

Egypt Declines U.S. Gift

Cairo

Egypt has decided against accepting a \$1 million property on the Nile river that had been offered by the United States as the site for a new mansion for President Anwar Sadat.

The U.S. government decided last summer to cede the plot to Egypt in an attempt to please Sadat. In similar gestures, former President Nixon gave the Egyptian leader a \$2 million helicopter and the United States donated \$10 million to Mrs. Sadat's favorite charity.

The moves drew congressional fire. Representative Lester L. Wolff (Dem-N.Y.) subjected Assistant Secretary Roy Atherton to sharp questioning on the gifts last August at a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing.

A U.S. embassy spokesman said Egypt has changed its mind about the land in the fashionable Giza district, but gave no reason.

Sadat already has a palatial residence and the use of many mansions and rest homes left over from the Egyptian monarchy.

The Nile property was acquired by the United States in the 1960s for a new ambassador's residence. The terms of the deal under which it was given to Sadat specified that Egypt should provide an equivalent plot for a residence.

The spokesman said the United States will now go ahead with plans to build a residence on the Nile plot, but the job will take two or three years.

In the meantime, the American spokesman said, the embassy has acquired a 12-room, \$2.5 million estate with large gardens as a temporary residence for Ambassador Hermann Eilt.

Eilt's current residence is considered inadequate for

the entertaining an ambassador must do and unsafe view, with apartment buildings on three sides.

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