

★ PRESIDENTIAL SERIES ★

PRESIDENT CARTER

AND THE ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE
IN THE CAMP DAVID ACCORDS



HISTORICAL
COLLECTIONS



View the Document Collection

This collection consists of more than 250 previously classified documents, totaling over 1,400 pages, including some 120 that are being released for the first time. These documents cover the period from January 1977 through March 1979 and were produced by the CIA to support the Carter administration's diplomatic efforts leading up to President Carter's negotiations with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin at Camp David in September 1978. The declassified documents detail diplomatic developments from the Arab peace offensive and President Sadat's trip to Jerusalem through the regionwide aftermath of Camp David. Newly released items include:

- Two National Intelligence Estimates on Egypt and the Middle East Military Balance.
- Selections from CIA's briefing book on Camp David created for President Carter.
- Leadership profiles from the Directorate of Intelligence on the key personalities of the Camp David summit.
- Intelligence on informal and formal inter-Arab negotiations and divisions between Israeli political parties with regard to the peace initiative and summit.
- The role of Jordan in the peace process
- Over four hundred pages of Foreign Broadcast Information Service reporting, capturing the press coverage of the negotiations, summit, and global reaction.

The documents convey a sense of the personalities, perils, and ambiguities that pervaded the lead-up to the Camp David Accords, which despite the many obstacles has had an enduring influence in the precarious peace between Israel and its largest Arab neighbor.

This collection is posted to the CIA Freedom of Information Act website at:

<http://www.foia.cia.gov/cartercampdavidaccords>

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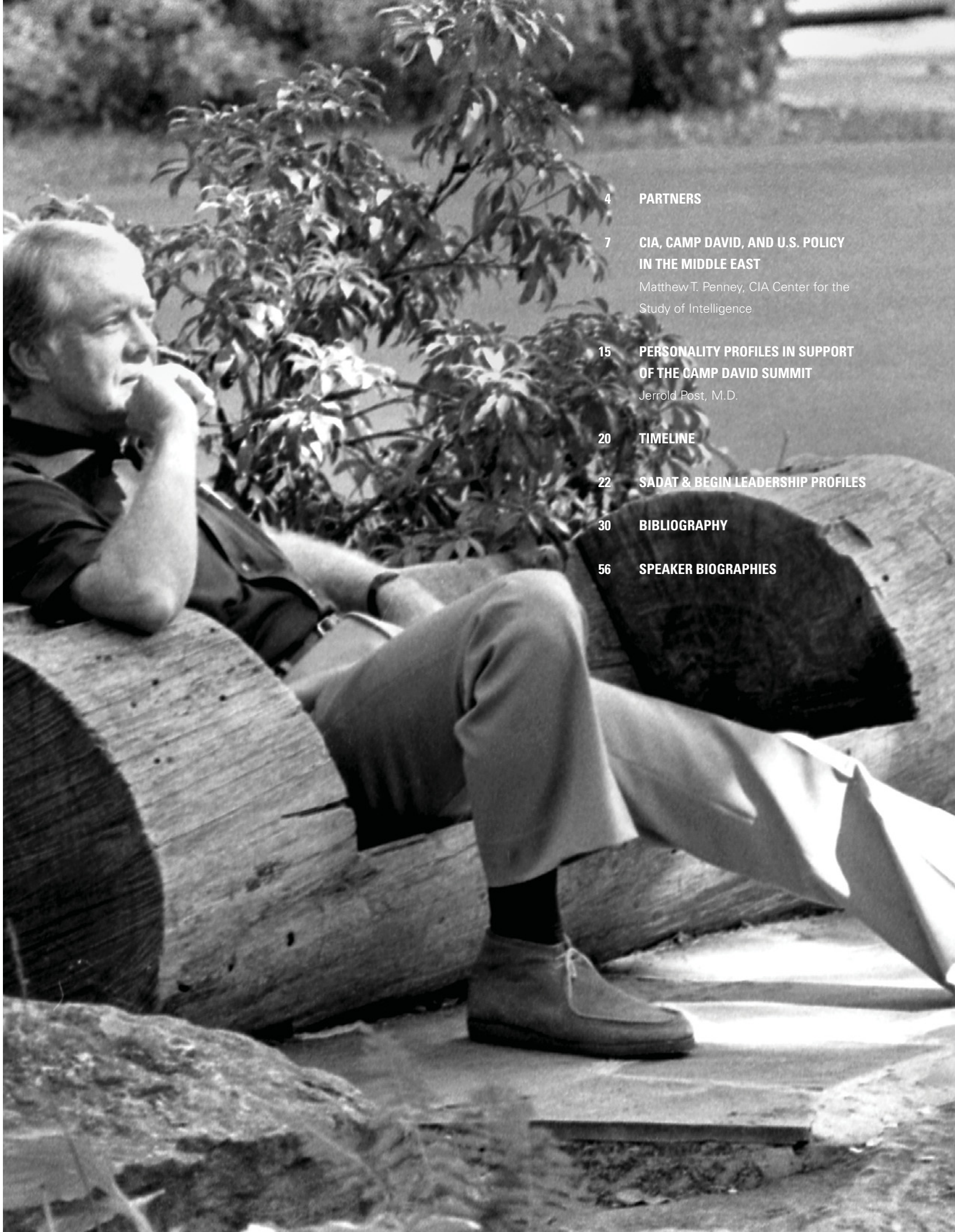
President Carter and the Role of Intelligence in the Camp David Accords

Jimmy Carter Presidential Library

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2013 // 9:00 – 12:00 PM

9:00 a.m	Welcome David Stanhope <i>Acting Director, Carter Library</i> Joe Lambert <i>Director Information Management Services, CIA</i> Opening remarks/Introduction of keynote speaker Jonathan Mann <i>Anchor and Correspondent, CNN International</i>
9:05-9:30 a.m	Keynote Address: <i>Role of Intelligence in preparing for Camp David</i> President Jimmy Carter <i>39th President of the United States</i>
9:30 a.m.	Introduction of featured speaker Jonathan Mann
9:30-10:00 a.m	Featured Speaker: <i>The Camp David Summit, An Insider's Perspective</i> William Quandt <i>Former Senior Staff Member, National Security Council</i>
10:00-10:15 a.m	<i>Break</i>
10:15 a.m	Introduction of Panel Jonathan Mann
10:15-11:45 a.m	Panel: <i>The Role of Intelligence in Support of the Camp David Summit</i> Panel Chair: Matthew T. Penney <i>CIA Historian</i> Panelists: Jerrold Post <i>Founding Director, CIA's Center for the Analysis of Personality and Political Behavior</i> Martha Neff Kessler <i>Former CIA analyst on the Middle East and South Asia</i> Adam Howard <i>General Editor, Foreign Relations of the United States Series, Department of State</i>
11:45-11:50 a.m.	Presentation of Awards Joe Lambert and David Stanhope
11:50-12:00 p.m.	Closing Remarks/Wrap up Jonathan Mann
12:00 p.m.	<i>Adjourn</i>



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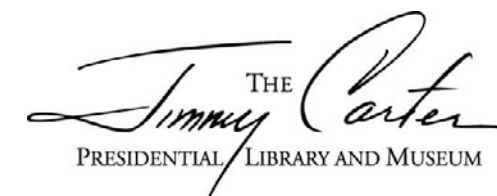
The Information Review and Release Group (IRRG) of the CIA's Information Management Services is responsible for executing the Agency's Historical Review Program (HRP). This program seeks to identify and declassify collections of documents that detail the Agency's analysis and activities relating to historically significant topics and events. The HRP's goals include increasing the usability and accessibility of historical collections. To do that, IRRG works with partner organizations to organize release events to highlight each collection and make it available to the broadest audience possible.

The mission of the HRP is to:

- Promote an accurate, objective understanding of the intelligence information that has helped shape major US foreign policy decisions.
 - Broaden access to lessons-learned, presenting historical material that gives greater understanding to the scope and context of past actions.
 - Improve current decision-making and analysis by facilitating reflection on the impacts and effects arising from past foreign policy decisions.
 - Showcase CIA's contributions to national security and provide the American public with valuable insight into the workings of its government.
 - Demonstrate the CIA's commitment to the Open Government Initiative and its three core values: Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration.
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The History Staff in the CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence fosters understanding of the Agency's history and its relationship to today's intelligence challenges by communicating instructive historical insights to the CIA workforce, other US Government agencies, and the public. CIA historians research topics on all aspects of Agency activities and disseminate their knowledge through publications, courses, briefings and Web-based products. They also work with other Intelligence Community historians on publication and education projects that highlight interagency approaches to intelligence issues. Lastly, the CIA History Staff conducts an ambitious program of oral history interviews that are invaluable for preserving institutional memories that are not captured in the documentary record.



The Jimmy Carter Library and Museum in Atlanta, Georgia houses U.S. President Jimmy Carter's papers and other material relating to the Carter administration and the Carter family's life. The library also hosts special exhibits, such as Carter's Nobel Peace Prize and a full-scale replica of the Oval Office, including a copy of the Resolute Desk.

The Carter Library and Museum includes some parts that are owned and administered by the federal government, and some that are privately owned and operated. The library and museum are run by the National Archives and Records Administration and are part of the Presidential Library system of the federal government. Privately owned areas house Carter's offices and the offices of the Carter Center, a non-profit human rights agency.

The building housing the library and museum makes up 69,750 square feet, with 15,269 square feet of space for exhibits and 19,818 square feet of archive and storage space. The library stacks house 27 million pages of documents; 500,000 photos, and 40,000 objects, along with films, videos, and audiotapes. These collections cover all areas of the Carter administration, from foreign and domestic policy to the personal lives of President and Mrs. Carter.



President Carter delivers remarks at the swearing-in ceremony for Admiral Stansfield Turner to be Director of the CIA. (Courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)

CIA, Camp David, and U.S. Policy in the Middle East

Matthew T. Penney
CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence
History Staff

One of the classic episodes in U.S.-Middle East relations was the meeting between President Franklin Roosevelt and King Abdul Aziz al-Saud on the deck of the USS *Quincy* in February 1945. Roosevelt was returning from the Yalta conference, where he had discussed the post-war disposition of Europe with the leaders of Great Britain and the Soviet Union. Believing that the United States would play a more active role in international affairs after the war, Roosevelt was especially concerned about the Middle East. The meeting was part of a series of direct U.S. bilateral engagements with regional heads of state—the others were King Farouk of Egypt and King Haile Selassie of Ethiopia—without the customary deference paid to the European allies, a forecast of the post-war order.

The iconic meeting aboard the *Quincy* relates to the present topic: Roosevelt wanted to discuss Palestine. After Roosevelt raised the issue, King Saud asked that the United States not support a Jewish state there, and Roosevelt agreed not to take action on the issue without due coordination with King Saud and other Arab leaders. Much later, William Eddy, the U.S. chargé in Saudi Arabia who had arranged the meeting, would grapple publicly with what he called a historic broken promise: the U.S. recognition of Israel and commitment to Israeli security.¹

Just weeks after its creation in September 1947, the Central Intelligence Agency issued two major analytic pieces that, among other things, warned of protracted instability in the Middle East over the issue of a Jewish state in Palestine. They said that the Arab popular response to the partition would force otherwise moderate Arab governments to vigorously oppose the new state, lest they be perpetually vulnerable to overthrow. Not only was a Jewish state in the Middle East intolerable to the Arab world, the Agency said, but fear of Israeli expansion would put its Arab neighbors on a permanent war footing. One of the two CIA pieces said that the goodwill generated by the Roosevelt-Saud conference had expired. Perhaps most importantly, the second of the two pieces—which allegedly owed much of its language to Eddy, by then at the State Department—said that the great powers would have to intervene to enforce the partition and that an Arab military front would defeat a Jewish state within two years unless the United States bolstered Israeli security.

In its post-war engagement with Middle Eastern heads of state, the U.S. government sought leaders with whom it could maintain amicable relations. At one point in the early 1950s, U.S. policymakers hoped that Egyptian President Gamal ‘abd al-Nasser might bring a coalition of Arab states into a defense alliance friendly to the West. Though Nasser would be a thorn in the side of U.S. officials for most of his presidency, he was nevertheless the kind of Arab leader whom the United States could tolerate; one who maintained his own course in international affairs (despite accepting enough Soviet military aid to alarm U.S. policymakers) and one who, in his actions, was moderate toward Israel. One National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) in 1953 ironically said that an Egyptian-led regional defense pact could be a forum for Western influence that would counteract—rather than the seemingly more plausible outcome of stoking, among the regional populations at least—suspicions of Western imperialism. For most of the Cold War, the United States would have to look outside Egypt for its closest Middle Eastern partners, namely Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and, until 1979, Iran. Given the competition for the proverbial hearts and minds between the United States and Soviet Union, much of what interested U.S. policymakers was the survivability of the region’s leaders, to include those allied with the United States, the Soviets, or somewhere in between.²

Following the quick Israeli victory in the June 1967 war, the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) monitored the Arab leaders’ efforts to regain favor with their populations, from what was a stunning loss known in the Arab world as “the setback.” In the years after 1967 the U.S. Intelligence Community considered the potential for an Arab counterassault, even one that the Arab leaders expected to lose militarily. This contradicts the conventional wisdom that the IC did not imagine such a case: As a recently declassified NIE from May 1973 shows, analysts assessed that the domestic pressure on President Anwar Sadat to redeem Egypt’s loss was such that Sadat might find even a failed invasion of Israeli-held territory politically favorable to inaction. Though the NIE stopped short of predicting war, its pages convey an astute understanding of the political climate in which Sadat operated—a far cry from the ostensible superfi-

ality often assumed. The analysts did consider most of the things that history has judged them harshly for not considering. In the end, however, they called it wrong, as we know from the joint Egyptian-Syrian attack that October during Yom Kippur.³

A recent CIA declassification event on the October 1973 war made available this NIE and many other documents. Among them were some that hinted at the longer-term ramifications of the war. As early as 19 October, CIA wrote that the Arab military strike had “greatly strengthened President Sadat’s political position in Egypt and in the Arab World generally,” and that he had “a respect and popularity that he never knew before.”⁴ This was a different Sadat, who until then had been losing credibility with his domestic constituents and his foreign interlocutors after several years of mostly empty declarations that something had to be done about the Israeli expansion. It would be Sadat’s reputation from the 1973 war—“the Hero of the Crossing,” a reference to the assault on the Israeli position in the Sinai across the Suez Canal—that would enable him to serve as the type of Middle Eastern leader that the U.S. preferred: a moderate with enough clout to remain in power yet willing to work toward a peace settlement with the West and Israel.

The negotiations following the 1973 war set the stage for Camp David, though no factor was more important than the commitment of President Jimmy Carter. His desire for a peace agreement, and one based on a respect for Palestinian rights was encumbered, however, by the legacy of U.S. policy in the Middle East. As it had been for years, U.S. policy in the region as of 1978 was three-fold: containing Soviet influence, keeping adequate oil supplies flowing without drastic price increases, and ensuring the security of Israel. On this last point, the policy was not to achieve a peace satisfactory to all, and the United States had historically maintained no Palestine policy apart from the considerations of what role Palestinians might play in achieving a workable peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. The three stated goals were intertwined. Containing Soviet influence required relationships with regional leaders. Likewise, cheap oil depended on Middle Eastern leaders with whom the United States could bargain and apply pressure. It thus served broader U.S. policy to achieve a bilateral agreement between Egypt and Israel even if a more comprehensive agreement was, at the time, illusory.

U.S. policymakers would have preferred such a comprehensive deal, as opposed to either a bilateral pact or a “step-by-step” approach that started with some of the more attainable issues and ultimately concluded with the most controversial. (A key problem with either of the two was an aversion to actually stating a specific end-game scenario.) The U.S. efforts with Middle Eastern leaders that eventually led to Camp David had initially envisioned a comprehensive approach, though all knew the odds were long. U.S. policymakers hoped for the participation of at least Syria and Jordan in addition to Egypt, and for the Arab side to offer a solution for the Palestine issue that Israel would not reject outright. As it became clear that among the Arab states Egypt alone was willing to deal, and when Israel gave no indication that it would compromise on the Palestinians, the talks even at their most successful would be just one step among many yet to come.



The documents in this collection attest to the difficulties Carter would face. It was clear the Arabs and Israelis would give only to the point where the domestic cost with their constituents would not be too great. In addition to the aforementioned aversion to identifying an end game, the parties seldom defined the most important terms. For example, what did Israel’s openness to “minor modifications” of the pre-1967 borders mean? Certainly the Arab leaders would have an interest in knowing. Nor were the meanings of terms like “autonomy” and “rights” defined. And then there was the persistent distrust between the two parties. At times, each side nursed the suspicion that the United States secretly sided with the other. Historical precedent gave the Arab side every reason to think that U.S. policy would favor Israel; conversely, Carter’s pronouncements about Israel needing to withdraw to the 1967 borders and his references to Palestinian rights were grounds for Israeli suspicion. Throughout, the Carter administration was not shy about stating that the rights of the Palestinians had to be respected in any peace process worthy of the name.

As if a comprehensive peace agreement was not already formidable, the Israeli elections in May 1977 brought to power a Prime Minister, Menachem Begin, who had championed the expansion of Israel’s borders and cared little about Palestinian rights. Also, unlike Sadat, Begin’s domestic political situation gave him little impetus to bring “deliverables” out of any meetings with his Arab neighbors. One of the documents in this collection, dated a week after Begin’s electoral victory, stresses the improbability of the Israeli acceptance of ceding the land it had taken in 1967.



Top: President Jimmy Carter Speaking to CIA personnel at CIA Headquarters

Bottom: Prime Minister Begin at Camp David (Photos courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)

It said that:

- “demilitarized areas, limited forces zones, forward monitoring sites, third-party reconnaissance...alone will not give Israeli leaders the confidence they now lack that the Arabs have peaceful intentions for the long term.”
- “it is unlikely that either side in the foreseeable future will modify its stated intention to control East Jerusalem...”
- “The nonmilitary benefits Israel will expect to receive in return for a withdrawal to the 1967 lines will have to be provided by the US—and to a lesser extent by the USSR and the UN—as well as the Arabs.”⁵

That November, President Sadat’s historic visit to Jerusalem to address the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) gave reasons for both optimism and caution. The CIA Directorate of Intelligence (DI) Weekly Summary for 25 November 1977, after Sadat’s speech, called the trip “a major

shock treatment comparable to the one produced by his equally bold war initiative in 1973.” Perhaps it could indeed be compared to the 1973 military campaign in its boldness and impact. But whereas the 1973 war had vindicated Israel’s hard line against its Arab neighbors, the 1977 event undercut this position: with the speech, an Arab leader was calling not for war but for peace. For all of the goodwill that he generated with the West with the visit, it prompted outrage from most Arab quarters, especially Syrian leader Hafez al-Asad, on the grounds that Sadat’s trip was a de facto recognition of Israel and betrayal of the Arab cause. This assertion was shared among the most vocal elements within Egypt as well.⁶

The collection shows the IC’s attention to this important relationship between foreign governments and their citizens. Analysts monitored the dire state of Egypt’s economy and its struggle to provide basic services as well as the local unpopularity of Sadat’s commercial orientation to the

West. Sadat’s critics made much of his closeness to the United States specifically, and a 1977 NIE declassified for this collection considers the intense domestic pressure on Sadat to get something out of his relationship with Washington. The collection also features analysis on the Egyptian military’s dissatisfaction with its ill-preparedness for another war with Israel. Agency assessments of Middle Eastern security services in general, and Egypt specifically, left little question that the IC viewed the region’s security services as key instruments for not only quelling political dissent but also as potential agents of regime change. The notion that popular unrest created a hospitable environment to Communist assistance tended to make U.S. policy-makers tolerate the security services’ efforts to maintain the established order, and a great deal of U.S. bilateral aid went toward helping them do so.⁷

The 1977 NIE on Egypt opened with a discussion of Sadat’s need to make

progress on the Israeli issue to stave off domestic frustrations. The NIE said that “negotiating progress would serve, at least temporarily, to reinforce Sadat’s credibility, to lessen the military’s urgency about securing new sources of weapons, and to divert popular attention from economic woes” and that “domestic ills are an impetus for rapid improvement in negotiations.” It depicted Sadat as wanting Egypt to “maintain its status as a significant regional power beyond the time when a peace settlement with Israel might change the focus of world attention from issues of war and peace in the area to issues of oil and economics.”⁸

Another issue, thoroughly explored in the outside writing on the Camp David process, was that of the Palestinians. Hardly any serious discussion about a peace ignored it even when euphemisms or other terms were used instead of explicitly naming the Palestinians, the West Bank, Gaza, or Israeli settlements. President Carter wanted each side to make some sort of gesture that the other would find welcoming. He wanted the PLO to accept UN Security Council Resolution 242, which had called—in famously vague language—for Israel to withdraw from the territory it had taken in 1967. However, Resolution 242 also implicitly recognized the Israeli state. Carter hoped that PLO acceptance of the resolution would force Israel to see the Palestinians as “reasonable,” as the United States viewed it. But not only was the resolution hazily worded, it neither mentioned a potential Palestinian homeland nor, for that matter, even the word ‘Palestinians.’ The PLO had indicated it would accept the resolution only if the United States would guarantee Palestinian statehood. A complicating factor in all of this was President Sadat’s seeming ambivalence toward the Palestinian issue, in which he displayed no real commitment to a Palestinian state in favor of a moderate Palestinian leadership with which he could negotiate.

Nor was Begin’s position on the Palestine issue a giving one. During his electoral campaign in 1977, he had made the Palestinians synonymous with “terrorist,” and rejected the notion of Palestinian self-determination. The PLO did little to help the image of the Palestinians in rela-



Jimmy Carter, Anwar Sadat, and Menachem Begin at Camp David for the Camp David Summit. (Courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)

tion to Israel, with the March 1978 Fatah raid on the Israeli coast and bus hijacking. In the attack, Fatah killed 38 Israelis, prompting the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon. All of this came just after the Abu Nidal organization’s assassination of Yusef al-Sibai, a Sadat associate who had been part of the Egyptian Jerusalem delegation. According to a CIA Weekly Summary for 17 March 1978, the Fatah operation and Israeli response were seen in Egypt as “serious, perhaps fatal, blows” to the peace initiative.⁹

The collection gives the reader the sense that Carter’s role in the Camp David talks was not that of a broker between Sadat and Begin, but rather that of a negotiator in two separate talks, one with Sadat and the other with Begin. All three men would be present, but the two most meaningful dialogues could be expected to be between Carter and Sadat, and Carter and Begin. Sadat’s and Begin’s messages would most likely be designed first for Carter, second for an international audience, and only third for each other. Nor did analysts anticipate the result to be a settlement between the two sides, but rather statements that Sadat and Begin could later cite as validating his position.

Mindful of Arab-Israeli relations up to that point, U.S. policymakers and Agency analysts had no illusions by that time that Camp David was the only hope to end the conflict. Agency analysts assessed

that the Accords would be successful if Israel and Egypt continued meaningful negotiations afterward. Conversely, they would be a failure if negotiations ended, especially if a persistent impasse pushed the two sides toward war, or prompted the Saudis to play the oil card as they had in 1973. Another ramification of a failure at Camp David would be the loss of the United States’ clout as a broker and the decline of U.S. influence in the region.

Almost immediately after the Accords concluded, it was evident that their success or failure was in the eye of the beholder. For the United States, they met the minimal criteria for supporting U.S. interests. They resulted in a freeze of the Egyptian-Israeli violence and a closer U.S. relationship with Egypt. Yet the Accords avoided the all-important issue of the Palestinians. Egypt’s Arab neighbors assembled in Baghdad and denounced the Accords as being only an Egyptian agreement with Israel without any benefits to other Arab states. Because they lacked any real commitments from Israel on the most important issues, most Arab leaders and commentators saw the Accords as a capitulation to Israel.¹⁰

Initial reactions from the Palestinian community criticized the vague language and the lack of concessions to the Palestinians. The Israeli military and settlements in the West Bank, it seemed, would stay. Little was to be found that



Jimmy Carter and Anwar Sadat at Camp David for the Camp David Summit. (Courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)



supported Palestinian rights or self-determination; nothing guaranteed even eventual Arab sovereignty in Gaza or the West Bank, and there was no mention of East Jerusalem. The PLO, like the Arab states that gathered in Baghdad, denounced the Accords as an Egyptian surrender and called for punishing any who supported the Accords. The Muslim Brotherhood, likewise, considered them a betrayal. The summer following the Accords, CIA analysts wrote that the Israeli position would solidify the Arab opposition on the basis that Israel “would concede only enough to protect its treaty with Egypt while maintaining effective Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza and preventing the development of an independent Palestinian state.” These were behaviors that the Agency predicted in blunt language would thereafter “contribute to the Arab belief that autonomy negotiations are a sham.”

The Egyptian-Israeli peace talks that went into 1979 also coincided with a transformative event elsewhere: the revolution in Iran. By the time of Camp David, Iranian public opposition to the Shah had swept the country, and in January 1979, as Egypt and Israel were still negotiating the peace treaty, the Shah fled. CIA analysts would later write that the fall of the Shah “caused Israel and Egypt to strike more rigid positions on key unresolved issues in peace negotiations” and were unambiguous that the revolution would diminish U.S. influence in the Middle East. They also pointed out that, for Egypt, seeing the Shah unseated may give Sadat pause about the benefits of a U.S. alliance. For the Palestinians, analysts noted that the Iranian revolutionaries would provide backing and make them a more formidable actor. Ultimately, the events in Iran gave Egypt and Israel an incentive to finalize the peace treaty and silence the decade-long drumbeat of possible war between the two in this time when tension and uncertainty were on the rise region wide. With the events in Iran, Arab opposition to the peace treaty,

Top: Sadat, Carter, and Begin at Marine Corps Ceremony at Camp David.

Middle: Posters of Jimmy Carter and Anwar Sadat.

Bottom: Framework for Peace-East Room. (Photos courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)

the prospect of another oil embargo, and rumblings of anti-Americanism in places such as Tripoli and Islamabad, the makers of U.S. policy in the Middle East in 1979 had much cause for trepidation.

Any release of a discrete number of documents will have limitations, especially one that focuses on a single act in a larger pageant (and moreover, one in which the Central Intelligence Agency has decided that things cannot be included). From time to time, scholars and reviewers of past CIA document releases have found them somewhat narrow and inattentive to related issues. This view is understandable, though the scope is often narrow by design, either for resource reasons or because other documents have been made public in other forums. For example, for researchers interested in the event that put the Egyptian-Israeli talks into motion, the document release on the 1973 Arab-Israeli War should be consulted.

Like any single release, the present group of documents has some gaps. It leaves much unsaid about how the Intelligence Community viewed the Palestinian organizations apart from how they factored into the negotiations. Discussions of regional neighbors such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and even Syria, are mostly relegated to their responses to phases of the bilateral Egyptian-Israeli process. Largely unaddressed are Syria’s efforts to keep the PLO’s position consistent with that of Syrian President al-Asad. We see little of Jordanian King Hussein’s attempts to find a unified Arab position before finding himself on the margins. And certainly Saudi Arabia had a great deal to lose from any scenario that stood to enflame the Arab radicals—to use the term of the time—to the point that the Saudi royal family became vulnerable. (The Weekly Summaries get at this latter issue in a general way, for Saudi Arabia and other neighbors.) The collection also avoids the ever-controversial issue of the U.S. posture on Israeli settlements. And given the scope, the story does not continue much past mid-1979 to testify to the effect of the post–Camp David order on CIA’s subsequent support to policymakers.

Looking back at 1978–79, we can see what the participants then could not have

known: the Middle Eastern landscape was on the cusp of change. The Egyptian part of the Arab-Israeli dispute was quieted, and Israel could turn its attention to operations elsewhere, especially Lebanon to the north. The animosity toward Sadat from the most fervent elements in Egypt, especially the Islamists, led to his assassination in 1981. The Iranian revolution ushered in a regime hostile to the United States and ended two and a half decades of a U.S.-friendly Persian Gulf security order. Iran’s attempts to export its brand of revolutionary Islam, and its support to violent proxy groups, would plague U.S. efforts to maintain favorable security alliances in the Middle East. Operations by Lebanese Hezbollah and its affiliates, and a wave of bombings and hijackings in the early and mid-1980s, would push the United States into a more proactive counterterrorist posture, marked at CIA by the creation of the Counterterrorist Center in 1986.

Also in the 1980s, a different U.S. presidential administration would be in the White House, with different priorities for the Middle East. President Ronald Reagan viewed the Palestinians foremost in their role as a categorical enemy of a key U.S. ally, Israel. The Reagan administration made some attempts to gain Israel’s acceptance of a land-for-peace deal, but with the mid-1980s civil war in Lebanon, there was little appetite in the Reagan White House, much less in Israel, for any such “concessions” to the Palestinians, as the United States and Israel would have seen it. Since then, the United States has remained a crucial party in bringing the two sides together, with periodic milestone-like agreements that can be seen as successes or failures depending on the perspective, with the issue no less challenging for all parties than it was in 1978–79.

At present, we are still waiting to see the extent to which the events of the so-called Arab Spring, or Awakening, are an abrogation of Camp David. For the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the realities of governance during its time in power had a slight and only momentary moderating influence, with the Brotherhood’s platform changing from a rejection of the peace treaty to a call for reassessment. Egyptian government

behaviors during President Muhammad Morsi’s tenure hinted at an acceptance of the Camp David order, both by inaction and by events such as Morsi’s mediation between Israel and Hamas in fall 2012. The issue has been less clear in Syria, where the ascendancy of Salafi elements stands to end Syria’s relative moderation.

This present collection offers a window into CIA’s support to the statecraft with which one White House administration attempted a solution to an issue that has burdened every U.S. president since Roosevelt’s conversation with King Saud on the deck of the USS *Quincy*. The Central Intelligence Agency’s provision of intelligence support to the Camp David process rounds out that which is known about the policy, the national interest, the image of the United States abroad, and the human rights considerations inherent in the United States’ handling of an issue so central to the stability of this volatile region.

¹ CIA 1, “Review of the World Situation as it Relates to the Security of the United States,” 26 September 1947; CIA Office of Reports and Estimates (ORE)-55, “The Consequences of the Partition of Palestine,” 28 November 1947.

² NIE 73, “Conditions and Trends in the Middle East Affecting US Security,” 15 January 1953.

³ NIE 30-73, “Possible Egyptian-Israeli Hostilities: Determinants and Implications,” 17 May 1973. The piece says that: If Egypt does decide to initiate hostilities, it will do so in spite of the military consequences, rather than in hope of military gains” (emphasis added).

⁴ CIA “Weekly Review,” 19 October 1973, 3.

⁵ CIA Memorandum, “Nonmilitary Compensation for an Israeli Territorial Withdrawal,” 26 May 1977.

⁶ CIA Memorandum, “Syria and Sadat’s Israeli Trip,” 25 November 1977; DI Weekly Summary, 18 November 1977 and 25 November 1977, quote on 1.

⁷ NIE 36.1-1-77, “Egypt,” 3 February 1977.

⁸ NIE 36.1-1-77, “Egypt,” 3 February 1977, negotiating progress, 8; maintain its status, 11.

⁹ CIA Weekly Summary, 17 March 1978.

¹⁰ CIA Intelligence Memorandum, “Possible Arab Acceptance of an Egyptian-Israeli Peace treaty,” 27 February 1979. See also Hermann Frederick Eilts, “Improve the Framework,” in Foreign Policy No. 41 (Winter 1980–1981), 9.

¹¹ National Security Council memorandum, “CIA Analysis of Middle East Peace Negotiations,” 31 July 1979, Israel would concede only enough, 1; autonomy negotiations as a sham, 2. The CIA DI Weekly Summaries from fall 1978 are informative on these topics.

¹² See CIA Intelligence Memorandum, “Implications of Iran for the Middle East Peace Negotiations,” 16 February 1979, quote from 1.

¹³ Central Intelligence Agency, President Nixon and the Role of Intelligence in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, publication prepared for the symposium at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California, 30 January 2013.



Jimmy Carter, Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin visit to Gettysburg battleground. (Courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)

Personality Profiles in Support of The Camp David Summit¹

Jerrold Post, M.D.

Among the briefing materials President Carter carried to Camp David for his historic meetings with President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin in September 1978 were a personality profile on each of the two Middle Eastern leaders and a third profile comparing their personalities and negotiating style. Following his diplomatic triumph, the President conveyed his appreciation to the Central Intelligence Agency for the intelligence support provided him and singled out the personality profiles for special praise: “After spending 13 days with the two principals,” he said, “I wouldn’t change a word.”

The history of studies relating personality and political behavior predates the founding of the Central Intelligence Agency, but controversy over the validity of such studies is as strong today as when Walter Langer and his associates probed the psyche of Adolf Hitler for the OSS. Much of the current controversy is over causality: was a particular political occurrence caused by a leader’s psyche, or did it result from the action of political, historical, and cultural forces? This, I submit, is an unnecessary focus of contention, for we believe, along with most historians, that most leadership decisions are multiply determined, and it is when a leader’s psychological and political needs are congruent that there is a particularly strong drive toward action. Even the most diehard critic would probably agree that if there is any occasion on which personality features weigh heavily in political proceedings, it is during unstructured negotiations among world leaders from different cultures with different perceptions, values, attitudes, and styles. Such was the case at Camp David.

On a visit to the Agency in August 1978, President Carter interrupted a briefing to ask the assembled analysts and intelligence production managers how they could help him before the forthcoming summit meeting, which had only recently been announced. He particularly indicated that he wanted to be “steeped in the personalities of Begin and Sadat.”

¹ This article was originally published in CIA’s in-house journal, *Studies in Intelligence*, vol. 23, summer 1979.



Camp David Summit. (Courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)

The presidential request sent a spasm through the National Foreign Assessment Center. The Office of Regional and Political Analysis (ORPA) was tasked with preparing political profiles which emphasized the political perspectives of the two main actors; the Office of Central Reference (OCR) was tasked with preparing updated biographic profiles which emphasized personality features; and the Center for the Analysis of Personality and Political Behavior (CAPPB) in the Office of Scientific Intelligence was tasked with updating the studies of the personality and political behavior of President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin which had been produced in 1977.

In short order, the several components produced the required material. CAPPB's contribution consisted of three pieces: an updated personality profile of Begin, which called attention to the increasing trend of oppositionism and rigidity in his personality; an updated profile of Sadat, entitled "Sadat's Nobel Prize Complex," which stressed his increasing preoc-

cupation with his role in history and the leverage this could provide in negotiations; and a paper which discussed the implications for negotiations of the contrasting intellectual styles of Begin and Sadat. To eliminate redundancy, the OCR and CAPPB profiles were integrated, emphasizing personality features of the leaders apt to become of particular significance during the negotiations. The two integrated personality profiles and the discussion of Begin's and Sadat's contrasting intellectual styles were the personality materials forwarded to support the Camp David negotiations.

It is important to emphasize that the ability of all components to respond effectively in the brief time available rested upon a foundation of significant background research as well as continuing monitoring of the target leaders. In the balance of this discussion, some of the research efforts employed to clarify the personality and political behavior of President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin will be described.

A recurring difficulty in analyzing the personality of world leaders is that the necessary data, although ultimately obtainable, has not been systematically recorded. Requests for "instant magic" are not uncommon when a coup, assassination—or in more civilized countries, election—leads to a change of leadership. In order to anticipate the needs of the intelligence community, over the years CAPPB has regularly surveyed key intelligence consumers to identify leaders of special interest, including emerging leaders, and establish research priorities. In developing this priority list, State/INR, Defense/ISA, the National Security Council, and the National Intelligence Officers are surveyed. Parenthetically, these survey results have always impressed the authors with the vigorous diversity of interests among the key consumers. Indeed, prior to the survey of the summer of 1976 no single highest priority candidate has ever been unanimously identified by all components. But that survey revealed across-the-board highest priority interest in one world leader, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt.

In developing personality studies several kinds of data are reviewed. In addition to drawing on all classified reporting, a thorough review of the open literature is conducted. Official and unofficial biographies have often provided key background material and insights, as have television, newspaper and magazine profiles. When there are significant holes in the data, requirements are sent to the field to attempt to develop the missing information. But the data which is particularly rich and especially helpful in developing a solid felling for the complexities of the personality of a leader is derived from debriefings of senior government and military officials and individuals from the private sector who have had significant personal contact with the object of the study. Official reporting has often been so heavily slanted toward current political concerns that a wealth of astute observations concerning perceptions, attitudes, and negotiating styles of the actors has never been recorded. These perceptions and observations can be lost during the transition from one administration to another, especially if the observations were made during the course of extremely sensitive negotiations, the details of which were necessarily closely held.

The strategic importance of the Middle East, the relative imperviousness

of the Near Eastern mind to Western perceptions, and the highly personalized leadership styles of its rulers have had the effect of focusing a disproportionate share of CAPPB's efforts on the personalities of Near Eastern leaders. In the process of developing studies of such leaders as King Hussein of Jordan, Yitzak Rabin of Israel, and Hafiz al-Asad of Syria, we had regularly debriefed key officials whose concern was the Middle East, including participants in the shuttle diplomacy of the Kissinger era. So when we began research for our study of Sadat in the winter of 1977, we had some material already on hand and were able to reinterview those who had significant contact with Sadat.

Several themes emerged as we collated interview impressions. Sadat's concern with his role in history and his preoccupation with "the big picture," coupled with his abhorrence of details, were regularly mentioned. By appealing to Sadat's long-range goals, Secretary Kissinger was often able to overcome negotiating impassess over technical details.

Ambassador Eilts related one amusing and charming anecdote which epitomized this quality. The occasion was a luncheon hosted by President Sadat just after a breakthrough in negotiations.

Present were President Sadat, Madame Sadat, Secretary Kissinger, and Ambassador Eilts. "Your Excellency," said Secretary of State Kissinger, raising his glass, "without your broad vision of history and your refusal to be bogged down by petty detail, we never would have come to this day." "No, Henry," replied President Sadat, "it was your negotiating skill which brought us to this day." "Oh no, Your Excellency," replied Kissinger, "it was your ability to think in strategic terms that..." At this point, Madame Sadat interrupted with a loud sigh to Ambassador Eilts, "Oh no, here we go again."

A major conclusion of this study addressed the manner in which Sadat's special view of himself and this "big picture mentality" interacted. "Sadat's self-confidence and special view of himself has been instrumental in development of his innovative foreign policy, as have his flexibility and his capacity for moving outside of the cultural insularity of the Arab world. He sees himself as a grand strategist and will make tactical concessions if he is persuaded that his overall goals will be achieved.... His self-confidence has permitted him to make bold initiatives, often overriding his advisors' objections."

A finished study was disseminated in April 1977, on the eve of Sadat's state visit to the United States. Israeli politics were in acute disarray at the time. Yitzak Rabin was forced to step aside as Labor Party leader in part because of revelations of his wife's financial activities, and the controversial Shimon Peres became leader with the elections of the Knesset only a month away. On reading the study of Sadat on a Friday, President Carter requested for his reading the next Monday a similar study of Shimon Peres, who, it was widely assumed—despite the Labor Party's difficulties—would be the next prime minister of Israel. (There has been an assumption that we maintain such studies as "shelf items" on all leaders of significance.) Modestly disavowing superhuman abilities, we indicated we would immediately begin research on a personality study on Peres, and returned to debrief again the shuttle diplomats.

Jimmy Carter, Rosalynn Carter, Anwar Sadat – Walking at Camp David. (Courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)



We were in the midst of the first drafts when the stunning election upset occurred which brought Menachem Begin to power. With retrospective wisdom, most analysts have attributed Peres’ loss to Labor Party complacency and widespread voter disgust with allegations of corruption by the Labor government.²

With the election of Menachem Begin, the material on Peres was put aside for another day, and research was immediately commenced on the new prime minister. In contrast to Peres, who was well known to a number of US Government officials, there had been little official contact with Begin. But there was a rich source of information in the open literature, for in two autobiographic works, the “White Nights” and “The Revolt,” Begin had revealed a great deal of the experience which had honed his attitude. His preoccupation with legal precision and his inability to restrain himself from clarifying imprecision was well illustrated by his arguing with his Russian jailers about details of the Soviet legal code. Furthermore, in analyzing the form as well as the content of his writing, it was possible to understand some of the complexities of his cognitive style. Later, Ambassador Lewis provided particularly illuminating personal observations of the new prime minister’s personality. The CAPPB study was disseminated in July 1977, in time for Begin’s first visit with President Carter.

Once a personality study is completed, with a thorough analysis of the basic personality structure, it forms a basis for continued monitoring of the subject. This is particularly important for an individual like Begin, who had not coped with national leadership before. A major question raised but unanswered by the initial study was whether this leader, who had spent his lifetime in opposition, could function as a leader for all the people, utilizing skills of compromise and developing consensus.



Jimmy Carter, Rosalynn Carter, and the Begins walking at Camp David. (Courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)

The creative diplomacy of November and December of 1977, highlighted by Sadat’s historic visit to Jerusalem, placed even greater emphasis on the personalities of the two key actors. A particularly interesting aspect of this visit, and something probably insufficiently attended to, was the impact of the media upon political behavior and the conduct of negotiations. Sadat’s already special view of himself was given a new boost. We initially characterized this personality reaction “the Barbara Walter syndrome,” but by summer of 1978, as it grew exponentially, designated it as Sadat’s Nobel Prize complex.” As we followed his political behavior particularly closely over the next several months, one of the most interesting changes had to do with the sharp increase in the first person singular. The frequency of the word “I” increased dramatically in Sadat’s statements. There were accounts suggesting that Sadat would not accept reports indicating that his goals for Egypt and himself were in trouble. There was a consequent shrinkage of the leadership circle around Sadat to those who would support his optimism.

In parallel, Prime Minister Begin demonstrated a continuing facility for statements of a provocative nature, often precipitated by reporter’s questions. A member of our center traveled to Israel to update the earlier study of Begin and focused extensively on some of the growing oppositional properties in Begin’s personality.

The prominence of these personality features led to a proposal that one of the dinner seminars hosted periodically by the Director of Central Intelligence be devoted to the topic of “The role of personality in the Middle East conflict.” The dinner was held in the spring of 1978, attended by a number of those who had been intimately involved in Middle East negotiations, including Ambassador-at-large Alfred Atherton, Ambassador to Egypt Herman Eilts, Assistant Secretary for Near East Affairs Harold Saunders, and Dr. William Quandt, the NSC’s senior Near Eastern specialist.

In pulling together materials for this meeting we focused particularly on matters of form, entirely apart from political substance, and addressed such issues as Sadat’s abhorrence of detail con-



Top: Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin at Camp David for the Camp David Summit.

Bottom: Jimmy Carter, Anwar Sadat, and Menachem Begin at Camp David for the Camp David Summit. (Photos courtesy: Jimmy Carter Library)

trasted with Begin’s predilection for precision and legalism. This precipitated a lively discussion among the participants on just how different Begin and Sadat were as personalities, and the problems these differences made when they were being dealt with in concert. One senior official advanced the notion that the personality differences were so profound that the two leaders should never be brought together in the same room. The task of preparing for the dinner discussions and distilling and analyzing the proceedings led us to sharpen the focus of our analysis on the stylistic differences between Begin and Sadat, and helped pave the way for the focused personality materials produced in support of the Camp David summit.

In focusing on the differences, there was an explicit analysis of the problems in simultaneous negotiation which these differences would produce, with some recommendations for dealing with these diverse personalities. The special circumstances of Camp David temporarily narrowed the differences between these two extraordinary individuals and made possible the Camp David accords. Needless to say, the gap persists. Above and beyond the massive political problems which must be overcome to reach a settlement, the fundamentally differing personalities of the two key actors remain a major source of tension in this historic drama, and will require continued observation and evaluation by the intelligence community.

² This is not the first occasion when the request for a personality study appeared to precipitate the downfall of a leader. The publication of a study of King Idris preceded the takeover of Libya by Qadhafi in a coup by two weeks. A principal conclusion of the study of Rene Barrientos of Bolivia was that “because of a strong need to prove himself as a man, Barrientos would likely burn himself out before his time.” Barrientos died shortly after publication, having piloted his helicopter into a high-tension wire. Just in the past year, the program was having a remarkable record. Prime Minister Vorster of South Africa resigned because of poor health shortly after the publication of the personality study on the very day a major analysis of the decision-making structure in the Vorster government was disseminated. The succession problem in the Soviet Union was thrown into disarray by the death of Kulakov, one of the prime contenders to succeed Brezhnev. His unexpected death by a heart attack followed by two weeks initiation of research on his study. Our study of Boumediene of Algeria was being drafted when Boumediene suffered an incapacitating and ultimately fatal cerebellar hemorrhage. An attempt to assassinate Prime Minister-elect Ohira of Japan was made on the very day our draft study was submitted for editing. Most recently, the initiation of a major research study on Ugandan leader Idi Amin Dada was followed almost immediately by a Tanzanian counterattack on Uganda, and on the day the study was disseminated Tanzanian troops were reported in the streets of Kampala. Although this pattern appears to transcend coincidence, it is not true that initiation of a CAPPB personality study is being used as an alternative to covert action.

President Carter


Camp David Timeline

6 JAN

The Israeli government decides to hold early elections in May.

18-19 JAN

Riots occur in Cairo following sudden food price increases.



7-8 MAR

President Jimmy Carter meets Israeli Prime Minister Rabin in Washington.

9 MAR


Carter makes a statement on the three key ingredients of a Middle East settlement: real peace, secure borders, and Palestinian rights.

16 MAR

In a town meeting in Clinton, Massachusetts, Carter speaks of a "homeland" for the Palestinians.

9 MAY

Carter meets Syrian President Asad in Geneva.




17 MAY

Israeli elections favor Likud bloc.

24-25 MAY

Carter meets Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Fahd in Washington.



19-20 JUL


Carter meets Prime Minister Begin in Washington.

9 NOV

Sadat announces his willingness to go to Jerusalem to speak before the Knesset.

19-20 NOV

Sadat meets with Begin and other Israeli political figures in Jerusalem.




4 JAN

In Aswan, Egypt, Carter makes a statement on the Palestinians.

11 MAR

The PLO attacks an Israeli bus; Israelis respond by launching Operation Litani, a military intervention in southern Lebanon.



21-22 MAR

Carter meets Begin in Washington.

6 AUG

Vance visits Jerusalem to invite Begin to Camp David.

7-8 AUG


Vance visits Alexandria, Egypt to invite Sadat to Camp David.

5 NOV

The Arab summit in Baghdad criticizes Camp David Accords.

15 JAN

The shah of Iran leaves his country.



2-4 MAR


Carter meets with Begin in Washington.

6 MAR

Brzezinski meets with Sadat in Cairo to convey the new proposals.


7-13 MAR

Carter travels to Egypt and Israel to bring the negotiations to an end.



26 MAR

Sadat and Begin sign the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in Washington.



1977

1978


1979

4 FEB

The Policy Review Committee meets on the Middle East.


14-20 FEB

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance travels to the Middle East and meets with Rabin (Israel), Sadat (Egypt), and Asad (Syria).




4-5 APR

Carter meets with Egyptian President Sadat in Washington.




25-26 APR

Carter meets Jordan's King Hussein in Washington.



21 JUN

Menachem Begin becomes prime minister of Israel, with Moshe Dayan as his foreign minister.



15-17 DEC


Begin presents his "Home rule" proposal to Carter in Washington.

25-26 DEC

Begin meets Sadat in Ismailiya, Egypt.

31 DEC

Carter leaves on trip that takes him to Iran, where he meets with King Hussein; he subsequently visits Saudi Arabia and Egypt.



3-4 FEB

Carter meets Sadat at Camp David in Maryland.

17-19 JUL

Vance, Dayan, and Egyptian Foreign Minister Muhammad Ibrahim Kamel meet at Leeds Castle, England.

30 JUL


Carter decides to invite Sadat and Begin to summit meeting at Camp David.

1 SEP

Carter holds a National Security Council meeting to discuss the Camp David summit.

5-17 SEP

Carter, Sadat, and Begin meet at Camp David.



10-14 DEC


Vance travels to the Middle East to complete the text of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty.

1 FEB

Ayatollah Khomeini returns to Iran.

17 SEP

Sadat and Begin sign the Camp David Accords at the White House; Carter signs as witness.



20

21



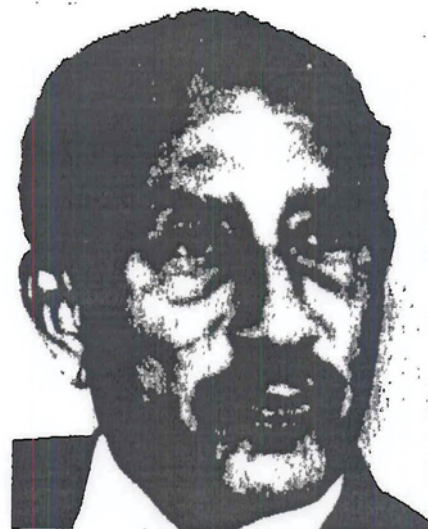
Leadership Profiles

Anwar al-SADAT
(Phonetic: saDAHT)

EGYPT

President (since
September 1970)

Addressed as:
Mr. President



When Anwar al-Sadat, a former revolutionary and ardent nationalist who rose from peasant origins, assumed the Presidency after the death of Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir, it was widely assumed that he had neither the strength nor the political astuteness to be successful. He has, however, long since shaken his image [redacted] and proved to be a moderate leader and a pragmatic politician and diplomat. He has become known for his realism, political acumen, and capacity for surprising, courageous and dramatic decisions. [redacted]

[redacted] He has continued to seek a peace settlement with remarkable self-confidence and optimism in the face of both risk and failure.

Leadership Style

Sadat's dominance of the decisionmaking process--especially in foreign policy--has become increasingly evident in the peace talks with Israel: senior foreign affairs advisers are not always certain what the President has in mind, and they must refer major decisions to Sadat personally.

Sadat [redacted] believes that Egyptians are superior to other Arabs. He takes pride in his peasant origins and in his reputation for being sensitive to his people's needs. He wants to go down in history as the man who improved the economic and social well-being of the ordinary Egyptian. Sadat has, however, far less understanding of or interest in economic matters than he has in foreign affairs or politics, and he devotes little time to this major problem area. A consummate politician, he looks at most issues in political terms, and if he is confronted with policy problems in which political factors and economic considerations are in conflict, his decision is likely to be influenced by the former.

Personal Data

In accordance with his upbringing, Sadat remains a deeply religious man. He speaks good English, but he does not always pick up nuances or follow complex reasoning. Soft spoken and serious, the 59-year-old President is warm in manner. His wife, Jihan, is an elegant, graceful woman. The couple has four children.

23 August 1978

Menachem BEGIN
(Phonetic: BAYghin)

ISRAEL

Prime Minister
(since June 1977)

Addressed as:
Mr. Prime Minister



Israel's sixth Prime Minister, Menachem Begin is the first in the history of the state not to be a member of the Labor Party (LP). As such, he may well instigate a major shift in Israeli policies, both foreign and domestic. A highly principled man with strong beliefs.

Begin is regarded as a hardliner on most issues.

He holds a master's degree in jurisprudence,

Since his election, however, a new image of the Prime Minister has begun to emerge in Israel--that of a sober and thoughtful national leader, a man of integrity whose forthrightness could renew Israeli pride and refurbish the country's image abroad.

As the almost undisputed leader of the political right wing, Begin spent 29 years in parliamentary opposition to LP-led governments. He has consistently maintained a strong, even autocratic, control of Herut (Freedom Movement), GAHAL (Herut-Liberal Party alliance) and the Likud bloc (GAHAL and other rightwing groups). Begin is primarily concerned with political issues. Domestic issues, particularly if they involve the economy, have in the past been the concerns of the Liberal Party faction of Likud, and the economic portion of the Likud electoral platform was largely written by the Liberals. Recently Begin has indicated that Minister of Finance Simcha Ehrlich, the leader of the Liberal Party and its key economic policy maker, will have a free hand in such matters and will set the tone, if not the substance, of economic policy.

(cont.)

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Economy

The Begin government has highly ambitious goals for the economy. The new administration will not continue the Labor Party's socialistic approach toward the economy, which included heavy governmental involvement in that sector. Begin has stated that his government will encourage private enterprise and pursue a liberal laissez-faire economic policy, with governmental guidance only to assure its prosperity. Through a decrease in government expenditures and imports, increases in exports, and real currency devaluations of 5 percent over and above the differential inflation rate, the new government plans to reduce the current balance-of-payments deficit by half--to \$1.5 billion within 5 years. Begin has also said that there will be a concerted effort to increase capital investment from abroad, with special emphasis on the construction of rental housing. The Likud's electoral platform calls for the return to an economic growth rate of 5 to 8 percent, to be achieved mainly through marked increases in productivity. The platform stated that there would be no increase in taxes for at least 2 years and that through wage and price freezes during the same period, inflation could be curbed substantially--it would be gradually cut to 15 percent. Begin has also said that there will be programs to extend educational and housing assistance to large families in an effort to abolish poverty.

With the objective of continuing the present state of full employment, Begin's coalition will, of necessity, be active in labor-government relations. The Prime Minister has promised greater restrictions on the Histadrut, Israel's monolithic trade union, even though the LP alignment maintained its control in that organization's June elections. These restrictions will include compulsory arbitration as a means of curtailing wildcat strikes, which the government feels can have a ruinous effect on the entire economy. Begin has often stated that the Histadrut will have to distinguish between what he calls its positive functions as a trade union and its ownership of commercial enterprises.

The Likud platform proposed that the entire government trading unit in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry be dismantled and its functions be taken over by private and/or cooperative trading firms. If this occurs, it could have marked impact

on US-Israeli trade. Such a change would be particularly obvious in the agricultural realm, where Israel has long been an almost captive market for US exports--because of the established commercial ties between the purchasing mission in New York and its US suppliers, and because of the liberal US export credits.

Foreign Policy

He was forced to flee Poland at the outbreak of World War II, having lost his mother, father and brother to the Nazis; and later he was imprisoned for a time in a concentration camp in northern Russia:

In the mid-1940's Begin was the leader of the Irgun Tsvai Le Umi, a Jewish underground movement that operated in Palestine during the British Mandate. The ideology of the Irgun--that all of Eretz Israel is historically and biblically the rightful homeland of the Jewish people--is projected in Begin's strong stand on that issue today.

Begin has consistently stated that he opposes withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza or any return to the borders that existed before the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, though he has left open the possibility of minor concessions on the Golan Heights and in the Sinai. He says that his government will encourage settlements on the West Bank--lands he considers to have been liberated rather than occupied by the Israelis in the 1967 war. He also considers the area to be of strategic importance to national security. Begin is opposed to the creation of a Palestinian state and to any negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Instead, he favors direct negotiations with the Arab states and has recently said that Israel is prepared to attend a reconvened Middle East peace conference in Geneva in the fall. Although his stated West Bank policy seems to impose a condition, he has said that all participants should come to Geneva without prior conditions and that all issues are negotiable.

- 3 -

Begin believes that face-to-face meetings with world leaders can bring about changes in their approaches to complex and seemingly intractable international problems. In line with this belief, he says that the United States and Israel can come to an understanding on the Arab question and continue their long history of good relations, a fundamental objective of Israeli foreign policy. He has been openly supportive of President Jimmy Carter's policy on human rights and considers this country the leader of the free world. Appreciative of US economic and military aid, he nonetheless feels that US-Israeli relations are based on the mutual needs and interests of not just one but both nations.

Begin is rarely if ever addressed by his first name. He speaks English, French, German, Polish and Russian.

7 July 1977

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Bibliography

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