

Nixon Gave Sadat \$2 Million Helicopter

By Carroll Kilpatrick
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In addition to his promise to sell a nuclear reactor to Egypt, President Nixon presented President Anwar Sadat with a \$2 million helicopter for the presidential fleet, the White House confirmed yesterday.

Deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said the helicopter, an Army craft used by the President during his Egyptian trip last week, was given to the Egyptian government under a government-to-government arrangement.

Officials were loath to explain how the gift was arranged or whether it was a spur-of-the-moment decision on Mr. Nixon's part after he and Sadat flew on the craft from Alexandria to Cairo.

That was the only use Mr. Nixon made of a helicopter while on his tour of five Middle East countries. The chopper—a Sikorsky VH3A, or S-61—was flown to Egypt aboard an airplane for Mr. Nixon's use.

The two presidents went from Cairo to Alexandria by train, stayed the night in the Mediterranean port city, and returned to Cairo the next morning by helicopter.

Warren said that the twin-turbine craft, which is sound proofed and air-conditioned, is more than 12 years old and "was in the process of being rotated out" of the presidential fleet.

Both the Army and the Marine Corps operate helicopters for the President, which he uses in going from the White House to Andrews Air Force Base, to Camp David, from Homestead Air Force Base near Miami to his Key Biscayne home and on other occasions.

The craft can be dismantled and flown in cargo airplanes. Or they can fly under their own power to Florida in about eight hours or to San Clemente, Calif., in two days.

All Presidents since Dwight D. Eisenhower have used helicopters extensively. The Sikorsky jet choppers have been used by Presidents since the early 1960s.

When it became known that President Eisenhower used a chopper to fly from the White House to Burning Tree Club for golf there was a storm of protest, and he stopped using it to get to the golf course.

During Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev's visit to Washington in 1959, he demurred when invited to ride on

the presidential chopper, commenting that he had been discouraged from using helicopters at home because some officials thought they were unsafe.

However, Khrushchev took a flight with President Eisenhower and liked it so much that he asked and was granted permission to purchase American helicopters for use in Moscow.

United Aircraft Corp., which manufactures the Sikorsky helicopter now in use by the

White House, has sold scores of them to foreign countries. They were first manufactured for the Navy in the early 1960s for anti-submarine warfare.

Agency for International Development officials declined to discuss the transfer of the helicopter, but the only aid money for Egypt in the 1974 budget is \$8.7 million for assistance in clearing the Suez Canal.

The administration has requested \$275 million for aid to Egypt in the 1975 fiscal year, which begins July 1, and if this money is voted it could cover the gift of the chopper, it was believed here.

The Sikorsky helicopter has a maximum speed of 163 miles an hour and can fly 4½ hours

without refueling. It can lift almost 10 tons and can carry 16 passengers comfortably.

Mr. Nixon spent yesterday at Camp David, where he celebrated his 34th wedding anniversary with Mrs. Nixon and their daughter Tricia Cox. The President worked on plans for his trip to Brussels and Moscow next week and on domestic matters, Warren said.

The President scheduled a meeting with his chief economic advisers for Monday morning at the White House. He is scheduled to depart for Brussels.

In another action, Mr. Nixon awarded the Medal of Freedom to Paul G. Hoffman for his work in support of the United Nations and in support

of assistance to needy countries.

The presentation was made in New York by United Nations Ambassador John Scali to the 83-year-old former industrialist. Hoffman is a former board chairman of Studebaker-Packard Corp. and was the administrator of the Marshall Plan for aid to Europe. He was later managing director of the U.N. Special Fund for aiding poor nations.

The President announced that he would nominate Charles A. Cooper, a member of the National Security Council Staff, to be assistant secretary of the Treasury for international affairs. If confirmed, he will succeed John M. Hennessy, who has resigned.