israel or Egypt to require a peacekeeping force indefinitely.

Undoubtedly, there was a time when it was believed that the shared requirement to sustain the MFO would influence the MFO’s longevity. However, the MFO has significantly reduced its operating budget and at \$18 million a year (approximate cost to Egypt and Israel), both countries can easily divert a portion of the \$5.1 billion in U.S. security assistance both share, to cover the cost. This is like a local sheriff forcing two feuding neighbors to rent a fence to separate their properties, then paying the neighbors 150 times the cost of the rent to keep away from each other’s throats. It doesn’t take a genius to accept peaceful coexistence and a payoff over friendly Saturday afternoon barbecues. Where is the incentive to change?

Israel is further encouraged to maintain the MFO because it is deployed only in Egypt. With no foreign forces on its soil, Israel can use Egypt’s desire for sovereignty as a bargaining chip toward extra-Sinai issues. However, as a witness, not signatory to the Egyptian-Israeli agreements, the U.S. is legally free to independently decide what level of support it provides.

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<sup>7</sup> Tabory, 126.



What level of U.S. military support was provided for in the Treaty of Peace?

None. The Peace Treaty called for “the redeployment of the United Nations Emergency Force.”<sup>8</sup> The United States did not provide any military troops to UNEF I or UNEF II.<sup>9</sup>

As unacceptable as the lack of U.S. participation would seem today, it is exactly what

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations, *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peace-keeping* (New York: UN Publication, 1985), 331-334.

Israel agreed to and expected to benefit from in 1979. This leads to suggestion number two.

The United States should immediately redeploy the USBATT operating in Zone C from the Sinai so that it can train for war and support operations in areas that *require* combat infantry battalions. Additionally, the MFO should cancel the Italian coastal patrol mission and close all checkpoints (CP), observation posts (OP) and the South Camp Headquarters, except for OP 3-10 and CP 3A (see fig. 12); essentially, terminating permanent operations in most of southern Zone C. These actions will bring significant benefits to all parties without, in the author's opinion, increased risks.

Southern Zone C has never been and will never be a major axis of attack through the Sinai Peninsula. Comprised mainly of extremely rugged and mountainous terrain, it has only one north-south route and two east-west routes. Only one narrow coastal road leads into Israel from the USBATT sector and it presents a major chokepoint for mechanized or armored forces.

To ensure the entire Israeli border is patrolled by ground forces, the MFO should adjust the COLBATT sector by ten miles to the south, including the current CP-3A in its area of responsibility (see fig. 12). The MFO could close one of the less critical OPs in the COLBATT sector so that additional personnel will not be required. Although helicopter resupply would be necessary for CP-3A, it would be much less burdensome than aerial resupply efforts currently required in the USBATT sector.

Several changes should also be made in the southern portion of the USBATT sector. South Camp is the Headquarters for the USBATT and houses the Italian contingent and others. It should be closed and given to the Egyptian government.

Situated on a prime piece of commercially exploitable coastal land, the Egyptians would most likely sell it to hotel developers. As stated earlier, the commercial development of the Sinai will increase the loss incurred by the Egyptians if they ever abrogate the Treaty of Peace and therefore will help deter aggression.

The only facility to remain should be OP 3-10 (see fig. 12). Located adjacent to the airport and overlooking the Strait of Tiran, the Egyptian airport security police could ensure the security of this OP. Equipment and vehicles necessary for Civilian Observer Unit verification missions would be stored at this OP. Additionally, if questions about freedom of navigation through the Strait of Tiran arose, observers could investigate and report from this location.

Again, the MFO should end the mission of the Italian Coastal Patrol Unit (CPU). If Egypt closes the Strait of Tiran, commercial ships would report it as quickly as the CPU. "Ensuring the freedom of navigation through the Strait of Tiran" has always been considered by the MFO as another observe and report mission.<sup>10</sup> The 83-person, 3-ship CPU is not much of a challenge to the 20,000-person, 63-ship Egyptian Navy.<sup>11</sup>

The changes in southern Zone C would provide many benefits. The U.S. would regain the equivalent of one infantry brigade ready for deployment to more hostile locations. The MFO budget would decrease significantly. Supplying the USBATT, operating South Camp, and patrolling the Strait of Tiran are costly endeavors. Northern logistic and support personnel that are required to support southern sustainment

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<sup>10</sup> Pelcovits, 74.

<sup>11</sup> Taylor, 124.

operations would also decrease. Most importantly, the absence of military forces in the USBATT sector would help encourage tourism and development, which provides a major deterrent for Egyptian aggression in the Sinai.

The retirement of U.S. ground combat forces from Zone C would still leave the U.S. as the largest provider of personnel to the MFO. In fact, the U.S. presence is interwoven throughout the MFO structure. The Director General and twelve of his staff are American. U.S. civilians lead the MFO liaison offices in Cairo and Tel Aviv. The Force Commander's staff at North Camp is directed by a U.S. Army Colonel and has twenty-six other U.S. staff members. The COU is comprised of U.S. civilians. Lastly, the U.S. 1st Support Battalion (361) would be the largest single military unit provided by any country to the MFO.

The amount of U.S. participation throughout the MFO is sufficient to demonstrate U.S. commitment to the peace process even without the USBATT. With 418 soldiers and civilians, the U.S. commitment to the MFO would remain its greatest to any peacekeeping organization, aside from the NATO Stabilization Force in Bosnia (SFOR). Additionally, because non-USBATT soldiers are on individual one-year tours to the MFO, the disruption of pulling a battalion from a cohesive unit for Sinai duty would no longer be required anywhere in the U.S. Army to support the MFO. Also, logistic and support personnel do not suffer from a decrease in readiness by participating in the MFO. These personnel have the opportunity to perform their real-world functions while supporting the MFO.

The MFO would need to bolster its COU by up to ten additional civilians to provide more robust verification coverage of southern Zone C and the Strait of Tiran,

when necessary. These personnel could fly into the airport at the southern tip of the Sinai, retrieve a vehicle from adjacent OP 3-10, and conduct verification missions. Similar procedures could be used from CP-3A in the north. The possible build up of Egyptian military forces in a periodically-supervised USBATT sector is much less of a threat than a similar build up in central or northern Zone B. The COU would monitor the former USBATT occupied sector just like Zones A, B, and D; the zone would remain completely demilitarized.

How does Israel benefit from these proposed changes? Together with the decreased financial cost of the MFO and the increased development in Zone C, which would help deter future Egyptian aggression, Israel would send a message to the Arab community and specifically Lebanon and Syria that it is willing to make reasonable compromises after countries prove peaceful intentions. Israel and the U.S. would also receive much more Egyptian appreciation if it is done through their own initiative and not as a result of Egyptian demands.

The aforementioned changes do not increase the risk of aggression. The UN involvement would demonstrate the commitment to peace by the entire world community. A hostile Egypt or Israel would have to answer to the UN, not just the U.S. The limited force arrangements and freedom of navigation provisions remain unchanged. A more robust COU will continue to monitor adherence to the treaty security provisions. The amount of early warning and possible delaying action by the force--never significant MFO capabilities--remain unchanged and continue to be viewed by Egypt and Israel as their own responsibilities.

The course of action outlined in this chapter could effectively modernize the MFO, making it more easily sustainable until a comprehensive peace is achieved throughout the region. In the author's opinion, the plan is feasible, suitable and acceptable (no increased risk). The MFO military buffer zone is retracted to cover only the Egyptian-Israeli border and an increased role by military observers is emphasized. Symbolic forces operating along and in the Strait of Tiran are removed in recognition of the free navigation of vessels through those waters for over thirty years. The decreased logistical requirement of supporting southern Zone C and decreased cost to maintain the force should make the MFO sustainable well into the next century.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

When President Reagan ordered the deployment of troops into the Sinai in April 1982 to support the MFO, Cold War posturing took priority over the identification of an endpoint for U.S. participation. President Carter's high-end estimation of an eight-year commitment has now doubled. Global and regional geopolitical realities have changed significantly, Egypt and Israel have achieved a sustained peace, but the spirit of Camp David--"normal relations"--has proven elusive.<sup>1</sup>

Recent Middle East security challenges--terrorism in Egypt and Israel, an apparent stalemate in Palestinian-Israeli peace talks, and Iraqi confrontation over UN inspections--do not indicate a comprehensive solution to the Middle East peace process, in the near term. So while sustained Egyptian-Israeli peace, albeit a cold peace, is encouraging, the lack of trust between Israel and Egypt will continue to require long-term international monitoring of the peace treaty security provisions.

U.S. post-Cold War leadership responsibilities require the most discriminating use of ground combat units. The U.S. should not continue to support the MFO in its current form. The U.S. should immediately begin talks with Israel, Egypt, and the United Nations with the objective of modernizing the MFO. Modernization should include: making the MFO a UN peacekeeping organization to strengthen its legitimacy; withdrawing the U.S. Infantry Battalion; retracting the MFO occupied portion of southern Zone C; and increasing the size and function of the Civilian Observer Unit.

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<sup>1</sup> Carter, 327.

From a U.S. perspective, “historical inertia” and lofty goals have left its support to the MFO unchallenged. At the same time, changes to the geostrategic environment, coupled with a smaller U.S. Army, have increased the cost in combat readiness, while simultaneously decreasing any international or regional benefits. Today, the U.S. Army is preparing to send units from the continental United States to relieve U.S Army Europe units from peacekeeping duties in Bosnia. A force prepared to repel a massive Soviet invasion of Western Europe only eight short years ago is now overwhelmed by a local peacekeeping mission. It was that same large and highly trained force, not a force of piecemeal deployments and peacekeeping preparedness, that ejected Iraq from Kuwait, while continuing to deter aggression on the Korean Peninsula in 1991. The U.S. can no longer afford its USBATT commitment to the MFO.

From an Israeli perspective, the MFO is a low-cost security apparatus on Egyptian soil, particularly when compared to the annual U.S. security assistance package. However, Israel’s need for the MFO has decreased significantly because of improvements in its security posture over the last sixteen years. The security of Israel is now an enduring U.S. interest. Israel has made peace with the Palestinians and Jordan. Time has legitimized its peace with Egypt. Israel has no regional military competitor and its local economic strength is daunting. If Israel’s recent self-promulgated plan to receive less U.S. aid is any indication of its willingness to accept change, then the U.S. should not be bashful about proposing a practical change to the MFO.

From an Egyptian perspective, the MFO is too large and is an encroachment on its sovereignty. Egypt has meticulously adhered to the treaty security provisions for over sixteen years. Its plan to develop the Sinai will, and to a certain extent already has, made

the peninsula a much less attractive battleground. And yet, normal relations are apparently many years away.

Egypt's desire for a small observer force demonstrates a certain amount of trust for Israel, but in the absence of overt reciprocal trust, analysis provided has shown the MFO is currently ill suited to perform actual or perceived missions. A United Nations force would provide much more legitimacy for the peace process and a greater deterrent effect. The MFO is poorly equipped and situated to provide early warning and defense against aggression. Lastly, the key function of verifying the limited force arrangements is relegated to its smallest unit--the COU.

The proposed modernization of the MFO recognizes changes to the strategic environment, replaces symbolism with geopolitical reality, and makes the MFO a more cost effective and pragmatic organization. The changes proposed are not nearly as difficult as the effort required to maintain the status quo. It is time to establish a consistent policy toward Egypt and Israel. If the U.S. is going to pay for peace it should expect peace and remove combat forces from the Sinai. If combat forces are necessary to maintain peace, the U.S. should stop security assistance to both countries until the message is received. Those who support the status quo should be able to explain why it is in the interest of Egypt or Israel to attack each other today or in the immediate future.

Some would argue the U.S. commitment to the MFO is a small price to pay for peace and that there is no need to tinker with such a successful operation. The Islamic Group has vowed to turn its attention away from tourists, increasing the possibility of another Lebanon bombing or Khobar Towers tragedy. Would events like this cause Americans to wonder why the U.S. still has combat forces in the Sinai? Would such an

occurrence cause the U.S. government to reevaluate its support for the MFO resulting in another ungraceful departure?

The peacekeeping effort in the Sinai has already cost the U.S. more lives than any other peacekeeping mission (or the Persian Gulf War for that matter), when a plane crashed on 12 December 1985 in Gander, New Foundland, killing all 248 returning peacekeepers aboard. At the time, it seemed like a difficult, but necessary price to pay for peace. Would Americans feel the same way if it happened again today?

## APPENDIX A

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The prominent research methodology is comparative analysis. A structure known as the levels of analysis taught at the Joint Military Intelligence College is applied to compare conditions of today with those in 1982. The levels are: world system, relations, society, government, role, and individual. A consideration of evidence in each of these areas lead to the deduction that there is a need for change in U.S. policy.

Various types of evidence including foreign documents and media provide additional perspectives. Many times a comparison of facts and discussion of their relevance to the question sufficed. When possible, official policy statements were used. At times, comments from authoritative sources were used.

Chapter 1 establishes the topic, its scope and purpose. A short background introduces the reader to the subject. The primary research question and subordinate questions set the framework for all that follows.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 provide an analysis from the application of the research methodology. Geopolitical realities are examined from American, Israeli, and Egyptian perspectives. In chapter 5, the role of the MFO during peace and war is examined to determine its effectiveness in keeping peace.

Chapter 6 presents alternative courses of action that are designed to be feasible, suitable, and acceptable. It builds upon deductions made in chapters 2, 3, and 4, imports ideas from historical examples, considers foreign perspectives and offers suggestions based on the author's personal experience in the Sinai.

Chapter 7 summarizes findings, answers the research question, and provides a conclusion.

Appendix B highlights the most important references used for background, MFO, security policy, Arab-Israeli conflict, and peacekeeping analysis.

## APPENDIX B

### LITERATURE REVIEW

There is very little written that specifically examines the MFO. However, there is an abundance of literature available on subjects associated with the paper and necessary for analysis. Specifically, references were used for background, MFO, security policy, Arab-Israeli conflict, and peacekeeping analysis.

Three books were primarily useful for background information. Don Peretz's *The Middle East Today* provides a broad overview of Middle East history.<sup>1</sup> Jimmy Carter's *Keeping Faith* provides a detailed explanation of the peace process leading to the commitment of the MFO.<sup>2</sup> In *Arab-Israeli Conflict and Conciliation: A Documentary History*, Bernard Reich has edited a fairly comprehensive collection of official documents related to the peace process.<sup>3</sup>

Four principal works provide good background on the MFO. Dr. Mala Tabory's *The Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai* focuses on the implementation, organization, structure, and functions of the MFO and is the only book devoted exclusively to the MFO.<sup>4</sup> Nathan Pelcovits provides a good, but dated analysis of the

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<sup>1</sup>Don Peretz, *The Middle East Today* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1994).

<sup>2</sup>Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982).

<sup>3</sup>Bernard Reich, *Arab-Israeli Conflict and Conciliation: A Documentary History* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1995).

<sup>4</sup>Mala Tabory, *The Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai* (Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1986).

international implications of the MFO in *Peacekeeping on Arab-Israeli Fronts*.<sup>5</sup> Major Clayton Cobb's Thesis *The Multinational Force and Observers: More Than Just A Peacekeeping Force* provides fairly recent information about the MFO and argues that the U.S. receives several tangible and intangible benefits from the MFO beyond peace.<sup>6</sup> The single most important source concerning U.S. participation in the MFO is the Government Accounting Office report to congressional requesters titled *Peacekeeping: Assessment of U.S. Participation in the Multinational Force and Observers*.<sup>7</sup> The report discusses MFO costs, operational impacts, the State Department's oversight, views of MFO performance and lessons learned. It does not seek to determine if a change to U.S. support to the MFO is necessary.

U.S. security policy is described in some detail in Karen Puschel's *U.S.-Israeli Strategic Cooperation in the Post-Cold War Era*.<sup>8</sup> The following government documents provide official security policy: *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, *National Military Strategy of the United States of America*, and the *United States Security Strategy for the Middle East*.

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<sup>5</sup>Nathan A. Pelcovits, *Peacekeeping on Arab-Israeli Fronts* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984).

<sup>6</sup>Clayton W. Cobb, "The Multinational Force and Observers: More Than Just a Peacekeeping Force" (Master's Thesis, Troy State University, 1994).

<sup>7</sup>Government Accounting Office, Report to Congressional Requestors: GAO/NSIAD-95-113, *Peacekeeping: Assessment of U.S. Participation in the Multinational Force and Observers* (Baltimore: GPO, 15 August 1995).

<sup>8</sup>Karen L Puschel, *US-Israeli Strategic Cooperation in the Post-Cold War Era* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992).

The following writers question the status quo on U.S. Mideast security policy. In two articles for *Orbis* titled, “U.S.-Israeli Relations after the Cold War” and “The U.S. Imperial Postulate in the Mideast”, Adam Garfinkle questions the geostrategic importance of Israel and suggests policy may be based on historical inertia, dumb fascination, and geoeconomic calculation.<sup>9</sup> Denis Sullivan writing in *Middle East Policy* explores U.S. aid to Egypt.<sup>10</sup> Lastly, Duncan Clarke questions security assistance issues in his article in the *Middle East Journal* titled, “US Security Assistant to Egypt and Israel: Politically untouchable?”<sup>11</sup>

The Arab-Israeli conflict is examined in Don Peretz’s *Library in a Book: The Arab-Israel Dispute*<sup>12</sup>. *Israel: Opposing Viewpoints* provides many good essays that assess the Arab-Israeli dispute.<sup>13</sup> Lastly, *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* provides a succinct, unbiased account from each of the participant’s perspective.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Adam Garfinkle, “U.S.-Israeli Relations After the Cold War,” *Orbis* 40, no. 4 (Fall 1996): 557-575; and “The U.S. Imperial Postulate in the Middle East: Agenda 2000,” *Orbis* 41, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 15-29.

<sup>10</sup>Denis J. Sullivan, “American Aid to Egypt, 1975-96: Peace without Development” *Middle East Policy* IV, no.4 (October 1996), 36-49.

<sup>11</sup>Duncon L. Clarke, “US Security Assistance to Egypt and Israel: Politically Untouchable?” *The Middle East Journal* 51, no. 2 (Spring 1997), 200-214.

<sup>12</sup>Don Peretz, *Library in a Book: The Arab-Israel Dispute* (New York: Facts On File Inc., 1996).

<sup>13</sup>David L. Bender, Bruno Leone, Bob Anderson, and Janelle Rohr, ed., *Israel: Opposing Viewpoint* (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, Inc., 1989).

<sup>14</sup>Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L Klausner, *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995).

Several key sources provided information on various aspects of peacekeeping. For U.S. policy, *The Clinton Administration's Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations (PDD-25)* and U.S. Army Field Manual 100-23, *Peace Operations* were examined. The history of UN peacekeeping operations is contained in *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United Nations Peace-keeping*. Nathan Pelcovits provides a detailed peacekeeping analysis in *Peacekeeping on Arab-Israeli Fronts: Lessons from the Sinai and Lebanon*.<sup>15</sup> Two articles, "Getting to Peacekeeping in Principle Rivalries: Anticipating an Israel-Syria Peace Treaty" and "The Peace Process, Phase One: Past Accomplishments, Future Concerns," analyze the possibility of deploying U.S. soldiers to the Golan Heights and thereby provide many useful points for this paper's content.<sup>16</sup>

This review of literature shows that although there is a shortage of publications devoted solely to the MFO, there are sufficient relevant references. It also ensures that the thesis is original. It is the purpose of this thesis to significantly add to the body of knowledge concerning the MFO by addressing some of the gaps and shortcomings in published literature.

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<sup>15</sup> Nathan A. Pelcovits, *Peacekeeping on Arab-Israeli Fronts: Lessons From the Sinai and Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984).

<sup>16</sup> Brian S. Mandell, "Getting to Peacekeeping in Principal Rivalries," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 2 (June 1996): 238-271; and Alfred B. Prados, Stephen H. Gotowicki, and Stephen C. Pelletiere. "The Peace Process, Phase One: Past Accomplishments, Future Concerns," U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute Monograph, U.S. Army War College, 1997.

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