POLICY ON A PATH TO PEACE
The Successes and Failures of Jimmy Carter’s Peace Plan

By

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>November 2</td>
<td>British issued the Balfour Declaration, which promised a “National Home” for the Jews in Palestine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1936 – 1939</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arab Revolt in Palestine</td>
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<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>November 29</td>
<td>U.N. Partition Resolution (G.A. 181) divided Mandate Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state with Jerusalem as an international city</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>Declaration of Israel as a Jewish State 1948 Arab-Israeli War (known as Israel War of Independence in Israel) begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>Armistice between Israel and the Arab states sets the border known as the “Green Line”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>July 26</td>
<td>Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company (leased by the British) to pay for the Aswan High Dam after the United States withdrew funding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 29</td>
<td>Israel, at the behest of the French and British, launches the Suez Campaign. Israel remains in the peninsula for several months, until both the United States and the Soviet Union pressure withdrawal</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>Suez Canal reopened</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Egypt and Syria form the United Arab Republic, a union between the two states that lasted until 1961</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Founding of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser closed straits of Tiran to shipments of arms to Israel and dismissed U.N. peacekeeping force in the Sinai</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June 5 – 10</td>
<td>Six Day War (alternatively known as the 1967 Arab-Israeli War) Israel conquered the Sinai Peninsula, Golan Heights, West Bank, and Gaza Strip. Resulted in the issuing of U.N. Resolution 242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug. – Sept.</td>
<td>Khartoum Conference: Arab states agree to no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>November 22</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council agrees on the text of Resolution 242, calling for Israeli withdrawal from Arab</td>
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lands and Arab peace with Israel.

1969 – 1970 *April - July*  
War of Attrition between Egypt and Israel

1970 *September*  
“Black September:” PLO hijacked three plane and flew them to Jordan. King Hussein used the Jordanian army against the PLO bases, freeing the hostages, and driving the PLO out of Jordan and into Lebanon.

1973 *October 6*  
1973 Arab-Israeli War (known as the Yom Kippur War in Israel, the Ramadan War in Arab countries, and also as the October War) began with a surprise Egyptian attack across the Suez Canal. Resulted in the issuing of U.N. Resolution 338-340 and 344.

*October 22*  
United Nations Security Council agrees on Resolution 338, calling for a cease fire and peace negotiations. Resolution 339, a cease-fire specifically directed at Egypt and Israel was adopted on the 23rd, as the two sides were still fighting.

*December 21 – 29*  
Geneva Convention convened

1974 *January 18*  
Egypt-Israel Separation of Forces Agreement (Sinai I) signed

*May 31*  
Syria-Israel disengagement agreement signed

*October 29*  
Rabat Summit: Arab league met in Rabat and declared the PLO the only representative of the Palestinians

1979 *March 26*  
Signing of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty

1980 – 1988  
Iran-Iraq War

1981 *October 6*  
Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat assassinated during a parade commemorating the 1973 War

1982 *April 29*  
Israel completes withdrawal from the Sinai

*June 6*  
Israeli invasion of Lebanon

1983 *April 18*  
United States embassy in Beirut bombed, killing more than 60 people

*October 23*  
Hezbollah suicide bomber destroyed United States Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, killing 241

1984 *September 20*  
United States embassy in Beirut bombed again, killing 22

1987 – 1991  
First Intifada, a mostly non-violent resistance movement
1991  
*October 30*  
Madrid Peace Conference begins

1993  
*September 13*  
Israel and PLO sign Oslo Declaration of Principles. Agree to mutual recognition, PLO members allowed back in the territories and staged withdrawals from the West Bank and Gaza.

1994  
*October 26*  
Israel-Jordan peace treaty signed

1995  
*September 28*  
Israel and PLO sign the Oslo Interim Agreement  
*November 4*  
Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin assassinated

1998  
*October 23*  
Wye River Memorandum signed, agreement to implement Oslo Accords

2000  
*May*  
Israel withdraws from Lebanon after almost twenty years in the country  
*July 11 – 25*  
Camp David talks between President Clinton, Prime Minister Barak and Palestinian Chairman Arafat  
*September 28*  
Second Intifada begins. This Intifada involves both non-violent protest and the use of suicide bombers  
*October 17*  
Sharm el Sheikh Conference, hosted by President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, ends with promises to end violence  
*October 21-22*  
Mubarak convenes Extraordinary Arab League Summit, which praises the actions of the Palestinians  
*December 18*  
Two sides met one last time to discuss Clinton Bridging Proposals, but there was no agreement.

2001  
*January 21 – 27*  
Taba talks between Israelis and Palestinians  
*September 11*  
Terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon conducted by al-Qaeda, a terrorist group led by Saudi national Osama bin Laden

2002  
*March 28*  
Saudis reveal Saudi Peace Plan, calling for Israeli withdrawal and a “just settlement” for refugees  
*June 23*  
Israel begins building a “Security Fence.” The International Court of Justice rules the wall violates international law and must be torn down on July 9, 2004. Construction continues.

2003  
*March 19*  
Operation Iraqi Freedom begins, Baghdad falls in less than a month  
*Aqaba Summit*  
Vow to stop violence and to follow the “Roadmap”  
*November 19*  
U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 1515 supporting the Roadmap for Peace
2005  *July – September*  Israel pulled out of Gaza, evacuating the settlements by August 15 and the military by September 1. Gaza was then sealed, the border crossing to Egypt closed, and all entry and exit of people and goods controlled by Israel.

2006  *July – October*  Hezbollah border skirmish and capture of two Israeli soldiers leads to full Israeli assault on Hezbollah forces in southern Lebanon. The U.N. passed resolution 1701 to end the conflict, calling for the disarmament of Hezbollah. Most Israeli troops withdrew by October 1.

2007  *November 26 – 28*  President Bush convenes the Annapolis Summit to negotiate a commitment from both sides to the Roadmap.

2008  *December 27*  Israel launches Operation Cast Lead against Hamas in Gaza

2009  *January 18*  Israel announces an end to Operation Cast Lead, when the death toll stood at 1,300 Palestinians dead, 13 Israelis dead
Key Players

Hafez al-Assad
President of Syria, 1971 – 2000. Refused to participate in the first Geneva Conference and not very enthusiastic about Carter’s attempts to reconvene the conference.

Alfred Leroy “Roy” Atherton
Foreign Service Officer and diplomat. Served as Ambassador to Egypt 1978-1979. Would often travel to coordinate between Carter and Begin and Sadat.

Menachem Begin
Sixth Prime Minister of Israel, 1977 – 1983. Member of the Herut (freedom) party and ruled as part of the Likud (consolidation) coalition government. Israeli leader who negotiated and signed the Camp David Accords and the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty.

Zbigniew Brzezinski

Jimmy Carter
President of the United States 1977 – 1981. Key in mediation of Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty

Moshe Dayan
Israeli military leader and politician. Was the fourth Chief of Staff of Israeli Defense Forces. Went on to become Defense Minister and then Foreign Minister. Served as Menachem Begin’s Foreign Minister 1977-1980. Was a key pragmatic voice in the Israeli delegation.

Prince Fahd bin Abdulaziz el Saud
Crown prince of Saudi Arabia 1975 – 1982 and de facto leader during the later years of the reign of his brother, King Khalid. He was the primary contact with the Carter during Carters search for peace.

Ismail Fahmy
Foreign Minister of Egypt 1973 – 1977. He resigned over Sadat’s plan to actually go to Jerusalem to seek peace with Begin directly. He did not believe that peace with Israel was the best course of action for Egypt, as it would most like cause breaches of confidence around the Arab world.

Gerald R. Ford
President of the United States, 1973 – 1975. He was the only president to not be elected to the office of either president or vice president before taking the job. Vice President Spiro Agnew had already resigned with Nixon resigned, so Speaker of the House Ford was sworn in, first as vice president, then as president when Nixon resigned. He felt it was his duty to continue the policies of his elected predecessor, and retained Nixon’s cabinet and continued his talks in the Middle East.
Boutros Boutros-Ghali
From a family of diplomats under the old regime. Served as acting Foreign Minister twice, in 1977 and 1978, and as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, from 1977 – 1981. He was very involved in the negotiations at Camp David and the final negotiations to develop the text of a treaty. He may have had misgivings as other ministers in Sadat’s government did, but generally remained very loyal both to Sadat and to Egypt.

King Hussein bin Talal
King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan after his father, King Talal, abdicated in 1935 until his death in 1999. He was the Jordanian leader at the time of the Camp David Accords. He was also the second Arab leader to sign a peace treaty with Israel, in 1994.

Mohammed Ibrahim Kamel
Long time Egyptian diplomat appointed to the office of Foreign Minister in 1977 after the resignation of Fahmy. He served until the final day of the Camp David talks in 1978, when he resigned because he did not believe that the Accords were in the best interests of Egypt.

Mustafa Khalil
Egyptian Prime Minister 1978 – 1980, also Egyptian Foreign Minister 1979 – 1980. He was instrumental in negotiating the treaty between Israel and Egypt once the Camp David Accords had been signed.

Henry Kissinger
German-born American diplomat and politician and advocate of realpolitik strategy. He served as National Security Advisor and later Secretary of State under Nixon and then Ford. (1969 – 1975 as National Security Advisor and 1973 – 1977 as Secretary of State). He helped negotiate the disengagement agreements between the Israeli, Egyptian, and Syrians. He was the pioneer of “shuttle diplomacy” and a prime mover in the development and signing of the Sinai I and II agreements.

Golda Meir

Gamal Abdel Nasser
President of Egypt 1956 – 1970. Fought in 1948 War against Israel, led Free Officers Revolution that brought him to power. Instrumental in formation of United Arab Republic with Syria.

Richard Nixon
President of the United States 1969 – 1973, when he resigned in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Nixon tried to restart the negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors in 1969, but got no where until after the 1973 War created a negotiation imperative. He and Kissinger paved the way for Carter’s later efforts.
William Quandt
Member of the National Security Council staff 1972 – 1974 and 1977 – 1979. He was Brzezinski’s Middle East specialist and was involved in the drafting of the 1975 Brookings Institute’s recommendations for the Middle East and in the negotiations to bring peace to the region, including the Camp David talks and the treaty negotiations. He has written several books and articles on peace in the Middle East and is an invaluable resource about event that occurred during that time.

Yitzhak Rabin
Prime Minister of Israel 1974 – 1977 and 1992 until his assassination in 1995. He was responsible for the completion of the Sinai II talks and was Carter’s original counterpart in Israel, before Begin and Likud won the elections.

Anwar Sadat
President of Egypt, 1970 – 1981. Was a member of the Free Officers group that led the coup in 1956. He launched the 1973 War and was personally responsible for much of the peace process between 1977 and 1979.

Cyrus Vance
Secretary of State 1977 – 1980. Vance was instrumental in implementing Carter’s policies for peace in the Middle East, including negotiating at Camp David and for the treaty. He resigned in 1980 after the attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran failed.

Ezer Weizman
A pilot in the Israeli Defense Forces who became the Defense Minister under PM Begin, 1977 – 1980. He was a more moderate and pragmatic voice during the negotiations at Camp David.
Introduction
Oh, I come from a land, from a faraway place
Where the caravan camels roam.
Where they cut off your ear
If they don't like your face
It's barbaric, but hey, it's home.

When the wind's from the east,
And the sun's from the west,
And the sand in the glass is right;
Come on down, stop on by,
Hop a carpet and fly,
To another Arabian night!

“Arabian Nights,” *Aladdin*

These are the first words the audience hears in *Aladdin*, and they are emblematic of how Americans perceive the Middle East. Mark Twain’s travels to the region in 1867 brought the Middle East into the homes of many Americans through his book *Innocents Abroad, or The New Pilgrim’s Progress*. He described the Holy Land as a region of ancient splendor and wonder, but with more cynicism and less reverence. He writes of the “barren shores of Galilee” and “the questionable loveliness of Esdraelon.”¹ Twain’s descriptions capture the essence of how Americans view the region; it is both a place of wonder and a backward stretch of desert in the middle of nowhere good only for its bountiful supply of oil. The image is divided between biblical history with its ancient splendor and the supposed barbarity of the region today.

The Middle East simultaneously captivates the American imagination with visions of sheikhs and harems and creates more confusion about the course of American foreign policy than any other region. The tantalizing myth arises from nineteenth century tourist literature and twentieth century Hollywood, while the confusion and fear stem from the creation of the

Jewish State of Israel in 1948. U.S. Policymakers found themselves adding an almost inexplicable affinity for Israel to the mix of Cold War conflict and the power of oil. This heady mixture was thoroughly jumbled in the crucible of regional conflict. The Middle East saw four wars in a quarter century, one of which caused an oil embargo, and the last two played out with Vietnam still looming in the background. There was no clear side to choose, no clear enemy, and no clear benefit in choosing Israel over the oil producing Arab states. Should the United States forget Israel to preserve its source of fuel? Was the Soviet Union controlling the actions of the Arab states? Did Israel’s military prowess indicate that it was the ticket to avoiding Vietnam in the Middle East?²

An end to the conflict seemed unbearably distant during the presidential campaign of 1976. Former National Security Advisor and then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger spent a great deal of political capital disentangling the Egyptian and Israeli forces surrounding the Suez Canal. The idea that Israel would completely withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula anytime soon was beyond even the most optimistic imaginations. And yet Israel signed a peace treaty with Egypt pledging to do just that less than four years after the signing of the Sinai II Agreement. The peace treaty followed lengthy negotiations and many disappointments, but it was a treaty, and it has held. The Camp David Accords and Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty that followed mark the beginning of a new phase of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The agreements represented the first direct negotiations between an Arab state and Israel. As such these negotiations deserve careful study.

Much has been written about the American policy relating to the Arab-Israeli conflict in general, and the Camp David Accords specifically. My goal is to place the Accords in the context of foreign policy decisions and how those decisions can serve as a model for current foreign relations crises.³

Ink poured onto the page even before the ink on the peace treaty was dry, mostly in the form of memoirs. Anwar el-Sadat, Moshe Dayan, President Carter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Cyrus Vance were among those who committed their thoughts and memories to paper. These memoirs will provide most of the primary sources for this thesis. Other early works were political and scholarly analyses. They ranged from overall examinations of American policy in the Middle East to explorations of the results of the Accords and Treaty.⁴ Through the 1980s, many political scientists evaluated the success of the treaty and analyzed whether or not it would hold. After the peace efforts of the 1990s began, such speculation largely ceased.⁵

The milestone work on the Camp David Accords, William Quandt’s *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics*, was published in 1986. Quandt was the member of the National


⁴ The first major overview work to include the Camp David Accords was Steven Spiegel’s *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, published in 1985, which examined the effects of American public opinion in making foreign policy in the Middle East. Many portions of his argument foreshadow and sometimes state the conclusions of John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt’s *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Other major works include George Lenczowski’s *American Presidents and the Middle East*, published in 1990 and William Quandt’s *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967*, published in 2005.

⁵ Joel Beinin’s “Cold Peace,” in the January 1985 *MERIP Reports* is a prime example of the pessimistic outlook while Alfred Atherton’s “The Shifting Sands of Middle East Peace,” in the Spring 1992 *Foreign Policy*, show the shift to a more positive evaluation.
Security Council responsible for the Middle East and was part of the negotiating team at Camp David. As an administration insider, Quandt had access to personnel and records. This first analysis was clearly colored by the politics of President Ronald Reagan, because Quandt placed the accords in the context of containing Soviet influence in the Middle East, a position from which he backed away in his later works. Significantly, Quandt claimed that Camp David would be remembered as President Jimmy Carter’s crowning achievement, which was not a given when he wrote *Camp David*. Politicians and analysts at the time were speculating as to whether or not the Egyptian-Israeli treaty would last the decade. *Camp David*, as well as Quandt’s later articles and books, will be major sources for this thesis.

The 1990s brought new peace negotiations and therefore a new concern in the “how’s” of the Camp David negotiations. Shibley Telhami published *Power and Leadership in International Bargaining: the Path to the Camp David Accords* in 1990, the same year that Tom Princen’s article “Camp David: Problem-Solving or Power Politics as Usual?” appeared in the *Journal of Peace Research*. Both authors were concerned with the theoretical principles at work during the negotiation and evaluating how well each side negotiated to its advantage. Telhami focuses on the effective exertion of national influence through effective leadership, especially by Menachem Begin. Princen examines the differences in obligations and responsibilities between Carter’s role of mediator and that of President of the United States. Both arguments are important factors in understanding American policy preceding Camp David.

The later 1990s saw very few publications focused on Camp David. There was more literature about the American involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including

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comparisons between the Camp David Summit during Carter’s administration to the summit there mediated by Bill Clinton in 2000. The one exception to this trend is Kenneth Stein’s *Heroic Diplomacy: Sadat, Kissinger, Carter, Begin and the Quest for Arab-Israeli Peace.*

Stein’s examination concentrated on the important factor of personality. He focused on the effect that the personalities of the three leaders had on policy leading up to the negotiations and how those personalities affected the negotiations themselves.

While these works provide essential scholarship on Camp David, most works about American policy in the Middle East published after Camp David had a much broader focus. They examined American policy in the region since 1945 or 1967. Most devoted a sizeable chunk to the Egyptian-Israeli negotiations and treaty, though not all. The Camp David Accords does not take precedence in these works. 1979 alone was a very busy year, including the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, the Iranian Revolution, and Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan. All three events had major implications for American foreign policy.

This thesis will rely on previously available sources, and take advantage of the benefit of time. Stein’s work was published prior to the failure of Oslo, the unresolved Camp David Summit under Clinton, and 9/11. Though large-scale Arab-Israeli wars have ceased, the current situation is perhaps more dire. The lack of success with President George Bush’s “roadmap” to peace only exacerbates the shortcomings of the efforts of the 1990s. As much of the anger toward the United States expressed in the Arab and larger Muslim world has a root in the Arab-Israeli and now Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the inability to further peace in the

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10 David W. Lesch’s *1979: The Year That Shaped the Middle East,* covers this very issue.
region presents a threat to American security. To better understand current policy options, my analysis will explore the success of Carter’s policies and the applicability of those policies to today’s crises. I will focus on the memoirs of the participants and scholarly works to analyze the success and duplicability of Carter’s peacemaking efforts.

Chapter One lays the foundations by first looking at a few theories about what factors are the most important to American foreign policy and who makes that policy. I will then set the stage for the Carter administration and the Camp David negotiations by giving an overview of the events in the region from the creation of the State of Israel through 1976, briefly examining Kissinger’s mediation efforts after the October War. Next, I will explore what Carter said about the Middle East during the 1976 campaign and analyze how policies shifted once Carter was in the White House as well as how they fit into the larger goals of his administration.

Chapter Two will detail the planning for and failure of the planned Geneva Conference. I will consider why the Carter Administration seemed to have such a singular view of Geneva as the only path to peace in the Middle East that Carter viewed Sadat’s visit to Jerusalem in the context of jump starting the negotiations. I will also look at the attempts at, and breakdown of, bilateral Egyptian-Israeli negotiations. In addition, I will consider whether American policy hindered these talks.

Chapter Three discusses the events of 1978, culminating in the September Camp David Accords. I will explore the impact of the Carter-Sadat strategies begun early that year and Begin’s intransigence through the spring and summer. I will then look at the events that led to the invitation to Camp David and how that fit into Carter’s larger Middle Eastern goals. The Camp David summit represented a diversion from his earlier push for an overall
settlement and that difference is key. My analysis will then turn to the summit itself, the
difficulties of negotiations and the American role in the process. The two framework
documents produced at the end of the thirteen days are important both for the successful plan
for an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and the inability to implement a plan to solve the
Palestinian problem. This section will conclude with the negotiation of the actual peace treaty.

The Conclusion chapter will address the implications of the treaty and the situation
today. I will place the treaty in the context of the shift from Arab-Israeli to Israeli-Palestinian
conflict and the inability of modern leaders to solve that issue. I will conclude with the lessons
today’s leaders should take from Carter’s policies and discuss the applicability of Camp
David as a model for today’s peace negotiations.

The negotiations that took place at Camp David remain an important benchmark in the
history of Middle Eastern conflict, presenting a precedent for the possibility of peace without
providing a clear path for leaders to follow. The reasons behind this ultimate success and
failure need careful consideration to inform the course for the future.
Follow the road past war and take a left at Carter…

A long, long, time ago – 1977
We always took care to make it understood that we were Americans—Americans!...The people stared at us everywhere, and we stared at them. We generally made them feel rather small, too, before we got done with them, because we bore down on them with America’s greatness until we crushed them...

If ever those children of Israel in Palestine forget when Gideon’s Band went through there from America, they out to be cursed once more and finished. It was the rarest spectacle that ever astounded mortal eyes, perhaps.

Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad, or the New Pilgrim’s Progress*

Mark Twain expressed a sentiment common to many Americans in this account of his visit to the holy land; we are here and we are here to stay. The United States edged into the Middle East with missionaries and businessmen during the nineteenth century and never left. This distant region has become a central part of American foreign policy, important for its abundant supplies of oil and as the location of Israel, special friend of the United States.\(^1\) It often seems that American foreign policy in the Middle East revolves around the actions of Israel and the conflicts to which that country is a party. Israel is, more often than not, at the cause of instability in the region. American support for Israel could result in a loss of access to oil and other resources. Resolving the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts became an increasingly important factor in the establishment of American foreign policy in the Middle East since the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. The term “Peace Process” came into being as a result of the successful American mediation of the conflict during the 1970s. American policies in the Middle East continue to be a part of the Peace Process, whether or

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\(^1\) The “special relationship” between Israel and the United States has examined many times. An example of how this relationship affects American perceptions and policies in outlined in the introduction to Kathleen Christison’s *Perceptions of Palestine: Their Influence on U.S. Middle East Policy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).
not those policies are bringing the region closer to peace. Of course, the role of the United States as a mediator of the Arab-Israeli conflict is only part of the overall policy plans.

**American Foreign Policy**

After the Second World War, politicians and scholars developed two schools of thought about American foreign policy and these views governed how each administration viewed American affairs in the world. One school of thought saw the world in the black-and-white terms of the Cold War, a world in bipolar confrontation. All decisions and all actions had their origins in Cold War politics, meaning that any crisis, anywhere in the world, no matter how small or how far away, was a part of the global war and thus was a potential threat to the United States. At times, various administrations employed a variation of this view. The basic premise remained the same, that the world was governed by Cold War conflict, but differed in the weight each region received in calculations of global threats. Some crises were more of a threat to the United States than others. Thus it was acceptable to take “losses” on the periphery as long as the United States continued to win “battles” in core regions. The second school of thought saw the world as multipolar rather bipolar. In this paradigm, East-West relations were less important than, and not linked to, North-South relations; crises did not always relate back to the larger global conflict. The Cold War was an important part of world affairs, but it did not control all actions around the world. An administration’s choice

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of one or the other of these frameworks could significantly influence how it responded to various crises.

These theories help to explain the motives and rationales behind American foreign policy decisions, but do not explain who makes policy decisions. Another set of theories attempts to explain who actually makes foreign policy. One theory is that the bureaucracy has great power over the direction of foreign policy; once various agencies get behind one policy they build an extensive bureaucratic machine to support it. This makes it very difficult to change policy, as it would involve the elimination of entire departments. Agencies have the power to drag their feet on the implementation of new policies or support ideas that they favor. This permanent government keeps policy relatively stable, prohibiting sudden shifts in policy due to a new executive promoting a new ideology. This theory may seem persuasive, but it does not explain why agencies like the Department of State often complain about their lack of influence or how inter-agency rivalry often results in loss of political influence.\(^\text{16}\)

Another theory, more important for the purposes of this thesis, is that the executive and his top advisors are primarily responsible for the creation of foreign policy. This position notes that Congress and the bureaucracy are simply too large to effect any great change in policy. The office of the executive is small enough and powerful enough to affect the course of policy.\(^\text{17}\) American public opinion serves as a check of sorts on this power. In the case of Middle East policy, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) wields enormous power in terms of molding public opinion. Funds dispersed at the AIPAC’s direction can make or break elections of senators and congressmen and have a great impact on presidential


elections. Some discount the impact of the Israel Lobby on American foreign policy. It is true that many administrations support Israel for ideological reasons rather than as a buffer against the political clout of AIPAC. Still, AIPAC’s political influence is too large to be ignored.

Beyond presidents’ plans and public perception, several key factors govern United States foreign policy concerns in the Middle East. During the Cold War, American policy was directed toward containing the Soviet influence in the region. In the 1950s and 1960s, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq were Arab nationalist regimes espousing Arab socialism. Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Israel, by contrast, looked to the West. As Israel’s primary enemies were Syria and Egypt, the United States had an interest in supporting Israel against their antagonistic, and perhaps Soviet-leaning, actions. Also, American identity is steeped in the Judeo-Christian religious tradition. In popular culture the Jews of Israel were like brothers who followed the familiar Old Testament while the Muslims in the Arab states were an alien “other.” Israel occupied the Holy Land; its towns and cities bore familiar names mentioned in the Bible. United States policy makers had, and still have, many reasons to create policies that favored Israel. And yet perhaps the most important consideration governing American policy creation does not favor extensive support for Israel. The rich oil reserves of the Middle East are in Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states, states not on friendly terms with Israel. United States foreign policy has to balance the support of Israel with the American oil requirements.

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19 Spiegel, 386.
Despite differences in the political party and stated policies of successive American presidents, foreign policy in the last six decades has remained relatively stable. A different party with a different ideology might come to power, but, according to Steven Spiegel, a scholar of American foreign policy in the Middle East, all administrations in the second half of the twentieth century sought to “prevent Soviet expansion, limit Arab radicalism, promote Arab moderates and pro-American governments.” All stood by Israel and took an active role in the security and peace of the region.

The Middle East Thus Far
The Ancient Past to the Modern Era

People like to say that the Middle East is complicated. And it is. The region is the birthplace of civilization and the three monotheistic religions of the world. Its religious significance makes it the hub of violence committed in the name of God. It has been the center of conquering empires and later conquered by other empires. At the turn of the twentieth century, the aging Ottoman Empire, with ever increasing amounts of influence from the British and the French Empires) ruled the region.

During the First World War, the Ottoman Empire threw its lot in with Germany and suffered the consequences of defeat. The British and French carved the region into mandates (because American President Woodrow Wilson insisted upon the principle of self-determination of nations). These mandates became the modern nation states of the Middle East. One of the mandates was Palestine, which was very problematic. The idea of the mandate system was to help the inhabitants of the mandate learn to govern themselves, but

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23 Spiegel, 381-382.
24 Ibid., 381-382.
Palestine had two peoples vying for sovereignty: the Arabs, whose families had been on that land for hundreds of years, and the recent European Jewish immigrants looking to form a Jewish Homeland in the middle of an Arab Muslim region.

Through the first half of the twentieth century, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia gained their independence, but Palestine remained a seat of instability. Increasing numbers of European Jews fled the policies of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich while the Arabs of Palestine were beginning to develop a national consciousness as Palestinians. Through the Arab revolt of 1936 and the constant Jewish-Arab violence the British held onto the territory. After the Second World War, however, with a country and empire in ruins, they passed responsibility for a solution to the problem to the newly formed United Nations.25

Post World War II

The United Nations devised a scheme to partition the British mandate territory of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, in 1947. In May 1948, Israel declared its independence, igniting the first Arab-Israeli War. Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq invaded Israel. After six months of intermittent fighting, Israel decisively beat the Arab forces and gained its “Green Line” borders.26

Hence the conflict began.

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The Israelis next clashed with their Arab neighbors when President Gamal Abdel-Nasser, the Egyptian revolutionary leader, nationalized the Suez Canal. The British and French, seeking to preserve their economic interests, employed the Israelis to retake the Canal. This led to the beginning of American intervention in the Arab-Israeli conflict. In this first intervention, the United States teamed with the Soviet Union and forced the Israelis back across the Green Line border.\textsuperscript{27}

The following decade saw the formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization and continued hostility between Israel and the Arab states. The next full-scale confrontation was in June 1967.\textsuperscript{28} False information about Israeli troop movements supplied by the Soviet Union led to a massing of Israeli and Arab forces along the borders and, finally, to an Israeli preemptive strike against the Egyptian air force on June 5, 1967. In the next six days, Israel took the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, and the West Bank from Jordan. This proved to be a turning point in American policy. The United States was bogged down in the quagmire of Vietnam. Meanwhile, Israel had successfully defeated three Arab armies without American assistance. If only the South Vietnamese could do the same. Moscow, embarrassed by the failure of the weapons it sold the Arab states, broke off relations with Tel Aviv, strengthening the impression of the 1967 War as a Cold War conflict.\textsuperscript{29}

President Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration threw its weight behind Israel, supporting its claims to the territories. Johnson also backed United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which noted the “inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., 48-49.
\textsuperscript{28}For a full analysis of the causes and events of the 1967 War, see Michael B. Oren, \textit{Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). This war is often referred to either as the 1967 War or the Six Day War. I shall refer to this conflict as the 1967 War.
\textsuperscript{29}Stein, 49-54.
need to work for a just and lasting peace,” but in the non-binding preamble and not the main
body of the resolution. The resolution notably called for the “withdrawal of Israeli armed
forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict.”

The substitution of “from territories” for “from the territories” was one of the key compromises secured by the United States to
secure Israeli acceptance of the resolution. Johnson then topped this semantic feat with the
sale of F-4 Phantom jets to Israel.

The Nixon and Ford Years

When Richard Nixon came to power in 1969, he brought his views of world conflict,
and Henry Kissinger, with him. Nixon and Kissinger, like Johnson, saw the world in terms of
bipolar balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union, but they were
willing to take a loss in Vietnam in exchange for a win in the Middle East. That meant
excluding the Soviet Union from the bargaining table, in order to maximize opportunities for
American gains. Kissinger’s strategy presumed the necessity of a balance of power between

31 The language of UN Security Council Resolution 242 is very controversial. The English version of the above
referenced section calls for “Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied during the recent
conflict,” while the French version reads “Retrait des forces armées israéliennes des territoires occupé lors du
recent conflict,” literally “Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from the territories, occupied during the recent
conflict” (emphasis added). It is grammatically impossible to say “from territories” in French; the definite article
is required. The omission of “the” from the English version of the text has caused major controversies over peace
settlements. The Israeli position is that that absence of “the” means that they must only withdraw from some of
the conquered territories in exchange for peace. The Arab position, referencing the French text, is that the
intended meaning was “from all of the territories” and thus they refuse to make peace until Israel gives back all
territory acquired during the war. The American position has generally been that the phrase means withdrawal
from all territories, except where adjustments must be made for Israeli security. These adjustments must be in the
form of equitable exchange of territory so that the size of Israel would be the geographically the same size as
before 1967.
32 Quandt, Peace Process, 45-49.
33 Ben-Zvi, 25-29.
superpowers. Furthermore, he believed that it was the leader’s role to obtain gains within that balance without involving bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{34}

Nixon had the perfect opportunity to test his negotiating strategy immediately as Israel and Egypt were still firing at one another across the Suez Canal in a war of attrition. Nixon sent former Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton to the Middle East to survey the situation and come back with a recommended policy. Scranton’s recommendation was to take a more “evenhanded” approach to the conflict as opposed to absolute support for Israel. Nixon did not like this assessment; if the Soviets were the cause of this conflict, and they supported the Arabs, then the United States had to be a good friend to Israel.\textsuperscript{35} Nonetheless, Secretary of State William Rogers and the State Department picked up the concept of evenhandedness, leading to the development of the Rogers Plan.\textsuperscript{36} This proposal called for peace between Egypt and Israel, mutual respect for territorial sovereignty, and diplomatic recognition. Unfortunately for Rogers, none of the involved parties were enthusiastic about his plan, believing it either went too far or not far enough.\textsuperscript{37} Despite this failure, Nixon and Kissinger began negotiations to end the war of attrition. All their efforts, however, yielded little during Nixon’s first term in office. Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat had more cause to negotiate with Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir than she with him. Incremental negotiations and small steps were the order of the day; American policymakers saw no need to force Israel to make peace with its neighbors.\textsuperscript{38} Israel was already serving as an American proxy supporting

\textsuperscript{34} Friedlander, 17-19.
\textsuperscript{35} George Lenczowski, \textit{American Presidents and the Middle East} (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 119-121.
\textsuperscript{37} Quandt, \textit{Peace Process}, 67-68. The Israelis were not willing to give up territory for anything less than full diplomatic relations, but the Egyptians were not willing to diplomatically recognize Israel at that point in time. They wanted the whole of Sinai back before beginning to consider diplomatic recognition.
\textsuperscript{38} Parker, 28-36.
United States interests in the region. During the September 1970 uprising by the Palestinian Liberation Organization in Jordan, Israel supported the Jordanian regime against threats from both the PLO and Syria.\textsuperscript{39} Not until 1973 did Nixon see a need to re-evaluate his Middle East policy.

In October 1973, Sadat, in coordination with Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad, attacked Israel on the Jewish holiday Yom Kippur. Both the Egyptian and Syrian armies pushed Israeli lines back across the Sinai and Golan Heights, respectively.\textsuperscript{40} The United Nations issued two Security Council Resolutions, 338 (which called for a cease fire and negotiations based on UNSC Resolution 242) and 344 (which required that the conference be under UN auspices) to bring an end to the conflict.\textsuperscript{41} The fighting finally ended after several attempted cease-fires. Though not clear victors by the end of the three-week war, Egypt and Syria did manage to bring about the most productive wave of negotiating in the history of the conflict. These negotiations laid vital groundwork for the Carter administration. Formally planning a UN conference of all involved parties to be held in Geneva, Kissinger began the process of shuttle diplomacy and step-by-step negotiations. The Geneva format also allowed Kissinger to include the Soviet Union as a bargaining partner, in keeping with détente, but exclude it from actual decisions since Kissinger did not intend to do any substantive negotiating at Geneva.\textsuperscript{42} The genuine negotiations would take place as bilateral talks between the Israelis and the Egyptians, Syrians, or Jordanians, with Kissinger shuttling back and forth between the various capitals in the Middle East. All proposals would go through Kissinger so he could act as a

\textsuperscript{39} Quandt, \textit{Peace Process}, 76-83.
\textsuperscript{40} For a full account of the events of the October 1973 War, see Stein, \textit{Heroic Diplomacy}, 74-96. This war is known as the October War, the Ramadan War, the Yom Kippur War, and the 1973 War. I shall use the nomenclatures October War or 1973 War.
\textsuperscript{42} Parker, 54-56.
clearinghouse for all feedback. Another tactic upon which he relied were secret negotiations and letters to bridge the holes left in the face-saving rhetoric of public agreements.43

The United States had been moderately involved as a mediator in 1967 and 1970, but Kissinger’s efforts after the October War began the era of almost constant American involvement in the “Peace Process.” The basic structure of any settlement under the peace process had not changed much since 1967. First and foremost was the notion that all parties must accept the land for peace framework of UN Security Council Resolution 242. Most believed that Israel’s acceptance of this resolution would eventually lead to a pull-back to the Green Line borders, which would include withdrawing from East Jerusalem.44

Kissinger was only going for a small portion of the UN framework, but his methods obviously worked. Even while Nixon was embroiled in the Watergate scandal back home, Kissinger negotiated two Egyptian-Israeli agreements and a Syrian-Israeli agreement. He even attempted a Jordanian agreement, but Jordan had not participated in the war and thus had no immediate impetus to negotiate. The process continued virtually unchanged after Gerald Ford took the oath of office in 1974. But by the conclusion of the Sinai II agreement in 1975, all parties involved were exhausted from the minutiae of negotiations. American guarantees were necessary for every concession from the Israelis or the Egyptians. Step-by-step diplomacy simply put too much on the line for symbolic gains of little substance.45

Kissinger failed to achieve more gains for many reasons, one of the most important of which was his perspective on conflict. Kissinger had a very nineteenth-century view of how the world should work. This view stressed balance of power politics among major states, which limited his flexibility to negotiate from a twentieth-century perspective involving

43 Quandt, Peace Process, 98-104. 159-160.
44 Ibid., 1-5.
multiple actors with no clear balance of power. Because Kissinger’s view was essentially a zero sum game, he was too pessimistic to consider the possibility of a comprehensive settlement, which he thought would mean Arab gains traded for Israeli losses. Kissinger believed that both sides would accept only minor steps. He did, however, have the trust and confidence of both sides and worked very well with both Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and Sadat, enabling him to push both to make concessions they otherwise might not have made. Notwithstanding these factors, for all Kissinger’s efforts, step-by-step diplomacy produced few results.

**The Left at Carter**

*Carter’s Campaign*

Very few people had heard the name Jimmy Carter before he announced his candidacy for President on December 12, 1974. He seemed to be stepping out of a vacuum and onto the national stage. He had virtually no foreign policy experience, but went on to become one of the most important foreign policy actors in the late twentieth century. Carter began his campaign with pledges to clean up Washington and make policy-making more transparent. His major themes throughout the campaign were “restoration of public trust in government” and various reforms regarding government transparency, welfare management, and responsible taxes. Though Carter focused primarily on domestic issues during the campaign,
foreign relations and the Middle East soon made an appearance in the campaign. Ford and Carter exchanged many blows over who was a better friend to Israel.\textsuperscript{50}

Carter’s religious views and personal experience played a large part in the formation of his opinions about Israel. Prime Minister Meir invited Carter to Israel in May 1973, while he was governor of Georgia. His trip made a great impact upon him, speaking to his deep religious faith. He wrote in his memoir that part of the reason for his loyalty toward Israel was that the Israelis maintained open access to the holy sites.\textsuperscript{51} Carter’s religious sentiment and familiar rhetoric about similar Israeli and American philosophies were both important elements in speeches on the campaign trail.\textsuperscript{52} As to his In terms of how his policies would look, Carter made statements that “I believe deeply that the foundation of our Middle East [policy] must be insuring the safety and security of Israel. This country should never attempt to impose a settlement in Israel, nor should we force Israel to make territorial concessions which are detrimental to her security.”\textsuperscript{53} He reaffirmed Israel’s “right to exist” and repeatedly said that he would did not expect and would not force Israel to give up the Golan Heights.\textsuperscript{54}

Toward the end of the presidential campaign, the Arab boycott of Israeli goods became a major issue, especially the issue of Arabs were boycotting American businesses trading with Israel. In order to set up trade relations with Arab states, some companies were beginning to promise not to trade with Israel.\textsuperscript{55} This was very troubling for someone like Carter, who was campaigning on a pro-Israel platform. Carter gave many speeches on the subject during the campaign, focusing on the inaction of the Ford administration. In a speech

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Quandt, \textit{Peace Process}, 172.}
\footnote{Presidential Campaign, part 1, 165, 167-168, 216-217.}
\footnote{Thompson, “Issues,” 10-11.}
\footnote{Presidential Campaign, part 1, 292, 441.}
\footnote{Carter, 284-285.}
\end{footnotes}
to a conference of leaders of major Jewish organizations in Boston, he said, “I see no reason why we should let a foreign nation through economic pressure circumvent or abrogate the Bill of Rights of the United States,” referring both to the Arab boycott and the oil embargo.\textsuperscript{56} Carter promised to take swift action against the Arab boycott and he put it on the agenda as one of the initial policies to review in January 1977.\textsuperscript{57}

Despite the deeply felt attachment Carter voiced toward Israel, Carter also campaigned on the promise to support human rights around the world.\textsuperscript{58} He was one of the first to call for a policy to counter the growing human rights crisis of Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories and in the surrounding Arab states. Carter called for a “more ambitious strategy that would lead to diplomatic relations between the Arabs and the Israelis.”\textsuperscript{59} During a speech in Tokyo in May, he spoke of trust, saying, “we must strive to maintain good relations with the Arab countries as well as Israel, and to recognize Arab needs and aspirations. . . . The rights of the Palestinians must also be recognized as part of any final solution.”\textsuperscript{60}

Carter also indicated a substantive break with the views of the previous administrations regarding the way the world works. Addressing the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in March 1976, Carter disparaged the bipolar worldview:

\begin{quote}
For too long, our foreign policy has consisted almost entirely of maneuver and manipulation based on the assumption that the world is a jungle of competing national antagonisms, where military supremacy and economic muscle are the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{56} Presidential Campaign, part 2. 836.
\textsuperscript{58} Thompson, “Initiatives,” 11
\textsuperscript{59} Parker, 99.
\textsuperscript{60} Presidential Campaign, part 1, 69-70.
only things that work and where rival powers are balanced against each other to keep the peace.\textsuperscript{61}

And yet he also bought into the Cold War paradigm of containment, noting that “without a settlement, the [Middle East] will become increasingly open to Soviet influence and more susceptible to radical violence.”\textsuperscript{62}

Campaign promises and statements are never the best gauge of what a future public official will accomplish. Carter’s admitted lack of foreign policy experience may have meant that his pro-Israel statements were only expressions of what was expected of a presidential candidate. His strong commitment to human rights and willingness to mention the Palestinians, even in the context of not recognizing the PLO until they would agree to recognize the right of Israel to exist, signaled that he had a deeper moral connection to the issue that would open the door to discussion.

\textit{The View from the Other Side of the Desk: Creating Foreign Policy}

Carter won the election in November 1976 after a very divisive campaign. Now rhetoric met policy. Two major forces divided the focus of Carter’s policies. According to Melvin Friedlander, a former Defense Intelligence Agency analyst and international policy scholar, Carter was a pragmatist, basing his theory of the world loosely on William James’s \textit{Pragmatism}. A pragmatist has two main beliefs: that truth is in perception, rather than fact, and that the individual gives the state its power, meaning the quality of a state’s people correlates directly to the quality of the state. Reverend Reinhold Niebuhr’s theology also influenced Carter. Niebuhr’s principles call for containment of the Soviet Union to contain its immoral nature. This was the basic divide in Carter’s foreign policy philosophy: a desire to

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 113.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 117.
better the human condition and the desire to preserve a balance of power.\textsuperscript{63} The former view might have led to a radical change in how to resolve conflict, while the latter view would have led to a continuation of Kissinger’s foreign policy goals.

The deciding factor was that Carter personally rejected the bipolar view of the world in favor of a multipolar approach. This shifted the emphasis away from an East-West paradigm to a North-South, or developed-developing, focus. Carter believed that most Americans had an excessive fear of communism.\textsuperscript{64} These views were those of the pragmatic Carter who believed that perception shaped reality and that human rights, especially in the developing world, were of prime concern.

Carter jumped into Middle East policy feet first and quickly surrounded himself with advisors who helped create a Middle East policy for a Carter White House. As he wrote in his memoirs, Carter struggled with the questions, and sought advice from all possible sources, only to be told by almost every advisor to stay out of the Middle East situation. It seemed that all the proposed solutions had already been tried and failed. However, I could see growing threats to the United States in the Middle East, and was willing to make another try—perhaps overly confident that I could now find answers that had eluded so many others.\textsuperscript{65}

Despite the odds, Carter realized that the Middle East could not survive in the status quo situation. There had been four Arab-Israeli wars in twenty-five years, creating an enormous refugee problem and leading to general instability in the region. The Middle East could not go continue that.\textsuperscript{66}

To facilitate his ambitious foreign policy goals, Carter chose the members of his staff, particularly his foreign-policy team, to both reflect his views and bring needed experience to

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Friedlander} Friedlander, 20-23.
\bibitem{Ben-Zvi} Ben-Zvi, 43-45.
\bibitem{Carter} Carter, 286.
\end{thebibliography}
the team. The vice president was Walter Mondale, who had close ties to the Jewish community. As his secretary of state, Carter chose Cyrus Vance, a lawyer with international experience (he negotiated at Paris at the end of the Vietnam War and negotiated a truce on Cyprus). Vance believed that there was hope for peace in the Middle East, a key element of Carter’s beliefs.

Carter selected an old friend, Zbigniew Brzezinski, as his national security advisor. In his memoirs, Carter wrote, “I find it interesting that Vance recommended Brzezinski for this job, and Zbig recommended Cy for Secretary of State. Both were good suggestions.” Carter and Brzezinski had met in 1973 while at a conference on foreign affairs. Though Brzezinski specialized in Eastern European and Soviet affairs, he had written on Middle Eastern relations with the United States. In a 1975 article published in *Foreign Policy*, Brzezinski criticized Nixon and Kissinger’s step-by-step style of diplomacy. He wrote that “the step-by-step approach might divide the Egyptians and the Syrians” because a bilateral Egyptian-Israeli agreement would seem like a betrayal of the Arab cause. Brzezinski argued that “to be effective, a solution must thus attempt to treat the whole problem and not simply bits of the infection,” and that “there is no more room for agreements without an attempt to tackle the central problems of the Middle East conflict, the relationship between Israel and the Palestinians.”

Both Vance and Brzezinski helped Carter learn about the Middle East at a very fast pace. Carter had been trained as a civil engineer and brought an engineer’s perspective to

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68 Carter, 52-53 and Quandt, *Camp David*, 34-35
69 Carter, 55
70 Carter, 54-55 and Quandt, *Camp David*, 35.
71 Zbigniew Brzezinski, François Duchêne, and Kiichi Saeki, “Peace in an International Framework,” *Foreign Policy*, No. 19 (Summer 1975), 5, 10, 17. The views presented in this article turned out to be very prescient, almost predicting the course of events.
problem solving. He wanted to know everything there was to know in order to devise the best solution.\textsuperscript{72} The Carter team based their Middle East policy on the Brookings Institution’s Middle East Study Group report, published in 1975.\textsuperscript{73} Vance, Brzezinski, and William Quandt, a member of Brzezinski’s National Security Council, all had a hand in writing this report, probably the main reasons they selected it as the outline of Carter’s Middle Eastern policies.

The Brookings report presented five basic conclusions about what was necessary for peace in the Middle East: a U.S. interest, a sense of urgency, a clear process, a settlement that brought peace and security to all, and an active U.S. role to guarantee the settlement.\textsuperscript{74} The report was ambitious in its call for a comprehensive settlement dealing with all involved parties, basing its recommendations on UN Security Council Resolution 242’s “land for peace” formula. This would involve “mutual recognition and peaceful relations,” including recognition of a Palestinian entity. Israel should return to the Green Line borders, though a settlement could involve security adjustments to the border. Israel alone, Israel and an Arab state, the international community should make special provisions for Jerusalem in order to give all religious groups free access to the holy sites. The report also combined an element of the Kissinger step-by-step method, in that both sides would implement any settlement in stages, building trust as they completed each stage.\textsuperscript{75}

By March 1977, Carter also had his own set of guidelines to follow for peace. First, peace required normal relations, not just an end to belligerency. Second, he allowed for differences between the internationally recognized borders, territorial sovereignty, and zones

\textsuperscript{72} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 31.
\textsuperscript{73} Parker, 99-100.
\textsuperscript{75} Brookings Middle East Study Group, 6-14.
in which Israeli or international troops would operate to prevent armed attacks in the future. Thirdly, Carter believed in the need for a Palestinian homeland, which was a radical idea at the time.\textsuperscript{76} With these decisions, Carter set himself on a course to recommence the Geneva conference, which had convened once in December 1973 under Nixon and Kissinger for the opening remarks and dinner, but which had not progressed to further talks. A Geneva-style conference had all the elements Carter thought necessary; it would lead to a comprehensive settlement with the involvement of the Soviet Union, and he was willing to ruffle some feathers to get it. Carter was not familiar with the role pro-Israel groups played in Washington politics and so his insistence on a comprehensive solution, including a Palestinian settlement, was new territory for most and offensive to many in Washington.\textsuperscript{77}

He had excellent advice, but Carter knew he needed to broaden his knowledge of the Middle East. He sent Vance to the Middle East in February to take the temperature of the regional leaders and see if anyone was willing to negotiate. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin spoke of peace, but did not commit himself. The Israelis were not in a particularly good mood; Carter had banned the sales of a type of cluster bomb to Israel and forbidden the sale of Israeli-made Kfir jets with American engines to Ecuador. These decisions had nothing to do with the regional conflict. Carter decided to eliminate cluster bombs from the American arsenal to support his commitment to human rights and it was standard policy to not allow the sale of American technology without specific authorization. These facts, however, did not take the edge off the decisions for the Israelis.\textsuperscript{78}

Vance’s visits to the Arab capitals were only slightly more fruitful than his visit to Israel. Sadat was particularly eager to resume negotiations under American auspices. He

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{76} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 58-61 and Quandt, \textit{Peace Process}, 182.
\item \textsuperscript{77} Stein, 35-38.
\item \textsuperscript{78} Parker, 100-101, Quandt, \textit{Camp David}. 40-42, and Stein, 189-190.
\end{itemize}
claimed to be willing, and able, to negotiate with the PLO to get them to accept Security Council Resolution 242. There was substantial disagreement among the parties about how to represent the Arab contingent; the Jordanians and Syrians wanted a single delegation, while the Egyptians wanted separate national delegations.79

Becoming Acquainted with the Middle East

Vance’s report to the National Security Council left everyone with the sense that they needed to take immediate action to bring the involved parties to a peace conference, but Carter still needed to meet with the regional leaders.80 Upon his arrival in the White House, Carter determined that he required a broader perspective on the conflict. Having visited Israel, he felt a bond to that country. Carter realized, however, that although he cared about peace, “I had no strong feelings about the Arab countries. I had never visited one and knew no Arab leader.”81

Carter began the series of meetings on more familiar grounds. His first meeting was in March with Israeli Prime Minister Rabin. The Knesset had decided to hold elections in May, so both men realized that they might not be negotiating together for long. Carter found Rabin very stubborn and unwilling to elaborate on his views about possible differences between who had sovereignty and who would maintain security control or what sort of agreement might be possible for the Palestinians. Rabin did not want to give Carter any sensitive information as Carter deliberately made many discussions public. This made negotiations very difficult but was part of Carter’s effort to “shake things up” and appear more transparent than Nixon’s administration. Carter’s public policy-making was worrisome for Rabin, who had an

79 Parker, 101-102 and Quandt, Camp David, 42-43.
80 Quandt, Camp David, 43.
81 Carter, 282.
upcoming election on the line. Rabin needed to appear tough; Carter might make him look overly conciliatory.\textsuperscript{82}

In April, Sadat became the first Arab leader to meet with Carter. This conference went much better than the meeting with Rabin. The first discussions between the two men were a little stormy, but only because neither man was sure of what to expect from the other. Sadat was used to dealing with Kissinger; he had no sense of Carter’s style. For his part, Carter had a vision of peace and could not understand why everyone else, Sadat in this particular instance, would not immediately accept it. After getting to know one another, both men fell into an easy working relationship. Sadat may have been comfortable with Kissinger, but he recognized that Carter was aiming higher. For Carter, Sadat’s willingness to offer several negotiating options, hard lines down to soft lines, displayed the kind of flexibility for which Carter was looking.\textsuperscript{83}

King Hussein arrived in Washington at the end of April, but the visit resulted in little of substance. Jordan’s position as the state that could speak of the Palestinians and rightful owner of the West Bank had eroded substantially since 1967, especially since the Arab League recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians. Consequently, Hussein agreed to participate in a conference, but he could not be a major player.\textsuperscript{84}

Carter’s meeting with Syrian President Asad occurred not in Washington but in Geneva. The two leaders met there in May. Carter wanted a comprehensive peace, and Asad would not agree to peace without the return of all territory. This was a bump in the road for Carter, given that during the campaign Carter had publicly stated that he would not force Israel to return the Golan Heights. Tellingly, Carter ended their meeting by talking about

\textsuperscript{82} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 44-45, 48-49 and Stein, 192-193.
\textsuperscript{83} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 50-53 and Stein, 195-196.
\textsuperscript{84} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 55-56.
regional economic development; Asad spoke of preventing another war. Peace was the only way to accomplish both goals, but Asad was less than optimistic when it came to that subject.\textsuperscript{85}

**Conclusion**

President Jimmy Carter’s policy differed from the policies of President Richard Nixon and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, but both policies were moving toward the same goals in the Middle East. The differences in method came from choice of a different theory. Kissinger’s policies were in support of a balance of power in a bipolar world and were more pessimistic than Carter’s. Therefore, Kissinger and Nixon never made a serious attempt at a comprehensive peace in the region, or even a peace treaty between Israel and one of the Arab states. Carter, on the other hand, placed great stock in human goodness and believed that almost anything was possible. He thought of the world as multipolar, with various regions of conflict that may or may not relate to the Soviet-American conflict. He did want to limit Soviet influence in the Middle East, but preferred to do so in a public forum rather than through secret deals. Kissinger thought he could limit Soviet participation by convening the Geneva conference as a front operation to make the Soviets think they were involved. Carter wanted to convene at Geneva to actually negotiate, but thought that the promise of generous aid packages from the United States to the Arab nations would limit the Soviet stake in the final picture.

The largest difference between the policy goals of Kissinger and those of Carter was their respective visions for the endgame. Both Carter and Kissinger were able to negotiate well with others. Both gained the trust of those around them; Kissinger’s ability to observe

\textsuperscript{85}Ibid., 56-58.
protocol to a trustworthy character, while Carter’s ability to empathize with the person in the room with him at the time created a sense of personal connection and trust. Carter’s political naïveté also gave him a certain advantage. Not knowing about the taboos surrounding certain issues or code words, Carter came up with a plan for a comprehensive peace not tainted by Washington cynicism. Kissinger did not see a comprehensive solution in the near future, while Carter was ever the optimist. As the plans for Geneva commenced, Carter’s high standards and clear goals were essential to laying the groundwork for Camp David.

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86 Stein, 40-43.
A Bump in the Road
The Carter administration decided early on to use the Brookings Institution report as the basis for peace in the Middle East. Out of this and the spring meetings with Middle East leaders, Carter developed five points for his peace initiative. These points stated that a settlement would be comprehensive in nature, use U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 as the bases for negotiation, and result in normal relations and an end of belligerency between the involved parties. To achieve this Israel would need to withdraw to mutually agreed and recognized borders on all fronts, phased over years in synchronized steps, and with security arrangements and guarantees.” . . . [and] A settlement must include provisions for a Palestinian entity and for means of assuring Palestinian adherence to the terms of the peace agreement. The Palestinian entity will not be militarized, and there will be provisions for an open economic and social relationship with Israel. Means should be sought to permit self-determination by the Palestinians in deciding on their future status.87

**Following the Maps**

*One Last Meeting*

By May, Carter had met with all of the leaders in the Middle East, except one. In May of 1977, Israelis elected a new government, the first since the creation of the state not led by the Labor Party. Menachem Begin, the leader of the Likud party and the new Prime Minister, was a very different person from Yitzhak Rabin. He was from Poland and had been a follower of Ze’ev Jabotinsky.88 Begin was a member of the Irgun in the 1930s and 1940s and had

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87 Cited in Quandt, *Camp David*, 80.
88 Vladimir (later Ze’ev) Jabotinsky was a militant Zionist in Europe who emulated many of the ideas of fascism. He founded the Jewish Self-Defense Organization in Odessa to help protect Russian Jews from violent pogroms. He relocated to Mandate Palestine after the First World War and was the founder of Revisionist Zionism. Unlike the more moderate Labor Zionists, the Revisionists wanted a Jewish state on both banks of the Jordan River. To further this goal, he founded a fascist style youth group, Betar, with its armed wing, Irgun Zvai Leumi (referred to as Irgun or EZTEL). Jabotinsky wrote of an “Iron Wall” of Jewish soldiers protecting their land from the Arabs. Along with Jabotinsky’s writings, many books have been written about him, including *Lone Wolf: a Biography of Vladimir (Ze’ev) Jabotinsky*, by Shmuel Katz, (New York: Barricade Books, 1996); *Jabotinsky and*
achieved praise and admiration in Israel for his actions while part of this group. The abrupt switch from the left, which had previously dominated the Israeli political system, to the right meant that Carter could not find much information on the new Prime Minister. He knew that Begin spent time in an NKVD prison and that as a member of the Irgun he had been a member of the force that bombed the King David Hotel. Little was available about his life or politics after his years as a terrorist. Carter was understandably concerned.

Carter was right to worry. When Begin visited the White House in July, it became clear that he did not operate as previous Israeli leaders had. He saw no reason to inform Washington of Israeli plans and did not see the West Bank as a bargaining chip, but as Judea and Samaria, the lands of King David rightfully returned to Israeli control. Though he said he was willing to negotiate for peace, he was not willing to put many bargaining chips on the table. Instead, Begin presented Carter with a list of strategic arguments for American support for Israel, mostly amounting to an account of captured Soviet technology.

Vance met with Begin to discuss the U.S. objectives for peace, including a reaffirmation of the legitimacy of Resolutions 242 and 338 and settlement with the Palestinians. When Begin left, Vance and Carter believed that Begin agreed with the basic principles of Resolution 242, which meant Israeli withdrawal on all fronts, with only minor adjustments. He also thought Bergin had agreed to a moratorium on settlements until after the conference. Unfortunately, in what was to become the first of many misunderstandings

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89 The Irgun was one of two main militias in the Yishuv (the pre-state organization that governed Jewish immigrants in Palestine), the other being the Haganah of the Labor Zionists. Together, these militias became the core of the Israeli Defense Forces in 1948. For more information see Benny Morris, 1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2008 or Zadka, Dr. Saul Blood in Zion, How the Jewish Guerrillas drove the British out of Palestine (London: Brassey's, 1995).


91 Quandt, Camp David, 78, 81.
between Carter and Begin, the Israeli leader did not suspend construction of settlements; in fact he legalized several outpost settlements. He also clarified in domestic speeches that Israel would not withdraw from Judea and Samaria.\textsuperscript{92}

\textit{Planning the Details}

Any disappointments resulting from the meeting with Begin did not cause a change in policy. The Carter administration had its eyes set firmly on a Geneva Conference to be held that fall. Carter sent Vance to the Middle East again in August to expedite the procedural discussions and begin work on substantive negotiations. Before Vance departed, Begin sent Carter a message asking Vance not to speak about possible PLO involvement at the conference or the American views on borders and security. Carter had to politely inform Begin that the American views on such issues were public and Vance would not refrain from reiterating them if asked.\textsuperscript{93}

The goals of Vance’s trip were to discuss and obtain approval of the five points, reach an agreement on the composition of the delegations, and bring the PLO into the discussion. The trip was not entirely successful. All of the Arab leaders had seen and accepted the five points in some form or another since January.\textsuperscript{94} Discussions on the who would be included in each delegation and talking to the PLO did not go as well.

At his first stop in Cairo, Vance and U.S. Ambassador to Egypt Herman Eilts drafted acceptable language the PLO could use to accept Resolution 242, thereby allowing the U.S. to negotiate with them:

\textsuperscript{92} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 80-83.  
\textsuperscript{94} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 86-87.
The PLO accepts United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, with the reservation that it considers that the resolution does not make adequate reference to the question of a Palestinians since it fails to make any reference to a homeland for the Palestinian people. It is recognized that the language of Resolution 242 relates to the right of all states in the Middle East to live in peace.\(^95\)

The foreign ministers of each Arab country Vance visited passed this message along to the PLO leadership. Unfortunately, each minister emphasized different elements of Vance’s proposal. The Egyptians were perhaps overly optimistic, all but guaranteeing the PLO a spot at Geneva. The Syrians remained negative, emphasizing the need for Israel to accept the PLO at Geneva and their belief that the Israelis would never agree to a PLO presence at the talks. The Jordanians and Saudis presented a more even keeled picture of events, but the damage was done. The PLO could not figure out if Vance was serious in his proposal and refused to accept the resolution.\(^96\)

Vance also presented the Arab leaders with an idea that came out of Carter’s meetings with Begin. Given that Begin was not willing to discuss the possibility of a Palestinian state, perhaps they could devise an trusteeship under the care of Israel, perhaps along with Jordan. This trusteeship would remain in place until such time as the Palestinians were ready to govern themselves. This would satisfy Begin’s security fears and the United States’ apprehensions about an unstable, radical Palestinian state giving the Soviets access to the region. Though Sadat seemed amiable to the idea, Asad correctly pointed out that the idea smacked of the mandate system of the League of Nations. The Arab leaders believed that the Palestinians were ready for government, and that even if the Palestinians needed a trustee, the Israelis had no place as the trustee of such a transitional state. The idea was problematic even for

\(^{95}\) Vance, 188.  
\(^{96}\) Quandt, *Camp David*, 94.
Begin, who did not like that the U.S. plan called for a Palestinian state to be formed after a certain amount of time. For Begin, the creation of a Palestinian state was not inevitable.  

The issue about the composition of the delegations encountered several problems. In the end, Carter and Vance failed to grasp why Sadat and Begin were so adamantly in favor of national delegations and why Hussein and Asad were so steadfastly opposed to them. For Sadat and Begin, a united Arab delegation would only serve to weaken their bargaining ability, granting more power to Hussein and Asad. Vance tried to reach a compromise by proposing a unified Arab delegation for the plenary session, to split into national groups for bilateral negotiations afterwards. By the end of his tour of the region, Vance did not have a clear picture of the shape the delegations would take. No leader had compromised on this key procedural issue.  

One small success was that Sadat did present Vance with a treaty he would be willing to sign, along with handwritten notes in the margins of his fallback positions. Sadat tasked Vance with obtaining such draft from every party and then presenting an American draft treaty. This was a good start, but no other country had draft treaties ready for Vance, greatly slowing the process.  

Vance returned to Washington at the end of August without much to suggest that Carter could even pull off a conference. Carter’s goals were already shifting before Vance went to Geneva. He began to see the conference as the end in itself, actually using the conference as the venue for negotiations, rather than a forum for signing pre-arranged

97 Vance, 187-188.
98 Quandt, Camp David, 93.
99 Ibid., 86-90.
agreements. The stubbornness of Middle Eastern leaders, particularly Begin and Asad forced Carter to lower his expectations.\textsuperscript{100}

\textbf{A Detour}

\textit{Failure to Agree}

In September, the Carter administration set four goals intended to bring everyone to the negotiating table at Geneva by the end of the year. That the administration pursued all of them simultaneously reduced the efficacy of each goal individually. The first was to obtain a draft treaty from each party from which Vance could put together an American draft. Unfortunately, only Egypt and Israel produced such documents; Jordan and Syria each submitted “a list of principles that should govern any settlement.”\textsuperscript{101}

The second goal was to work through the Arab states, mostly through Syria, to get the PLO representation at the Geneva bargaining table.\textsuperscript{102} The main problem with this approach was that the Syrians had no real interest in helping the PLO obtain a seat. If the PLO attended, Syria would lose credibility as the only hardliner supporting them. PLO attendance would effectively eliminate the main complaint with Geneva and force Syria to attend, or look like warmongers.\textsuperscript{103}

Carter and his team also had to nail down the procedure for Geneva. Even though Carter was beginning to think of Geneva as the forum for negotiation, Sadat was still pushing for high-level, secretive talks to be held beforehand, to minimize any possibility for disagreement at the conference. The situations on the ground were slowly eliminating this

\textsuperscript{100} I\textit{bid.}, 87.
\textsuperscript{101} Quandt, \textit{Peace Process}, 186.
\textsuperscript{102} I\textit{bid.}, 186.
\textsuperscript{103} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 94.
option, so Vance needed to plan actual negotiating committees. There was general agreement that the talks on borders and security should be bilateral, between Israel and the state concerned. But the talks on the Palestinians were not so simple. The American team assumed that Jordan and the PLO would discuss this with Israel, not recognizing the extent of King Hussein’s ill will towards the PLO and Asad’s interest in becoming an advocate for the Palestinians. No agreement was ever reached on this issue.104

Finally, Vance needed to begin bringing the Soviets into discussions, given that they were co-chairs. The Soviet Union had refrained thus far from making inflammatory statements; Vance and Carter wanted to be sure that this remained the case. Also, as co-chairs, the United States and the Soviet Union should present as united a front as possible with regards to the principles of the Conference.105

The entire process of moving to Geneva seemed stuck in molasses. Carter, beaten down from repeated attacks from AIPAC and the American-Jewish community, moved out of the public eye, letting the State Department take over the daily tasks and defenses of the negotiating process.106

Throughout the month, Carter and Vance met with the foreign ministers of Israel, Egypt, and Syria to try to hammer out the last little details and finally meet at Geneva. The meeting with Moshe Dayan was difficult. Dayan was firm in Israel’s territorial demands, wishing to maintain control of Sharm el-Sheikh and the strip of territory along the coast from there to the border with Israel, as well as a buffer zone along the border, “he would rather have Sharm than peace with Egypt.”107 Vance tried to offer security guarantee from the

105 Ibid., 187-188. This will be discussed in greater detail below.
106 Quandt, Camp David, 95.
107 Ibid., 112.
United States, but neither Vance nor Carter elaborated on exactly what those guarantees would mean.\(^{108}\)

Carter used the meeting with Ismail Fahmy to try to convince him of the need to negotiate at Geneva, despite Sadat’s preference to have all discussions finished beforehand.\(^{109}\) Carter also sought to convey his lack of maneuverability \textit{vis à vis} Israel. Fahmy found it most peculiar that the leader of a superpower would express such “weakness,” but was impressed with Carter’s honesty.\(^{110}\) Abdul Halim Khaddam heard the same message and only saw weakness. Carter could not give him the assurances that Egypt would not be allowed to pursue a separate peace with Israel.\(^{111}\)

During these meetings, Carter was not aware that Egypt and Israel had opened up a secret channel of communications with the aid of Sultan Hassan of Morocco.\(^{112}\) Immediately before his scheduled discussion with Carter and Vance, Dayan met with Deputy Prime Minister Hassan Tuhamy. Tuhamy had not been involved with peace negotiations before; Sadat chose him because they had worked together on covert operations before the revolution in Egypt and Sadat knew he could keep a secret.\(^{113}\) Despite the fact that the meeting got off to

\(^{109}\) Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 115.
\(^{110}\) Ismail Fahmy, \textit{Negotiating for Peace in the Middle East} (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 198-199.
\(^{111}\) Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 116-117.
\(^{112}\) The Sultan of Morocco was in a unique position to help bring the Israelis and the Arabs together. He viewed himself as a member of the club of Arab monarchies, along with Kings of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and was (still is) a member of the Arab League. He had cordial relations with almost all Arab leaders, including Sadat. The Moroccan monarchy also had a long history of good relations with its Jewish subjects. During the Second World War, when the French wanted to send the Jews of Morocco to the Nazis in Europe, the Sultan refused, noting that the Jews were under his personal protection and that any attack on them would be an attack on the monarchy. See \textit{Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust’s Long Reach into Arab Lands} by Robert Satloff (New York: Public Affairs, 2006). Hassan told Dayan that although the visit was a secret (Dayan arrived in disguise), if it became known that a representative of the Israeli government was a guest of the monarch, his throne would remain intact and his rule strong. Dayan, 40.
\(^{113}\) Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 110.
a rocky start, the fact that the two sides met was astounding in and of itself.\textsuperscript{114} Though the two men disagreed on the nature of the final peace in the region, they did agree to obtain permission from their respective governments for another meeting and show their proposed peace documents to each other and the United States. If the governments agreed, then Tuhamy and Dayan would meet again in two weeks to determine final agreements.\textsuperscript{115}

Even though Carter had no knowledge of these secret talks, there were plenty of warning signs to indicate that a conference in Geneva would not take place. Perhaps he should have been more concerned with Asad’s fears of a separate agreement. He did not pick up on Dayan’s hint that he had visited Morocco before coming to Washington. He did not catch the meaning behind Fahmy’s message from Sadat “urging that nothing be done to prevent Israel and Egypt from negotiating directly.”\textsuperscript{116} Obstacle after obstacle obstructed the path to Geneva, but Carter still only saw it as the only solution. He was going to Geneva, without being certain that he would have company there.

\textit{U.S – U.S.S.R Joint Communiqué}

Momentum may have gathered through October, if the administration could have concentrated on placating Syria and getting the PLO to accept resolution 242. All the parties would have convened in Geneva by the end of October or early November and the road to peace would have begun there. Events unfolded in such a way as to prevent this from occurring and provide yet another nail in the Geneva Conference’s coffin.

\textsuperscript{114} Stein, 207. Tuhamy did not offer to shake Dayan’s hand and both men’s statements were formulaic and left little to no room for negotiation. Tuhamy wanted a pledge of Israeli withdrawal to pre-1967 borders and Dayan said that the Israeli government wanted to keep the settlements in the Sinai. See also Dayan, 45-47. Dayan’s continually referred to “the pattern of coexistence in Jerusalem” as a model for the West Bank. Understandably, this was not considered acceptable because the pattern in East Jerusalem and the West Bank more clearly resembled occupation rather than peaceful coexistence.

\textsuperscript{115} Dayan, 51-52.

\textsuperscript{116} Carter, 301.
All of Carter’s advisors agreed that the Soviets needed to be involved in the Peace Process, if only to prevent them from sabotage.117 To make the Soviets feel like true partners in peace, Carter and Vance had discussed the need for a cochairmen’s statement as early as May. Vance kept the Soviets informed as events progressed over the summer and met with Foreign Minister Gromyko in September during the UN General Session.118 The two sides negotiated extensively over three weeks. Gromyko provided the first draft, which was unexpectedly moderate, lacking the usual communist rhetoric and all mention of the PLO or a Palestinian state. By the end of the negotiating process, the Soviets gave up their phrase “Palestinian national rights” for the more ambiguous American phrase “legitimate rights” of the Palestinians.119 Just before the Carter released the document, Vance did show it to Fahmy and Dayan, with lukewarm reception. Dayan did not think that his government would approve of any official document talking about withdrawal or the rights of the Palestinians; his government would see these as preconditions to negotiations, something to which the Israelis had always been adamantly opposed.120

On October 1, Carter released the final document, known as the U.S. – Soviet Joint Communiqué, to the media, not expecting the firestorm that followed. The reaction was negative from all sides, less so on the part of the Arabs. They were more disappointed that the document did not call for a Palestinian state. The Israeli government did not have such a moderate reaction. Dayan immediately contacted Carter with threats to go to American Jewry, the media, and the United States Congress with a statement on the bias of the Communiqué.

117 Stein, 212. Both Brzezinski and Vance believed that the Soviets would be less likely to try to hold up the talks if they had a vested interest in their success, such as co chairmanship.
118 Vance, 192.
119 Quandt, *Camp David*, 119-120.
120 Stein, 216.
On October 4, Carter used his address to the United Nations to reaffirm the United States’ commitment to Israel.¹²¹

Carter and some of his top advisor, including Brzezinski and Vance, met with Dayan and other Israelis that evening about bringing Israel back on board with the Geneva talks. Dayan strategically offered a concession the Israelis had, until then, not been willing to discuss. He agreed to allow less well-known members of the PLO to attend the conference as part of a unified Arab delegation. Carter saw this as flexibility and turned his frustration to the Arab side, particularly Asad, who was the least willing to make compromises so all parties could meet at the negotiating table. The team negotiated until the early hours of the morning and finally agreed on the wording of a U.S-Israel Working Paper.¹²² It included provision for a unified Arab delegation, for bilateral negotiations between Israel and its neighbors, for talks between Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and Palestinian representatives, and for discussion of refugees (both Palestinian and Jews who left Arab countries in 1948 and afterward).¹²³

On October 11, the Israeli Knesset approved the document as the basis for going to Geneva. By the end of the week, Carter was presenting it to the Arab leaders on a “take it or leave it” basis, but these men were not eager to accept a document already approved by their enemy. Sadat noted that he had approved the Joint Communiqué, but could not approve of this recent document without more references to the PLO. Though he was tired of the tedious problems of wording such a statement, Carter agreed to a final compromise to ensure Arab participation at Geneva. If Asad, Sadat, and Hussein would agree to participate (and the

¹²² Quandt objects to the term “U.S.-Israel Working Paper” (*Camp David*, 138) but it is the term that has most frequently been adopted by historians and those writing personal accounts of these events. Though the phrase does color the nature of the document, I believe that this connotation is useful in examining the dominance of Israeli negotiating power during October 1977.
¹²³ Dayan, 68-71.
Saudis offer support), then Carter would make a public statement regarding the importance full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and of solving the Palestinian problem to peace in the region. At this point Carter and his advisors were not hoping for a settlement to emerge from Geneva and thus were not concerned with getting agreement on the wording of the protocols. They believed that once all the parties sat down at the negotiating table, peace would follow, even if it took some time.  

Despite the optimism among Carter’s team, all realized that getting the Arabs, particularly Asad, to commit to going to Geneva would take more than a statement from Carter. On October 21, Carter sent a handwritten note to Sadat, a “personal appeal for [his] support.” Sadat read this as confirmation of Carter’s domestic weakness. The personal nature of the note, being handwritten, also struck the Egyptian President. His response to Carter’s appeal shocked his fellow Arab rulers, the Israelis, and, perhaps most of all, the Carter administration.

Sadat’s Initiative

Sadat responded to Carter’s note with a handwritten message of his own promising a “bold action.” After consultation with his Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy, Sadat sent a proposal for a conference in East Jerusalem, to be attended by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, Israel, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. No one on Carter’s staff thought that this conference could ever take place. It would involve the Israelis opening

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124 Quandt, *Camp David*, 138-143.
125 Quandt, *Camp David*, 139.
126 Brzezinski, 110.
127 Fahmy, 255-259. According to Fahmy, he drafted the note in response to Carter, Sadat only copied it. Before sending the plan for this “bold action” he and Sadat discussed what the initiative could be. Sadat brought up the idea of visiting Jerusalem, but Fahmy managed to dissuade him. He argued for an all-inclusive conference in East Jerusalem instead. He prepared the invitations and was about to send them out when Sadat decided that he needed to inform the Americans first.
their doors not only to Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian representatives, but also to PLO leaders. Plus, the five permanent members of the Security Council could not be counted on to be available or willing to meet, let alone to agree on a course of action in Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{128} Carter responded with a plea for Sadat to keep the focus on such large conferences as taking place in Geneva.\textsuperscript{129}

To Sadat, this was the perfect opening and he announced his willingness to go to Jerusalem for peace on November 9 during an open session of the Egyptian People’s Assembly. The audience was generally enthusiastic about this plan, thinking it related to the common Egyptian saying: “an Egyptian is always ready to go far, even to the end of the world to achieve something.”\textsuperscript{130} Sadat even instructed Fahmy to censor that portion of his speech for the newspapers, possibly because he thought it would have a negative reception within Egypt.\textsuperscript{131}

Despite his reservations, Carter chose to look on this offer as a way to clear the path to Geneva and encouraged Begin in this view. The Israeli Prime Minister sent an official invitation within a week. Sadat boarded a plane bound for Jerusalem on November 19. Great fanfare greeted Sadat as he stepped off the plane. The wife of the American ambassador had cut out a picture of the Egyptian flag so that it might be displayed at the airport and the conductor of the I.D.F. band taped the Egyptian national anthem off Cairo Radio, transcribing it for the band to play for Sadat the next day.\textsuperscript{132} Sadat prayed at al-Aqsa, visited the Church of the Ascension, and went to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum. His speech before the Knesset was nothing new or radical, reiterating the basic Egyptian demands for peace: Israeli

\textsuperscript{128} Brzezinski, 111.
\textsuperscript{129} Quandt, 145.
\textsuperscript{130} Fahmy, 265.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 266.
\textsuperscript{132} Stein, 226-227.
withdrawal and Palestinian self-determination. Carter’s response was cautious, since his team was still evaluating what this trip meant for their policy, but he did speak of the relevance of two such ancient enemies meeting to discuss peace. This journey changed everything. Sadat took center stage, pushing the United States, catalyst for peace, to the sidelines. And while Carter struggled to hold on to the Geneva Conference, Vance began to reevaluate the course of United States policy in the Middle East.

**Down Fork Number One**

*Reevaluation of Policy*

There is no generally agreed upon narrative about if or how U.S. foreign policy changed as a result of Sadat’s trip to Jerusalem. The memoirs of the key American participants do little to shed light on the situation, painting themselves as having great foresight while they look at events with the benefit of hindship. Vance and Brzezinski write as though the trip to Jerusalem effectively closed off the road to the Geneva Conference. Brzezinski said that “this in effect brought to an end our strategy for going to Geneva, and ushered in a new phase in which the prime mover was Sadat.” And yet barely a page later he commented that a separate peace would be “inherently unstable” and thus Carter should try to bring at least Hussein and the Palestinians, if not Asad as well, back into the peace process. He also wrote a memo at the end of November detailing how direct Egyptian-Israeli could be turned into a wider initiative. Vance similarly spoke of a comprehensive

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133 Boutros-Ghali, 20-22.
134 Carter, 305. This is interesting because the Egyptians and the Israelis were actually allies before the Babylonians conquered Judea.
136 Brzezinski, 111.
137 Brzezinski, 112-113.
138 Quandt, *Camp David*, 149.
peace as the broad goal, perhaps using a preliminary Egyptian-Israeli accord as a way to bring the rest of the Arabs to the negotiating table.\textsuperscript{139} William Quandt, a member of the National Security Council staff wrote a memo to Brzezinski on December 12 that did not speak of Sadat’s initiative as an opening for bringing others to the table. He thought that Sadat seemed to be deliberately polarizing the Arab community, appealing to Egyptian nationalism rather than Arab unity. Quandt surmised that Sadat was maneuvering towards a bilateral accord. But he also noted that if Sadat could alienate Asad and maintain the support of the Jordanian and Saudi governments, then his initiative could lead to a comprehensive peace.\textsuperscript{140} All voices found a way to make the movement to bilateral talks appear as a path to a Geneva Conference.

Clearly the Carter team was not ready to abandon their efforts for a single conference at which all countries could negotiate for a peace. Vance concluded that there would be less of a role for the United States and that reconvening a Geneva Conference would probably take longer than expected. But the expectation was that a Geneva Conference would occur. On November 30, Carter said that he thought that peace would go through Jerusalem, Cairo, and on to a comprehensive peace settlement at Geneva. Vance differed slightly in his views; a comprehensive peace was preferable, but they should focus on promoting successful talks between the Egyptians and Israelis first. Egypt could be the test case for peace with Israel.\textsuperscript{141} Both men saw Sadat’s initiative in visiting Jerusalem and then inviting all participants to talks in Cairo as the first in a series of steps leading to peace between Israeli and its neighbors. The disagreement seems to have been in how long there would be between Sadat’s initiative and a comprehensive peace and how big a role that initiative would have in the final outcome.

\textsuperscript{139} Vance, 195.
\textsuperscript{140} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 152.
\textsuperscript{141} Quant, \textit{Camp David}, 149-151.
Ismailia

Immediately after his speech at the Knesset, Sadat organized a preparatory conference in Cairo. His acting foreign minister, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, sent invitations to the governments of Syria, Jordan, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Israel, as well as to the PLO congress. Only representatives of the U.S. and Israel attended, yet another indication that the comprehensive format was no longer truly viable. Even so, Vance spoke to Sadat and Begin after the conference to stress the importance that all efforts lead up to the Geneva Conference.142

The negotiators accomplished nothing of substance was accomplished at Ismailia. Talks of substance were scheduled to begin at the end of December in Ismailia, a town along the Suez Canal and the location of one of Sadat’s vacation residences. Carter tried to coordinate with Begin prior to these talks to ensure a successful outcome. Sadat expected Begin to reciprocate with a gesture of similar significance to his speech before the Knesset. Sadat’s visit in effect recognized Israel, one of the Arab “no’s.” Begin’s response would need to be something equally dramatic, preferably a commitment to fully withdraw from all occupied Arab territory. He presented his plan to Carter on December 16 so that he could present it to Sadat in Ismailia with an American endorsement. He felt that Sadat would then either have to accept the plan or walk away. Even when the American response to his plan turned was non-committal, he would still claim endorsement at Ismailia.143

Carter was lukewarm about Begin’s proposal because, while Sadat had gone to Jerusalem, Begin’s idea of a dramatic proposal was a phased withdrawal from the Sinai, keeping all settlements there under Israeli sovereignty, and “home rule” for the Palestinians in

142 Vance, 196.
143 Vance, 198-199.
the West Bank and Gaza. Carter claimed that he did not understand all of the points about Sinai, but rejected Begin’s proposition for the West Bank and Gaza as not in compliance with UNSCR 242. He and his advisors even noted that Begin’s plan sounded like Begin wanted to impose the condition of blacks in South Africa (i.e. apartheid) upon the Palestinians. Begin and Carter went back and forth on the precise definition of sovereignty in the occupied territories and just how much of a military presence Israel intended to keep in those territories, either to guard settlements or to serve as early warning stations. By the end of their negotiations, Carter felt that Begin had an agreement that could serve as a starting point, but that he would have to make significant concessions, something the Israeli leader was not wiling to do.144

Despite the best efforts and American encouragement, the talks at Ismailia barely got off the ground. There was no discussion of substantive issues. The two leaders could only agree to form two committees, one to deal with political issues and one to deal with military issues. These committees would meet in Jerusalem and Cairo, respectively, within three weeks to begin negotiating a treaty.145 The summit adjourned two days after it began. Begin may have called the talks successful, but all others, including Sadat and Moshe Dayan reported that nothing had been accomplished, rendering the talks a failure.146

Jerusalem

After the difficulties at Ismailia, Carter added some items to his agenda during his meetings in the Middle East with King Hussein of Jordan and King Khalid of Saudi Arabia. He continued to request their support for Sadat and his peace initiative. Carter even told the

145 Ibid., 159-160.
146 Dayan, 105.
Saudis that he was moving forward with a proposed arms sale in an effort to win their support. This arms deal, which included equipment for Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, would later become a hindrance to the peace process.  

On his way back to Washington, Air Force One stopped in Aswan, where Sadat was staying, to refuel. During his brief time on the ground, Carter quickly met with Sadat and made a statement at the airport that would come to be known as the Aswan Declaration. In it he reiterated that peace would stem from Israeli withdrawal (taking into account security concerns), but he added another point about the Palestinians. He said “there must be a resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. The solution must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and enable the Palestinians to participate in the determination of their own future.” Carter had expressed such views in full in private and partially in public, but this was the most forceful of such statements. Unfortunately, he was unable to bend policy to fully champion that cause during his term in office.

Meanwhile, preparations for the meeting of the political committee in Jerusalem were under way. Carter decided to send Vance to the negotiations, to which both the Egyptian and Israeli governments agreed. Carter thought that Vance would be more effective at putting pressure on Begin than Sadat could be. Carter realized that any chance of a comprehensive peace would require Begin to be flexible in Jerusalem. The Egyptian and Israeli negotiating teams of the political committee began their attempts to formulate an agenda for their upcoming meeting in Jerusalem. The Israelis were willing to discuss the settlements in the Sinai, “autonomy” in the West Bank and Gaza, and to begin discussing a peace treaty. The Egyptians first wanted a commitment to withdrawal and self-determination for the

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147 Quandt, Camp David, 161.
148 Ibid., 161.
149 Ibid., 162-163.
Palestinians. The draft agenda went back and forth between the two delegations, and finally Vance proposed a “neutral” American agenda. This agenda included discussing the principles by which a settlement would be negotiated, “guidelines for negotiations” in the West Bank and Gaza, and the terms of a peace treaty between Israel and its neighbors. Even to this no one would agree until Vance threatened to not attend. Apparently both the Egyptians and the Israelis thought they would need Vance’s presence more than their specific wording on the agenda.\(^{150}\)

The two sides met in Jerusalem on January 16, and at first it seemed as if they might make some progress there. Each side submitted a draft declaration of principles and Vance began the tedious process of attempting a compromise between the two very different documents. Unfortunately, Begin insulted Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamel at a state dinner on the evening of the 17\(^{th}\), both with an extensive history lesson on the plight of the Jews and by referring to him as a “boy.” Sadat recalled the Egyptian delegation for “consultation” the very next day.\(^{151}\) Vance did manage to have the two sides meet once more before the end of the month, but they adjourned *sine die* within twenty-four hours.\(^{152}\) Sadat did not cancel the scheduled military committee talks in Cairo, but it made little progress due to the very tense atmosphere between the two sides.\(^{153}\)

*Where Can We Go From Here?*

Carter and his policy in the Middle East desperately needed to move forward. No Geneva Conference manifested itself before the end of 1977. And 1978 was not shaping up to


\(^{151}\) Dayan, 111-114; Kamel, 55-70; and Quandt, *Camp David*, 163-165.

\(^{152}\) Vance, 203.

\(^{153}\) Stein, 244-245.
be a much better year. Sadat and Begin were two very different men. As Israeli Defense
Minister Ezer Weizman noted, “Sadat wanted to take [peace] by storm, [but] Begin preferred
to creep forward inch by inch. He took the ram of peace and ground it down into fine dry
powder of details, legal clauses and quotes from international law.”154 Carter began to discuss
with his advisors the possibility of bringing both men to Camp David, so an American
delegation could mediate between the two personalities of the Begin and Sadat. Carter even
consulted with Henry Kissinger, who warned that if Carter brought the leaders to Camp
David, he would need to produce results.155 This marked a clear change in strategy, if not yet
a clear change in policy of the Carter administration.

Public diplomacy was giving way to private negotiations. As much as Carter deplored
Nixon’s and Kissinger’s style of making deals behind closed doors, he was slowly learning
that his public statements about the need for Israeli withdrawal and his desire to solve the
Palestinian problem was very different from the views of most Americans at that point. His
continued statements on “Palestinian rights” only served to increase support for Israel.156
Carter still had his sights set on Geneva, but the issues developing between Egypt and Israel
forced him to deal with their immediate conflict. Mediating this conflict would inevitably lead
to the bilateral talks at Camp David in September of 1978, but Carter could not see this
ultimate outcome in January.

154 Cited in Quant, Camp David, 165.
155 Carter, 313.
156 Quandt, Camp David, 167.
A Winding Road

The Year of Camp David
I told [Begin] that peace in the Middle East was in his hands, that he had a unique opportunity to either bring it into being or kill it, and that he understood that the Arabs genuinely wanted peace, particularly Sadat. He had seen the expression on the faces of people in Cairo, Ismailia, and Jerusalem when they exchanged visits, and there was no doubt in his mind about it. . . . My guess is that he will not take the necessary steps to bring peace to Israel—an opportunity that may never come again.

Jimmy Carter, *Diary, May 1, 1978*

**A Cold Front**

The disappointing outcome of the Ismailia talks and the dissolution of the Political Committee negotiations in Jerusalem forced Carter and his advisors to reexamine the course of the peace process and reevaluate the course of American policy as well. Carter came to two unsettling conclusions, first that he would not be able to let Sadat and Begin sort out their differences on their own and secondly that he may have to set aside his grand notion for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The first conclusion would mean a significant change in policy; Carter and his advisors resigned themselves to the necessity of putting forth a compromise American proposal, though they wanted to avoid dictating peace to anyone. The second conclusion did not, at that time, constitute a major shift. Carter believed that the Egyptian-Israeli talks could be used to bring as an example for the other participants, perhaps with the exception of Syria. Asad was simply too stubborn to negotiate with Israel at that time.\(^{157}\) Brzezinski writes of forming a model of “concentric circles;” talks between Egypt and Israel were the center circle, Jordan and the Palestinians next, and Syria and the Soviets in the outermost. Carter’s foreign policy team thought the most realistic chance of peace existed in the first two circles.\(^{158}\)

\(^{157}\) Quandt, *Camp David*, 169.

\(^{158}\) Brzezinski, 113.
Vance was particularly concerned with making sure that talks between the Egyptians and the Israelis did not turn into a separate peace agreement. Brzezinski was convinced this could be accomplished by using Begin’s autonomy plan, as presented to Carter in December of 1977, to develop a transitional plan for the West Bank and Gaza. Brzezinski and the State Department worked to draft this plan, which became known as the nine points. The basic outline of the plan called for the elections in the West Bank and Gaza to form a governing body to rule in the West Bank and Gaza for five years, deriving its authority from Israel, Egypt and Jordan. Neither Israel nor Jordan would claim sovereignty over this territory and Israeli forces would withdraw to limited security areas. During the transitional phase there would be negotiations between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinian governing body on Israeli withdrawal from the territories seized in 1967. Negotiations would also cover a possible United Nations or Jordanian military presence in the West Bank, resettlement of Palestinian refugees, and the ability of Israelis to purchase land in the West Bank and Palestinians to purchase land in Israel. The agreement would come into force with the agreement of all parties and would also launch a plan for economic development in Israel, Egypt, Jordan, the West Bank, and Gaza. Vance thought that if Begin presented this plan, Sadat would regain some of his credibility in the Arab world, adding needed momentum to the negotiation process. Carter was especially concerned with ensuring a Palestinian voice in their future. He saw the elected body proposed in Begin’s autonomy plan as an alternative voice to the more volatile PLO. Though sound in principle, the plan required the

159 Vance, 203.
160 Quant, *Camp David*, 171-172.
161 Vance, 204.
162 Quandt, *Camp David*, 168.
cooperation of both Begin and Sadat, which was not forthcoming after the stormy encounters that winter.

In January Carter conceived of the idea to invite both Begin and Sadat to Camp David to work out their differences, but he and his advisors did not think that they would be able to accomplish very much. The two sides were simply too far apart and presidential mediation at that stage was unlikely to succeed. Carter decided that he would speak to Sadat first and invited the Egyptian leader to meet with him at the presidential retreat in February. In preparation for the meeting, Vance and the State Department staff prepared a memo for Carter on what was necessary to accomplish. First, Carter should gauge whether or not Sadat was serious about the West Bank and Gaza or if it was only a cover for a bilateral deal. Vance also recommended that American policy should seek to promote a declaration of principles that both Sadat and Begin could sign and that Carter should present the nine points to Sadat and get his reaction. Carter should also convey to Sadat that he had other political concerns, particularly the Panama Canal Treaty, that would make it impossible to devote his full attention to a peace settlement in the Middle East. Vance cautioned against discussing a possible sale of F-5 jets to Egypt. Though the request for arms was still standing, it would only complicate the current proceedings.

_A Strategem_

When he arrived, Sadat was very pessimistic about the future of talks between Israel and Egypt. He was on the verge of calling off the talks. Begin had failed to make any dramatic gesture at Ismailia and there had been no declaration of principles. Carter and his

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advisors managed to convince him not to break off all the talks just yet, as international opinion would no doubt turn against him and doubt the Egyptian commitment to peace. It would be preferable to devise a strategy that would put Begin at the disadvantage.\textsuperscript{165} Sadat stressed that if he was not going to break off the talks, he would need American help in influencing Begin, specifically an American declaration of principles.\textsuperscript{166}

In a move that illustrates Carter’s ability to strategize behind closed doors, he agreed to put forth an American proposal, but only as a response to an Egyptian proposal. Carter thought that if the Sadat sent Begin a very hard line document, a document to which Begin could never agree, a subsequent American compromise proposal would be a favorable development. If Begin chose not to accept the compromise, he would be the stubborn leader not willing to make peace, not Sadat. This plan could serve to turn public opinion in favor of an Arab state for a change, and was secretive and dramatic, both traits Sadat favored. The plan was to play out over the course of the Spring. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry would draft their conservative document for release by mid-March, so that Carter and the State Department could prepare a compromise plan by the end of March or beginning of April. If all went according to plan, the two sides could sign preliminary agreements by the summer.\textsuperscript{167} Carter was hoping that successful negotiations between Egypt and Israel would convince other Arab governments to join the process, but asked Brzezinski to look into the implications of a separate peace between Egypt and Israel anyway.\textsuperscript{168}

This covert plan with Sadat and the consideration that its result might be less than a comprehensive peace took Carter into uncharted territory. He was moving away from his

\textsuperscript{165} Ibid., 175.
\textsuperscript{166} Vance, 204.
\textsuperscript{167} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 175.
\textsuperscript{168} Brzezinski, 244.
idealistic policies and view of his first year in office, his avoidance of private diplomacy and
push to a comprehensive solution in the Middle East, to a more realistic approach.
Unfortunately, his acknowledgement of the limits of presidential power and influence,
particularly in the face of domestic political concerns, served to weaken his image in the eyes
of Sadat’s staff. While Sadat held Carter in high regard for this honesty, his aides only
perceived a weak leader who would not be able to deliver peace. The gap between Sadat’s
views and those of his ministers would only grow in the coming months, breeding distrust and
causing difficulties during negotiations with the Israelis.¹⁶⁹

Growing doubts on the part of the Egyptians was the least of the difficulties with
Carter and Sadat’s strategy. Their plan relied on the belief that Begin would want to make
compromises to retain the favor of American and international public opinion. After Sadat
left, the White House issued a statement in support of Resolution 242, emphasizing the
illegality of the settlements and noting that they were an obstacle to peace. Carter felt that the
settlements were the one issue he could safely criticize, rallying public opinion behind his and
Sadat’s efforts. Unfortunately, arguments like this would do little to sway Begin.¹⁷⁰ Carter did
not fully understand just how committed Begin was to political positions based on deeply felt
religious belief. This only partially became clear during Dayan’s visit to Washington in
February. Dayan indicated his readiness to compromise for peace, including issuing a
moratorium on settlements until an agreement could be reached. He could not make such a
gesture, though, because Begin would never allow it.¹⁷¹ Dayan even produced a document

¹⁶⁹ Kamel, 83, 90.
¹⁷⁰ Quandt, Camp David, 179.
¹⁷¹ Vance, 205-206.
indicating American support for Israeli retention of an airfield in the Sinai even after its return to Egypt.\textsuperscript{172}

\textbf{The Stormy Season}

The Egyptian proposal was ready on March 7\textsuperscript{th}, but it was not what Carter had been expecting. The document was mainly a restating of Egyptian policy on Israeli withdrawal, Palestinian rights, and settlements. Carter had been hoping for something closer to a draft peace treaty than a statement of policy. At that point, the views of the Egyptian hard line proposal and those Dayan presented a few weeks earlier seemed completely irreconcilable.\textsuperscript{173} Carter could only hope that Begin would be in a conciliatory mood when he arrived in Washington later that month.

\textit{A Series of Unfortunate Events}

Negotiations with Begin were sure to be difficult, and events throughout the spring of 1978 only served to make the situation more tense. High on Carter’s list of priorities were the Senate debates on the Panama Canal Treaties he signed in the fall of the previous year. Many on both sides of the aisle disapproved of Carter’s agreement to hand the canal over to the government of Panama in 1999. Few believed that the Panamanians would be able to adequately defend the canal and that the United States would be giving up a strategic resource in Latin America.\textsuperscript{174} Carter told William Quandt that though he normally would not worry

\textsuperscript{172} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 180.
\textsuperscript{173} \textit{Ibid.}, 182.
\textsuperscript{174} Much has been written on the debates over the ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties including: The Panama Canal in American Politics: Domestic Advocacy and the Evolution of Policy by J. Michael Hogan; The Limits of Victory: The Ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties by George D. Moffett; and The Dynamics of Foreign Policymaking: The President, The Congress, and The Panama Canal Treaties by William Leon Furlong, Margaret E. Scranton.
about pushing to get one of his policies through Congress, but in this case he was also working on normalizing relations with China, SALT II talks, and peace in the Middle East. To get the Panama Canal treaties through, he would need support from Senators opposed to his other policies.\textsuperscript{175}

Carter’s second major problem was the Middle East arms deal. Vance proposed linking the sale to Israel with sales to Egypt and Saudi Arabia because while the Israeli deal was sure to pass, Egypt and Saudi Arabia’s requests might not.\textsuperscript{176} Politically, it would have been much easier to postpone the sales to the Arab countries, but Carter felt the need to shore up the perception of the United States among the Arab states. The 1973 oil embargo was still a relatively fresh memory and he did not want to risk relations with the Saudi government, who had threatened to go to the French for jets if the Americans would not supply them.\textsuperscript{177} The debates continued through the middle of May, costing Carter much needed political capital that could have been used to maintain the momentum of the peace talks.

Both of those issues, though, were domestic concerns and ultimately Carter’s responsibility. On March 11, an event beyond his control further destabilized his peace efforts. On that day some members of the PLO based in Lebanon managed to land a small ship near Haifa and capture two busses on the road to Tel Aviv. A lengthy chase left more than thirty Israelis dead and the Israeli government responded with Operation Litani, a full-scale invasion of southern Lebanon. Carter condemned not only the PLO attack but also the Israeli invasion. He also supported the United Nations resolution calling for the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from Lebanon. Carter could not condone the Israeli strike due to both his

\textsuperscript{175} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, footnote on page 188.
\textsuperscript{176} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 179. The Egyptian and Saudi Arabian sales were far more controversial even though the Egyptians would only be able to purchase 50 F-5s and the Saudis 60 F-15s while the Israelis would get a contract for 15 F-15s and 75 of the latest F-16s.
\textsuperscript{177} Brzezinski, 247-248.
commitment to human rights and international law and to his firm commitment to the peace
talks. His views may have earned him marginal respect from Arab leaders, but it also soured
his relationship with Begin less than two weeks before the Israeli leader arrived in
Washington.\textsuperscript{178}

\textit{Begin’s Visit and its Ripples}

Even if there had been no debates in the Senate or international incidents, the mood would still have been tense when Begin arrived on March 21\textsuperscript{st}. The Israeli and Egyptian governments had been using the United States as an intermediary, passing along questions that each side had about the other’s policies. Early in March Dayan had asked if Sadat would continue negotiating if he and Begin agreed on a declaration of principles and King Hussein declined to join the talks. Sadat had responded affirmatively, as long as it was a strong declaration. This exchange seemed beneficial, except that Sadat sent his response back with his own personal observations, to be repeated to Begin, that the Israelis were more interested in haggling over language than actually negotiating a settlement. He acknowledge the need for security guarantees, but questioned why Begin was so loathe to compromise when he was being offered peace and formal recognition? Begin’s response was telling: he replied that Israel needed the recognition of none except God.\textsuperscript{179}

Carter’s reception of Begin was markedly different from their previous encounters. His patience was wearing thin and since southern hospitality has not gotten him very far, he reverted to anger. Dayan’s personal impressions of the talks dwell on Carter’s mood and his

\textsuperscript{178} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 183.
\textsuperscript{179} \textit{Ibid.}, 181-182.
belief that the Americans were backing Sadat. Carter and his team did take a very forceful line during this visit in an attempt to counter the Israeli claims of weak American leadership. As the Israelis still had not withdrawn from Lebanon when Begin arrived, Carter threatened to use the Arms Export Control Act, which prohibits the use of American weapons in offensive operations to force the Israeli hand. He never had to follow through on the threat, but it was a bold move after having faced such criticism of his Middle East policy. Carter also informed Begin that the settlements were the single largest obstacle to peace and that he expected a detailed account of the exact meaning and extent of Resolution 242 for the Israeli government; the Israeli leader was not used to hearing such demands from Carter.

All in all, the meeting should have been a great success for Carter’s policies. He stood his ground and took his version of the meeting to Congress and the press before Begin was able to. This included what came to be known as the Six No’s of Israeli Policy, that they were not willing to withdraw politically or militarily form any part of the West Bank; not willing to stop the construction of new settlements or the expansion of existing settlements; not willing to withdraw the Israeli settlers from the Sinai, or even leave them there under UN or Egyptian protection; not willing to acknowledge that U.N. Resolution 242 applies to the West Bank-Gaza area; not willing to grant the Palestinian Arabs real authority, or a voice in the determination of their own future

These negative views, coupled with their ambivalence to Vance’s suggestions about security guarantees between Israel and the United States in exchange for peace, tarnished Begin’s image in the United States.

Despite Carter’s rather skillful maneuvering, the meeting was not a success. Begin had not shown flexibility in response to Carters demands. Begin was riding high on public support

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180 Dayan, 126, 130.
181 Vance, 208.
182 Quandt, *Camp David*, 184.
183 Carter, 319-320.
184 Vance, 207.
within Israel. The PLO attack and the invasion of Lebanon united Israelis behind Begin’s conservative views.\textsuperscript{185} Dayan even wrote in his memoirs that he could not answer the American questions on Israeli policy because they were the wrong questions; Palestinian sovereignty in the West Bank and Gaza was not an option that his government was willing to discuss.\textsuperscript{186} The Israelis did not have to wait long for American public opinion to shift in their favor once more. The lack of progress during Carter’s meeting with Begin combined with the continued struggles of the arms deals in Congress created the image that Carter had sold out to Arab oil interests at the expense of Israeli security.\textsuperscript{187}

After the meeting with Begin, Carter was forced to retreat from the center of the negotiations. The Senate had just ratified one of the Panama Canal Treaties and the second treaty was coming up for a vote in the middle of April; Carter needed to solidify his support. His advisors were also putting together the arms sale package to submit to Congress once the Senate ratified the second Panama Canal Treaty. These concerns, plus the public perception that Carter was forcing a peace settlement on the Israelis, precluded further American involvement in negotiations at this stage.\textsuperscript{188}

It is fortunate that Sadat sought a meeting in Cairo with more flexible elements in the Israeli government, Defense Minister Ezer Weizman and Attorney General Aharon Barak, at the end of March. The meeting served to convince the Israeli team that Sadat was ready for peace and did not necessarily need an implementable plan for the West Bank and Gaza. A “fig leaf” plan was all he needed to save face with the Arab states. This in itself was promising,
but even Weizman thought Begin’s plan was little more than a “caricature” of self-rule, without enough substance to even be called a “fig leaf.”

This meeting illuminated two hurdles to successful negotiations: the gulf between what Begin considered reasonable and what his advisors did, and the growing distrust between Sadat and his Foreign Minister, Mohammed Ibrahim Kamel. Kamel was quite distressed by Sadat’s holding of talks with the Israelis as the Arab League was convening in Cairo to discuss the situation in Lebanon and form an Arab Solidarity Committee to help repair relations between Egypt and the other Arab states. Kamel even went to the Saudi Foreign Minister to see if the Crown Prince could convince Sadat not to hold a meeting in the same time and place as the Arab League meeting. Kamel felt that Sadat was deliberately leaving him out of the loop and allowing the Israelis to work to undermine Arab unity. As the peace talks progressed, Kamel became more and more distrustful of Sadat, the Israelis, and Carter. This made negotiating very difficult since a key part of Carter’s plan was to get the two sides to trust one another.

*Starts and Stops*

Vance and Dayan met again in April to try to develop a detailed self-rule plan. Dayan believed that if they came up with a solid self-rule plan, then the Israeli government could unilaterally implement it without needing concessions from other. Dayan had always maintained that Israel wanted access to the land without the need to govern the people, so implementing self-rule could actually benefit Israel. The sticking point was that Dayan

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190 Kamel, 140-146, 170-174.
wanted all eventualities left vague while Vance insisted on having a clear plan detailing what would happen to the Palestinians after any transitional plan.\(^{191}\)

The American Ambassador to Egypt also worked with the Egyptian Foreign Ministry on a second draft of the Egyptian proposal. Dayan was now also calling for an American proposal, so Carter needed a document to which he could respond. The document the Egyptians submitted on May 1 did contain more details than their previous plan, but was still not what Carter had thought of when he devised his strategy with Sadat back in February.\(^{192}\)

Despite the setbacks, Carter was still hoping to help the Egyptians and Israelis draft a declaration of principles that could be used to bring other Arab states into the talks, but time was running out. In a memo to Brzezinski on May 17, Quandt detailed how he saw American policy and noted: “if we cannot get such a clear Israeli commitment on withdrawal, the only realistic alternatives will be continued stalemate or a bilateral Egyptian-Israeli agreement on Sinai. At some point we may have to ask ourselves whether a bilateral deal is better than none at all.”\(^{193}\) As Quandt saw the situation, if Carter could not convince Begin to compromise soon, then a comprehensive peace would be lost. They had already compromised for Begin, no longer using the word “minor” when discussing border modifications under Resolution 242 and speaking of “legitimate” rather than “national” Palestinian rights. Sadat, too, had compromised, putting himself out in the open by traveling to Jerusalem and conducting talks with the Israelis. If Begin was not willing to meet Sadat halfway, then the negotiations should cease; the United States could not apologize for its policies.\(^{194}\)

\(^{191}\) Quandt, *Camp David*, 189.

\(^{192}\) Ibid., 190-191. This proposal was still primarily concerned with the West Bank and Gaza. The plan detailed authority for a Palestinian assembly as coming from Egypt, Jordan, and the United Nations, which was problematic as Israel wanted to be included as well.

\(^{193}\) Ibid., 193.

\(^{194}\) Ibid, 193-194.
By the end of May it became clear that Carter and Sadat’s plan had failed. The Egyptian proposals had not measured up to what the White House had been expecting and domestic political concerns prevented Carter from developing an American compromise proposal sooner. The plan was also focused on obtaining concessions from Begin that would overcome differences on the West Bank and Gaza and the Palestinian refugees. Meanwhile, Sadat had been moving steadily to an “Egypt First” policy ever since his trip to Jerusalem. This created the added problem of making the United States appear more pro-Arab than Egypt. Finally, Vance and Carter had not been able to postpone the sale of American F-5 jets Egypt. For some reason, Sadat requested the jets while he was at Camp David and hoped to have an agreement in the near future.195 Perhaps Sadat wanted to solidify his personal friendship with Carter with an arms partnership. Or maybe his generals thought if peace did not go well, Egypt and Israel could become embroiled in another series of skirmishes across the border. Whatever Sadat’s reasons may have been, his urgent request for arms shifted the focus of American public opinion from his efforts for peace to the possibilities for war.

Though in hindsight a bilateral treaty seems inevitable once Sadat landed in Tel Aviv and gave his speech before the Knesset, the failure of Carter and Sadat’s cooperative strategy had the effect of closing off the option of a more comprehensive agreement. Carter may have still wanted such an agreement, but that would have required Egyptian-Israeli cooperation beyond what was currently possible.

Peace Fizzling Out

Secret Plans

Carter’s efforts to bring peace to the Middle East had come to nothing by June of 1978. He needed a new plan or his Middle East policy would come to nothing and he would not have another chance. The goodwill of his first year in office was gone and relations with Israel were more tense than ever due to the approval of the Saudi and Egyptian requests for jets. Carter expressed his support for the State of Israel at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. marking the thirtieth anniversary of Israel’s independence, but the time when simple gestures could move mountains had passed.\(^\text{196}\)

To help break the deadlock, a secret planning group, consisting of Vice President Mondale, National Security Advisor Brzezinski, and Under Secretary of State Newsome and some members of their respective staffs, began to meet on June 1\(^{\text{st}}\) to develop a new policy strategy. They came to the conclusion that the United States would have to release its proposal for peace in the Middle East, but perhaps should put a little time between the Saudi arms deal and the announcement of such a document.\(^\text{197}\)

Ambassador Eilts met with Sadat to discuss the possibility of releasing a new Egyptian draft proposal. Sadat, ever the fan of strategy and manipulation, agreed this could be done. He was willing to make substantial concessions regarding the fate of the West Bank and Gaza, including the stationing of Israeli troops at security outposts in the territories. He did say that it would probably look better if the Americans “forced” him to accept the troops. He

\(^{196}\) Carter, 320-321.

\(^{197}\) Quandt, *Camp David*, 194-195
could not be accused of selling out his Arab brethren if the United States, seller of advanced military technology to Egypt, demanded such a concession.\textsuperscript{198}

On July 2, Mondale left for Israel and Egypt, hoping he could help implement some of the new strategy of the Middle East planning group. His statement before the Knesset about peace bringing security was not well received; fortunately his meeting with Sadat in Alexandria went better. Sadat went so far as to say that he did not need an agreement with the Israelis about the Palestinians before he signed a peace treaty. Simply have Israel return the Gaza strip with the Sinai and he would implement self-rule there.\textsuperscript{199}

Mondale returned to Washington with agreements from Begin and Sadat to send their foreign ministers to London for detailed discussions and with recommendations for Carter.\textsuperscript{200} He told Carter that the time had come for a “political negotiator” in the talks between Egypt and Israel; Mondale cast Carter as the preferable negotiator. Carter had only ever seen himself as a facilitator; he had never seen himself as a mediator and wanted to avoid becoming one.\textsuperscript{201}

History may view Carter as the mediator of a Middle East peace beginning with his efforts to convene a Geneva Conference during his first year in office, but for Carter and his advisors, this role would require a substantially different strategy and realign his policy goals. The Egyptian newspaper \textit{AlAhram} quoted Carter n July 3 as saying that if the trilateral talks in London failed, then he would once again try to convene a Geneva Convention under U.N. auspices.\textsuperscript{202}

\textsuperscript{198} Vance, 214.  
\textsuperscript{199} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 196-197.  
\textsuperscript{200} Vance had sent his invitations to talks in London in June. Sadat’s acceptance of the invitation served to increase the friction between himself and Kamel, who wrote that “this habit of his of placing me before the \textit{fait accompli} without prior consultation irritated me.” Kamel, 179.  
\textsuperscript{201} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 197.  
\textsuperscript{202} Kamel, 187.
The Middle East planning group met again on Mondale’s return from the region to discuss the options. Brzezinski wondered if the negotiations were doomed and they should simply walk away now. Mondale thought they should be put on hold so that Carter could take time to rebuild his support among the American Jewish community. Vance advocated distancing themselves from the Egyptian-Israeli talks and advising Carter to return to promoting a comprehensive settlement at a Geneva Conference. Hamilton Jordan, Carter’s political advisor, was included in this meeting and rejected both points of views. Egyptian-Israeli talks needed to go forward and preferably end with a peace settlement. The main concern was portraying the negotiations in such a way that Begin could not muster the full support of the American Jewish community. The planning group went with Jordan’s advice and decided to press forward, committing themselves to the London talks and to any action necessary to bring about a settlement at least between Israel and Egypt, if not Jordan as well.203

While the Middle East planning group was reaching this decision, Sadat was deciding that he might prefer to negotiate with someone besides Begin. He met with Weizman and opposition leader Shimon Peres in Vienna, attempting to gauge how he would respond to each of them as a negotiating partner. He proposed a unilateral Israeli gesture, the return of Mount Sinai to Egypt before continuing with negotiations. He spoke of a future in which Egypt would sell oil to Israel and pump water from the Nile to irrigate the Negev Desert. Sadat’s interference could have caused a major international incident, creating the image that he was shopping around for future Israeli leaders. It is a testament to the importance of peace that his actions caused no dramatic consequences.204

204 Kamel, 193-194; Quandt, *Camp David*, 198.
Leeds Castle Talks

Vance, Dayan, and Kamel met at Leeds Castle in Kent for two days of talks on July 18 and 19. The purpose of the meeting was primarily to develop ways to bridge the gap between the Egyptian and Israeli positions, though it also had the effect of bringing the two delegations to the same table for the first time since the January political committee talks. The conference focused on possible agreements about the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which is where the most controversy seemed to lie. The Sinai, on the other hand was a relatively straightforward issue and the major disagreements surrounded extent and implementation of Israeli withdrawal rather than if Israel should withdraw. 205

Regarding the proposal on self-rule for the West Bank and Gaza, Vance and Kamel proposed several compromises. Kamel indicated Egyptian willingness to accommodate Israel when it came to security concerns, even allowing forces in the territories. He also proposed negotiating and implementing any agreement in stages. 206 Vance proposed formally recognizing the right of private individuals to buy and sell land in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Israel (Jews would be allowed to purchase land from Palestinians in the territories and Palestinians could purchase land in Israel), providing a legal means for continuing settlement. Dayan’s only hint of compromise was that Begin might be willing to adopt a self-rule plan as long as there was no agreement over what would happen after a five year period. He also stated that Israel would not accept a peace based on the land for peace formula set out in U.N. Resolution 242. 207

The meeting also confused the positions of the Americans and the Israelis. Vance told Kamel that the United States would no longer insist on Jordanian participation in any future

205 Quandt, Camp David, 200.
206 Ibid.
207 Ibid., 199.
negotiations. Kamel still firmly believed that more Arab states should be involved. Vance left Leeds Castle believing that many more meetings would be necessary before all sides could reach a compromise. Kamel’s desire for a broader peace was at odds with many of Sadat’s earlier statements. Vance returned to Washington with little optimism and questioning whether or not Carter would have a strong partner in any subsequent talks.

A Commitment

When the Leeds Castle talks ended on July 19, Carter had to make a very important decision. Both the Dayan and Kamel had requested an American proposal once again, but Brzezinski warned that issuing such a document would essentially commit Carter to following the negotiations through to their end. Carter and his advisors were perhaps overly cautious with the release of any American proposal, perhaps because the U.S. – Soviet Communiqué from October 1, 1977 had so seriously hampered the march to Geneva. But if Carter failed to act he risked destroying the last chance to reach any peace agreement in the Middle East.

Sadat sent a lengthy message on July 26 stating his belief that any further talks would be useless and that he was shutting down the Israeli military mission in Cairo, the last link to the effort begun in December at Ismailia.

Carter had proposed a trilateral summit as early as January and he returned to the idea as the last ditch effort to bring peace talks. At the rate relations were deteriorating between Egypt and Israel, something needed to be done to prevent open hostilities. A message from Ambassador Eilts on July 30th conveying Sadat’s willingness to end all efforts at peace,

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208 Kamel, 211-212.
209 Quandt, *Camp David*, 201.
210 *Ibid*.
211 Carter, 323.
convinced Carter of the need to hold a summit\textsuperscript{212}. Without one, there would be no peace. On August 6\textsuperscript{th}, Carter sent Vance to Jerusalem and Cairo with invitations to hand deliver to the two leaders. Both accepted and agreed to begin the summit on September 5\textsuperscript{th}, after the end of Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting and prayer. Both leaders even agreed to not make any negative statements before the summit, though neither was perfect on this count.\textsuperscript{213}

**Camp David**

*Planning the Summit*

The presidential retreat had been built in 1939 as a New Deal recreation camp, but President Roosevelt had appropriated it as the presidential retreat in 1942 due to its convenient location near the capital. It was an ideal location for Carter’s purpose. It was isolated with security like a military facility. Any intrepid reporter would have to get through a double security fence that was patrolled by Marines. The military provided all staff for the facility, largely eliminating threats that a staff member might leak information about the talks. All calls had to go through the Army Signal Corps switchboard, further isolating the negotiators from the troubles outside the retreat. Press Secretary Jody Powell was in charge of all statements to the press, corralled in a rented hotel in a nearby town. In this way Carter could completely control the message the press took to the outside world.\textsuperscript{214}

The heads of state each had a cabin to stay in, while their advisors shared quarters. Other cabins served as the negotiating space. All three teams would have to come together at least three times a day for meals in the communal mess hall. Given that they had complete

\textsuperscript{212} Quandt, *Camp David*, 202.

\textsuperscript{213} Carter, 324-325.

\textsuperscript{214} Reynolds, 304-305.
control of the environment Brzezinski suggesting tapping the phones and bugging the rooms, but Carter refused. It would have offended his sense of southern hospitality.215

Along with the environment and all information about the talks, Carter needed to be in control of the negotiations. To reach any agreement, he would need both Sadat and Begin to compromise on issues central to their personal philosophies. Sadat would need to agree to slight shifts in future borders and to withdrawal in stages. Begin would need to accept the principle of withdrawal on all fronts and that he could have security without holding occupied territory. Compromise on both sides was a good plan, but Sadat would have to be more flexible than Begin, since both Carter and Sadat needed the summit to end in success. Begin could return to Israel without peace and remain secure in his political position.216

As soon as Begin and Sadat agreed to meet at Camp David, Vance and a team of planners sequestered themselves in a small town near Washington to plan the summit. There was only one precedent for such a peace summit at the presidential level, President Theodore Roosevelt’s summit at Portsmouth in 1905 that ended the Russo-Japanese War. But Roosevelt remained on Long Island for most of the negotiations, while Carter intended to be the chief mediator at Camp David.217 Logistically speaking, Vance decided that they should send two teams, a political group to handle the negotiating, and a professional group to provide analysis and advice.218 They also prepared a multitude of briefing books to clearly state American policy and to prepare Carter and themselves for all contingencies. According to Vance,

The broad as well as the immediate objective of the administration’s strategy was still to find a way to achieve a comprehensive settlement that we could recommend to all the Middle East parties. In addition, at Camp David, I hoped

215 Brzezinski, 254.
216 Brzezinski, 253; Reynolds, 305-306.
217 Reynolds, 303.
218 Vance, 219.
we could reach agreement on a draft of an Egyptian-Israeli agreement that would form part of the comprehensive settlement.\textsuperscript{219}

This agreement would pave the way for “negotiations of peace treaties and autonomy for the inhabitants in the West Bank and Gaza.”\textsuperscript{220} Brzezinski’s memoirs also indicate a view of Camp David as a stepping stone to a comprehensive peace.\textsuperscript{221} Even after the decision to invite Begin and Sadat to Camp David, there was hope for a comprehensive solution bringing peace between Israel, the Arab states, and the Palestinians. Whether this was Carter’s position or that of Vance and Brzezinski is unclear. Vance writes that he was largely responsible for the policy at the summit, but Quandt argues that Carter had moved to the more pragmatic position of focusing on an Egyptian-Israeli accord, with or without a deal for the Palestinians.\textsuperscript{222} The fact remains that the view existed within the Carter administration that policy should be to find a comprehensive solution, even in the fall of 1978.

The goals and strategies determined the focus of the negotiations at Camp David. Vance and Brzezinski assumed that most of the discussions would focus on the Palestinian issues and that a Sinai agreement would be relatively easy to reach. Most of the compromises on both sides would occur to bring about an agreement in the West Bank and Gaza. Begin did prove more stubborn on the settlements in the Sinai than expected, but that was the only major problem. The territories took on added significance because Sadat insisted on linkage between an Egyptian-Israeli agreement and a future agreement with the Palestinians. The Carter administration agreed with linkage in principle. Without Egypt providing the military and

\textsuperscript{219} Ibid., 218.
\textsuperscript{220} Ibid., 218.
\textsuperscript{221} Brzezinski, 254.
\textsuperscript{222} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 207.
political might behind a coalition of Arab states, Israel had little reason to fear its neighbors or negotiate peace with them. In the end, however, Carter valued a settlement over linkage.\textsuperscript{223}

Vance sent Carter a memo detailing the goals for the summit as he saw them, which were largely the same as American policy as previously articulated. The memo called for accepting the principle of withdrawal on all fronts, but acknowledging that withdrawal could be multidimensional. It could be in phases or even have an Israeli military outpost, but Egyptian or Palestinian sovereignty over the territory. Carter also had to impress upon Begin that withdrawal and security were related; he could not have one without the other. For Vance, the minimum compromise with Israel should be an agreement upon the language in the Aswan declaration. Israel should also agree on a moratorium on settlements and Carter should accept that most sovereignty and border issues would most likely not be solve at the summit.\textsuperscript{224} Vance’s final strategy also outlined a timetable for the summit; it called for spending two to three days discussing the broader issues and then moving on to a settlement, with the entire conference lasting around six days. It allowed two to three days to discuss the overall issues and allotted the second half the summit to negotiate the details of an agreement.\textsuperscript{225} This assessment turned out to be more than a little optimistic.

During the preparation period, the National Security Council also met about the possibility of failure. If the summit were to fail, the team needed to gauge how well Sadat would be accepted back into the Arab world. The Director of the CIA believed Sadat would be welcomed back into the fold, while Brzezinski was not convinced the other Arab states would trust Sadat now that he had gone so far down the road of negotiations with Israel.\textsuperscript{226}

\textsuperscript{223} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 209-212.
\textsuperscript{224} \textit{Ibid.}, 216-217.
\textsuperscript{225} Reynolds, 305.
\textsuperscript{226} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 216.
While the Americans were devising their plans, the Egyptians and Israelis were preoccupied with planning their strategy. Begin announced that he would not agree to withdrawal from the territories acquired in 1967. This would make Carter’s task even more difficult. He could expect Sadat to show at least some flexibility but would need Begin to reciprocate to make a deal. The Egyptian team worked through the month of Ramadan to create their strategy, Kamel worried the entire time about ulterior motives behind Carter convening the summit. He believed that “The final purpose of the United States was to isolate Egypt from the Arab world, so that an ostracized Egypt might fall an easy prey and submit to a separate settlement, thereby increasing Arab dissension.” There is no indication that this was Carter’s purpose, but Kamel saw conspiracies everywhere, especially because Sadat took a very active role in the negotiating process and did not always consult with his Foreign Minister.

*Negotiating at Camp David*  

Three teams of negotiators arrived at Camp David on September 5th, and there they stayed until September 17, when Begin and Sadat signed the Camp David Accords in the White House. Carter, Sadat, and Begin each arrived at the presidential retreat with different purposes and strategies. Each had his own style and hopes for the peace. Carter would need to serve as the mediator not just between two different versions of peace but also between two different styles of negotiating.

227 Brzezinski, 254.  
228 Kamel, 261  
229 This account is a very brief overview of the major issues and final settlement. For an in depth look at the negotiating process and the progression from one proposal to the next, see *Summits: Six Meetings that Shaped the Twentieth Century* by David Reynolds, pages 304-342. Carter also gives a very detailed, day-by-day account in *Keeping Faith*, pages 326-412.  
Sadat tended toward the dramatic side of things. He was constantly concerned with the big picture, painting broad strokes in words and written documents. He also enjoyed secret plans and covert operations, one of the reasons the strategy he devised with Carter appealed to him.\textsuperscript{231} Begin, on the other hand, was very detail oriented; he would obsess about legal language down to the placement of comas and about the definitions of key words. Both Begin’s nit-picking and Sadat’s dramatic gestures served to allow both leaders to avoid making an agreement.\textsuperscript{232} Begin only focused on the trees and Sadat only on the forest. Both were needed for a successful conclusion to the summit. Carter would need to negotiate a balance between too much detail and total ambiguity.

The negotiating teams also needed special consideration. Kamel and Sadat’s other advisors were very cautious about peace, retaining a pessimistic outlook and a maximalist stance on what Israel should concede to achieve peace. Dayan and Weizman, Begin’s advisors, were far more flexible and pragmatic than the Prime Minister. Vance would have to negotiate between teams that embodied traits that countered those of the heads of state.\textsuperscript{233}

Carter also needed to mediate between three different expectations. Begin was expecting a “permanent partial peace,” a de facto arrangement that there would be no more war, but forgoing a formal peace treaty. His idea of success was an agreement on procedure. Sadat was looking for a framework for a final comprehensive peace between Israel and all its neighbors. He would consider the summit successful if Begin agreed, at least in principle, to withdrawal from Arab lands on all fronts.\textsuperscript{234} The third view was the prominent view in the Carter administration: that the goal of the summit should be to begin a comprehensive

\textsuperscript{231} Kamel, 122.
\textsuperscript{232} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 306.
\textsuperscript{233} Reynolds, 306-307.
\textsuperscript{234} Reynolds, 308-309.
settlement. Supporters of this approach, including Vance and Brzezinski, viewed linkage as absolutely necessary and saw dim prospects for a written agreement by the end of the summit. Carter himself seems to waver back and forth between this view and a more pragmatic approach involving a peace treaty between the Egyptians and Israelis only. He liked the idea of linkage, but did not consider it absolutely necessary. He also believed that the summit needed to end with a written agreement. At the end of the day, Carter’s views were those implemented at Camp David.\footnote{Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 217-218.}

Carter’s goal was to get both men to trust him personally, and perhaps eventually trust each other. This trust would be the foundation of the agreement. On this point, Carter was most likely overly optimistic. Camp David in many ways was a new venue to argue old arguments. The same rhetoric went around the negotiating table; the table just happened to be set in a bucolic setting. Camp David became a contest of who could afford to stay the longest, a contest Begin won, as he was continually ready to leave the summit without an agreement.\footnote{Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 217-219. Stein in \textit{Heroic Diplomacy} argues that not even Begin could have returned home without an agreement. This is contrary to the consensus in other sources and to the events of earlier that year, when Begin’s popularity at home spiked due to the decision to invade Lebanon, Stein, 252.}

Sadat arrived with a draft of a very hard line treaty sprinkled with anti-Israel statements. But he also came prepared with a list of concessions and alternative language that he would be prepared to accept.\footnote{Reynolds, 312.} Begin did not arrive with a written proposal, but he had not altered his position since his statement that he would not agree to withdraw from territories taken in 1967. For the first three days of the summit, Carter, Begin, and Sadat met together to discuss the issues. After the third day, he decided that from that point on, Begin and Sadat would not be allowed to see each other, let alone speak to each other, as Carter believe that
they were “completely incompatible” and were literally not on speaking terms. From that point on, negotiations were conducted in a very similar fashion to Kissinger’s shuttle diplomacy. Instead of jetting between Cairo and Jerusalem, however, Carter and his advisors walked or drove in the Camp David golf carts between the Egyptian and Israeli cabins.238

Four days past Vance’s estimated deadline for an agreement, the talks were at an impasse. He and his team had spent ten difficult days going back and forth between two men at loggerheads. None of the participants could afford to stay locked away at Camp David for much longer. Everyone was beginning to feel claustrophobic and whispers of being held in a concentration camp accurately reflected the mood of everyone there. Carter needed to get back to Washington to deal with the crisis brewing in Iran. The Shah had declared martial law on the 8th and the situation was rapidly deteriorating. Up until that point, the bulk of the negotiating had been about a West Bank and Gaza agreement, to the detriment of a settlement on the Sinai. At this point Carter had to remember that “politics is the art of the possible” and that he could either go for a full agreement and risk going home empty handed, or settle for something less and have a better chance of success.239 Vance remembers Carter telling the political team “his concern that in our preoccupation with the West Bank-Gaza complex of issues—the core of the framework for a comprehensive settlement—we had overlooked a chance to negotiate an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty.”240

Carter now had two options. The first was to convince Sadat to accept immediate normal relations with Israel (the last concession that Begin wanted for peace). Then if Begin refused to sign the document, then Carter would have to try to take his case to the American

239 Quandt, Camp David, 235.
240 Vance, 223.
people and place the blame for the lack of peace on Begin’s shoulders. But this plan had the distinct possibility of failing itself. Carter opted to look for the “possible” and try for a second option. He would negotiate a firm accord on the Sinai and a more vague document about the West Bank and Gaza. Israel would return the Sinai to Egypt and hopefully the vague document about the West Bank and Gaza would jump start a further round of talks regarding the Palestinians.  

On Friday the 15th, Carter told his aides that he was not sure if they would succeed or fail. He announced that he would collect proposals from all sides and try to come up with some sort of statement that would allow all three to depart amicably by Monday the 18th. Before even finishing this plan, Vance came to his cabin and announced that Sadat was leaving. He and his aides were packed and Vance was supposed to be ordering him a helicopter. This would mean the end of the peace talks and failure for after two years of effort. Carter walked over to Sadat’s cabin and discussed the matter with him. Carter went so far as to say that if Sadat left, he would forfeit the trust he had earned, the good relations between the United States and Egypt and Carter’s friendship. He went on to say that if circumstances did not improve within two days, everyone would leave. Sadat believed that the Israelis were leading everyone on and would never sign a statement. They would simply take the proposals from Camp David and use them as the starting point for any future negotiation. Carter assured Sadat that if either party rejected a single part of one of the agreements, then none of the proposals would be binding. And Sadat agreed to stay. He even told his team that he would sign anything Carter gave him without even reading it.

241 Quandt, Camp David, 235-236.
242 Carter, 400-402
243 Kamel, 357.
All three leaders spent the weekend at Camp David revising and reviewing the two documents that would become the Camp David Accords. Several issues, including Jerusalem and the status of settlements, threatened to kill the agreement. To resolve these issues, Carter agreed to redact all mention of Jerusalem from the text and exchange letters with each leader detailing his position on the city. Begin, who had made an oath to God to not dismantle a single Israeli settlement, agreed to put the issue before the Knesset, which would decide whether or not to dismantle the settlements in the Sinai. (The issue passed with an overwhelming margin.) On the point of a settlement freeze, Carter agreed to remove all language from the documents, but he believed that that Begin had agreed to freeze settlement building until after negotiations with the Palestinians settled the status of the West Bank in letters. Begin also did not want any language from Resolution 242 in the document, so Carter had to satisfy himself with appending the full text of the resolution to the documents.\textsuperscript{244}

The agreement was almost finished when it seemed to fall apart at the last minute. Begin was refusing to sign any document if Carter and Sadat exchanged letters on Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{245} He announced that he was leaving and then asked Carter if he would sign some photos of Carter, himself, and Sadat taken at the start of the summit for his grandchildren. Carter did this, personalizing each photo with the names of Begin’s eight grandchildren. Carter then walked over to Begin’s cabin and handed him the photos. Carter believes that in that moment, Begin thought about what it would mean for his grandchildren to grow up under constant threat of war, for them to be negotiating the same issues. He agreed to accept Carter’s letter to Sadat regarding Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{246}

\textsuperscript{244} Reynolds, 329-333.  
\textsuperscript{245} Carter, Keeping Faith, 407.  
\textsuperscript{246} Carter, Speech at AUC.
After several further quick modifications on the language to satisfy all parties, Carter, Begin, and Sadat boarded a Marine One for Washington, D.C. There, in the Rose Room of the White House, at 10:15 p.m., all three men signed the Framework for Peace in the Middle East and the Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel.  

To a Treaty and Beyond

Issues Arise

Even before the negotiations on a final treaty began, the spell that had enabled an agreement at Camp David was broken. At the retreat, Carter tried to get a commitment in the form of a letter from Begin detailing a settlement freeze during the autonomy negotiations with the Palestinians. The letter had gone through a few revisions and on Sunday when Begin sent over the “new letter, it had not changed. When Begin announced the construction of a large number of new settlements planned for 1979, Carter was unable to pressure him to reconsider. Carter believed Begin had deliberately tricked him.

Both Begin and Sadat also found the real world less conducive to negotiating than Camp David. Kamel, Sadat’s third Foreign Minister since his trip to Jerusalem, resigned and Sadat had to face the real world alienation of his Arab neighbors, including the threat of expulsion from the Arab League if he signed a separate treaty. The support he and Carter had expected from King Hussein and Prince Fahd did not appear. Rather, the two leaders distanced themselves from Sadat and the Camp David Accords. Thus the issue of linkage and a strict timetable became increasingly important to Sadat in his effort to save face within the Arab world. He was also reluctant to exchange ambassadors quickly, as this would only

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247 Carter, Keeping Faith, 411-412.
strengthen the opposition to Egypt in the Arab world.\textsuperscript{249} As for Begin, he returned home to find the Israeli public concerned that Sadat was providing them with a piece of paper that would prove worthless if there was ever another war. He wanted assurance that Egypt’s previous defense treaties with Arab states would not lead to the violation of a new peace treaty with Israel if Syria, for example, were to invade.\textsuperscript{250} He most likely meant well, but Begin’s continual focus on minute legal detail slowed the talks immensely.\textsuperscript{251}

Events outside the control of any party also affected the negotiations. Turmoil in Iran needed Carter’s immediate attention, and also served to make the Israelis very nervous. At the time Iran supplied them with the oil they needed, being the only oil producing country that was not Arab (and whose leader was dependent upon American aid and weapons). Begin needed an agreement with Egypt that would include the purchase of Egyptian oil to meet Israel’s needs.\textsuperscript{252} Egypt also looked at the revolution in Iran as a portent of things to come. Besides Israel, Iran had been the Middle Eastern state most closely aligned with the United States. He was moving his own country in that direction and was worried that the same might happen to him.\textsuperscript{253}

\textit{The Negotiations}

The Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel included a timeframe for that conclusion: three months. Carter, however, hoped to have a treaty signed by the midterm elections on November 7. In October, he invited the negotiating teams to Washington, D.C., where Vance led the negotiations, based at Blair House. The

\textsuperscript{249} Brzezinski, 274.
\textsuperscript{250} Stein, 257.
\textsuperscript{251} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 289-290.
\textsuperscript{252} Parker, 140.
\textsuperscript{253} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 291.
negotiators began work on a draft treaty October 12. One draft existed by the end of October, and further revisions brought it even closer to the ultimate treaty by November 11. Though the talks looked promising initially, they left without the finalizing a treaty to sign.\textsuperscript{254}

Vance began an intense bout of shuttle diplomacy beginning in December, despite his intense involvement in the SALT talks in Moscow. When this failed to yield anything except Vance’s increasing feelings of frustration toward Begin, Carter decided to invite the key negotiators for to Camp David in February. The key problem was that although Egyptian Prime Minister Mustafa Khalil had the full authority to make a deal, Dayan was only authorized to explore options.\textsuperscript{255}

Carter was already expending far too much time on the Middle East. He was now in the third year of his administration and was attempting to normalize relations with China, negotiate arms reduction with the Soviets, deal with various domestic issues, and help Sadat and Begin finalize a peace treaty. He met Begin to Washington to attempt to iron out the key issues on March 2 through 4. Carter then took a political risk by traveling to the Middle East himself to resolve the final differences.\textsuperscript{256}

Carter’s final efforts at shuttle diplomacy paid off; he was able to extract final concessions from both sides. Begin agreed to drop the binding sales of Egyptian oil so long as the United States guaranteed Israeli oil needs for fifteen years. Sadat backed away from the highest degree of linkage that he had been advocating. The signing of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty was no longer contingent upon the conclusion of an autonomy agreement in Gaza, a solution he had proposed instead of requiring autonomy in both territories at first.\textsuperscript{257}

\textsuperscript{254} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 268-281.
\textsuperscript{255} Vance, 240-242.
\textsuperscript{256} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 298-302.
\textsuperscript{257} Quandt, \textit{Camp David}, 303-311.
Begin and Sadat arrived in Washington on March 25 for the final signing ceremony. The two sides continued to debate issues and treaty language right up to the signing of the document on the White House lawn on March 26.\textsuperscript{258} The two countries were at peace, never to fight another war. Israel returned the last stretch of the Sinai to Egypt on April 25, 1982.

\textsuperscript{258} Carter, 436.
Conclusion
I told [Begin] that peace in the Middle East was in his hands, that he had a unique opportunity to either bring it into being or kill it, and that he understood that the Arabs genuinely wanted peace, particularly Sadat. He had seen the expression on the faces of people in Cairo, Ismailia, and Jerusalem when they exchanged visits, and there was no doubt in his mind about it. . . . My guess is that he will not take the necessary steps to bring peace to Israel—an opportunity that may never come again.  

Jimmy Carter, *Diary, May 1, 1978*

Jimmy Carter’s assessment of the peace process illustrates the fragile nature of peace negotiations in the Middle East. Opportunities come and go, often without being exploited to their full advantage. Only Jordan has joined Egypt in signing a peace treaty with Israel, and the Palestinian problem seems no closer to a solution.

**What happened next?**

*Consequences*

Almost exactly one month ago was the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty. In that time, neither side has violated any part of its obligations as laid down in the treaty. Since the signing of the treaty, there has not been a single Arab-Israeli War. This is not to say that the region is at peace, Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 and remained there until 2000. Its treatment of the Palestinians under occupation in the West Bank and Gaza strip is often violent. But there was no repeat of the alliances and maneuvering that led to the 1967 War or coordinated counterstrike that started the 1973 War. Without Egypt, Syria, the principle aggressor, would not risk attacking an Israel that would only need to fight on a single front.

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259 Carter, 319.
The consequences of the treaty were not all beneficial. After Egypt signed the treaty, the Arab League suspended its membership and moved the Arab League headquarters to Tunis. Egypt’s departure from the league left a power vacuum that Saddam Hussein was only too glad to fill.\(^{260}\) Israel also may have chosen to invade Lebanon in 1982 because there was not threat of Egyptian retaliation.\(^{261}\) Israel has gone on to destroy nuclear reactors in Iraq and Syria, without any hint of retaliation from the Arab states. In 1981, an Islamic fundamentalist group assassinated Sadat, sending a chilling message to any other leaders who may have been thinking of negotiating a peace with Israel.

Gradually, though, the Arab League did welcome Egypt back into the fold, moving the headquarters back to Cairo in 1989. Since then, Egypt has been able to plan an important role in negotiations between Arab states, the Palestinians, and Israel; Egypt increasingly acts as a mediator, hosting conferences in Cairo, Sharm el-Sheikh and other Egyptian locations. This provides a forum for discussion where neither side is perceived as an American stooge.

The consequences for the United States were mostly financial. Aid to Israel and Egypt increased dramatically. The United States helped defray the cost of Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai, and Egypt received a very generous economic aid package and increasing amounts of military aid. Israel and Egypt are still first and second on the list of aid recipients by amount.\(^{262}\)

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\(^{260}\) Lesch, 85.

\(^{261}\) Quandt, *Camp David*, 321. Quandt claims that the war in Lebanon was a “war of choice,” but this does not explain why Israel invaded Lebanon in 1978, when Egypt was still a potential threat. There is no guarantee that Egypt and the other Arab states would have felt obligated to save predominately Maronite Lebanon. History will never know if a belligerent Egypt would have prevented the Israeli occupation of Lebanon.

\(^{262}\) This is excluding the money flowing into Iraq at the moment. That expense is a recent phenomenon and is due to the fact that “we broke the country.” Stephen Walt, “The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy” a Lecture at the American University in Cairo, May 29, 2008.
Subsequent Searches for Peace

Domestic political issues and the Iran Hostage Crisis probably cost Carter the 1980 election. Unfortunately for the Middle East, Reagan was far more interested in brinksmanship with the Soviet Union to advance the cause of peace. President Ronald Reagan did launch a peace initiative to try to bring about the autonomy talks called for in the Camp David Accords and the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, but not until 1982, after Israel invaded Lebanon. The initiative was short lived and did not result in any change in the situation. It is unlikely Reagan would have wanted autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza. He was quoted as saying “as to the West Bank, I believe the settlement there— . . . they’re not illegal.” While Reagan did not do anything for peace, the Palestinians did. In 1987 they began the First Intifada with a group of teens throwing rocks at Israeli tanks. The largely non-violent Intifada served to change many people’s opinions, particularly in Europe, about the nature of the State of Israel.

President George Bush Sr. entered office with the goal of furthering peace in the Middle East, but of avoiding everything Carter had done to achieve it. There would be no grand plans and no high level meetings. Thus the peace process stagnated once more until Bush used the opportunities of the American-Arab victory over Saddam Hussein in Kuwait and PLO support of Saddam during that war to convene a Geneva style conference chaired by both himself and Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev. Bush hoped that the Palestinians would be more willing to accept a compromise since they had backed the wrong horse and lost a lot of goodwill in the Gulf states. The conference opened on October 30, 1991 in Madrid. But his goal was only to convene and facilitate meetings, not actively push for an agreement. Bush

did try to restrain the pace of Israeli settlements in the territories by attaching conditions to American aid, but that was in 1992, and Bush was gearing up for his reelection campaign. All that Bush had accomplished by the time he lost the election to Bill Clinton in November was to have gotten all the parties to sit down at the same table.264

Clinton advanced the cause of peace the furthest since Jimmy Carter. Bush had convened the Madrid Conference, Israel and Syria were conducting peace talks, and Israel and the PLO had been secretly negotiating in Oslo. Perhaps the most difficult half of the battle, getting the two sides to speak to one another, had been accomplished without Clinton lifting a finger. He was able to host the signing of the Oslo Accords September of his first year in office. Immediately after the signing of the Oslo Accord, Jordan began peace talks with Israel. With minimal American involvement, Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin concluded their negotiations and signed the treaty in October 1994. In September 1995, Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat signed Oslo II detailing even further the peace agreement.

Peace talks in Clinton’s second term proved more difficult than those in his first. An Israeli religious extremist assassinated Rabin in October 1995 and Benjamin Netanyahu, a conservative, was elected on a platform that Oslo Accords were damaging to Israeli security. Deadline by deadline, the Oslo Accords slipped by without actually changing any situation on the ground. Clinton did attempt to facilitate the implementation of Oslo, but he had to deal with a crisis in Kosovo, Saddam violating the no fly zones, and impeachment at home. In the last year of his presidency, he invited Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Arafat to Camp David in an attempt to broker a deal as Carter had done in 1978. Clinton, however, was facing different and, in many ways, more complicated issues than Carter had. The two sides left

264 For detailed information about Bush’s foreign policy in the Middle East, see Quandt, Peace Process, 290-318.
without signing an agreement, a new, more violent Intifada erupted, and Clinton handed the reigns over to George W. Bush.\footnote{For a full discussion of Clinton’s foreign policy goals and actions in the Middle East, see Quandt, \textit{Peace Process}, 321-381.}

Bush II had no plan for the Middle East when he entered office. By the time Israeli leader Ariel Sharon was convincing him to throw his weight behind Israel, it was early September. On September 11, the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington ushered in a new era of American foreign policy in the Middle East. Focus shifted from Israel to Afghanistan, and Bush looked at the world began to view the world as “with us or against us.” Sharon, plagued by suicide bombers, joined the “Global War on Terror” right in his own backyard. For the next eight years, the peace process stalled as Bush ignored the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, hunting for Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan and weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. He did launch the “Roadmap” in 2003, but had little follow-up as that was immediately prior to the invasion of Iraq. By the time Bush convened the Annapolis conference in 2007, Israel had fought a minor war in Lebanon, elections in the territories had been subverted when Hamas won, and Hamas controlled a Gaza under Israeli siege, periodically launching rockets into Israeli towns protesting their lack of food, clean water, and medicine.\footnote{For a more in depth discussion of Bush’s foreign policy, see Quandt, \textit{Peace Process}, 385-412.}

\textbf{Was it worth it?}

Since the completion of the Camp David Accords and the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, many scholars have wondered if the benefits of peace outweighed the costs of obtaining it. Many of these musings occurred the 1980s, when the peace process as a whole had stagnated. They saw only Egypt’s isolation from the Arab world. The general
consensus was that the United States benefited from peace between Egypt and Israel. There was less fear of Soviet incursion and the increased relations with Egypt served to counter, if only marginally, the loss of relations with Iran.\textsuperscript{267} The United States also seemed to have a lot to lose in the mid 1980s. Egypt and Israel maintained official relations, but it was a “cold peace” with “frozen” relations.\textsuperscript{268} The lack of warm relations had worried many in politics and business because if the treaty were to fail, the United States would lose substantial political and economic investment in Egypt.\textsuperscript{269}

There was also the worry that with the most powerful Arab belligerent out of the picture, Israel would have no reason to negotiate for peace. By the 1990s, this pessimism was beginning to wane. Egypt had been accepted back into the Sunni Arab fold as a counter weight to the strength and threat of Shia Iran.\textsuperscript{270} The Oslo Accords and the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty cast Egypt in the role of peace pioneer, not liability, in hindsight.

\textbf{Can we follow in Carter’s footsteps?}

There are few who would question the wisdom of Carter’s efforts to bring about an Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty today. Even without the threat of a war with Egypt, Israel has not been safe. Non-state actors like Hezbollah are proving more difficult to defeat, as evidenced by Israel’s failure to achieve its objectives during the 2006 war with Hezbollah. The cost of occupying an unwilling population in the Palestinian territories is also beginning to take its toll. And Israel will most likely have to be ever more accountable to the world and the United State in the near future. The days of \textit{carte blanche} for Israel are waning. Osama

\begin{footnotes}
\item[268] Beinin, 7.
\item[269] Quandt, “Peacemaking,” 373.
\item[270] Atherton, 117.
\end{footnotes}
bin Laden cited the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and American support for Israel in that equations one of his many reasons for committing acts of terror on September 11th. The United States may not bow to pressure from terrorists, but completely ignoring the option of eliminating one of bin Laden’s largest grievances would be foolish. Two wars that are quickly turning into quagmires in far away countries have led the American people to question the wisdom of advancing policy through war rather than through diplomacy. The recent election of Barak Obama may alter the use of American power abroad, shifting the policy strategy to peace talks.

In this shift, politicians may turn to Carter’s foreign policy as a guide for the future. This would be inadvisable. Carter did not achieve his essential foreign policy goal in the Middle East: a comprehensive peace. He continued to attempt to achieve a comprehensive peace even through the end of the negotiations at Camp David in 1978. If he had accepted Sadat’s initiative and the bilateral talks as a sign that there would be no comprehensive agreement, an Egyptian-Israeli treaty might have come sooner and with much less headache. His failure came with the success of that treaty, so it is easy to overlook the fact that his policies did not work. It seems that Sadat and Begin achieved this great success in spite of Carter’s policy goals and not because of them.271 Trying to follow Carter’s path to achieve another such success is unlikely to yield results. Clinton illustrated this when he brought Barak and Arafat to Camp David to try to work through the stalled Oslo process. By the time the two sides left, Oslo was dead and no one is rushing to hold a Camp David III. 272

Clinton’s successes in his first term offer another hint as to why future leaders cannot simply emulate Carter to achieve peace in the Middle East; the successes during the Clinton

271 Quandt, Camp David, 324.
administration were largely the result of regional initiatives. The same is true of the Egyptian-
Israeli treaty. After the failure to convene at a Geneva Conference, Sadat decided to not let the
policies of his Arab neighbors affect his chances for peace. He pursued an “Egypt First”
policy when he went to Jerusalem and began holding bilateral talks with the Israelis. These
talks did fail and success came from Carter throwing his personal prestige behind their success,
but Sadat was willing to take the difficult steps to peace because he believed it was the best
option for Egypt. Similarly, a separate treaty with Egypt had been a long-standing goal of
Israeli politicians, as evidenced by the earlier Sinai agreements. Carter happened to be the
right man to bring these two desires together in a working relationship.273

Future leaders can take away Carter’s commitment to peace and his willingness to risk
everything to achieve it. They should also look at Carter’s mistakes and failings. Carter
wasted a good portion of 1978 going back and forth between Egypt and Israel with questions,
instead of drafting an American proposal and starting a discussion.274 Carter was
understandably wary of being perceived to dictate American policy on the world, but both
sides had asked for such a proposal. By delaying American involvement in the negotiation of
policy itself, Carter allowed the Egyptians and Israelis to run each other raw with antagonistic
behavior. Much of this was not even intentional. Begin’s legal “haggling over minutiae”
infuriated Sadat so much because Egyptians to not bargain for diplomacy as they would in the
market.275 It degrades the entire experience. Begin was trying to make sure he had an airtight
deal, offending Egyptian sensibilities the entire time.276

273 Quandt, *Camp David*, 330-331. Brzezinski notes that credit for the success of the negotiations had to go to
Carter’s “perseverance.” Brzezinski, 273.
274 Quandt, *Camp David*, 326.
275 Vance, 224.
276 Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone, “The Practice of American Diplomacy in the Middle East: The Case of
Assuming the support of King Hussein and Prince Fahd after the Camp David Accords was another key error in judgment. When their support failed to materialize, it almost derailed the entire peace process. Without them, Sadat wanted new guarantees to be sure that he would not be seen as betraying the Arab people. Begin, of course, would not accept any new demands as it related to the West Bank and Gaza, widening the gap that Carter had worked so hard to close at Camp David.277

Carter was also ineffective in pressuring Israel to accept more concessions. By promising not to withhold American aid, Carter effectively cut off a key bargaining tool in his arsenal. Even without the promise, Carter did not have the domestic political backing to use such a power. The path to the Camp David Accords accentuated the limits of American power. American political capital can propel a peace effort forward, but that capital is not limitless and it depends on the goodwill of the people.278

Camp David’s Place in History

Thirty years beyond further into time, Camp David has earned its place in the pantheon of landmark Middle Eastern Peace agreements. The early belief that it would provide a model for future talks or a stepping-stone to an Israeli-Palestinian agreement has not been proven true, but that does not diminish the importance of the Accords.279 The Middle East is definitely a safer place with Israel and Egypt not at loggerheads. Without the threat of war, there is the chance of reform to the authoritarian politics in Egypt. The lack of war also lessens the effectiveness of Israeli arguments for security when avoiding an agreement with the Palestinians. Carter’s policies show that an American effort can be very effective in jump-
starting the peace process. Unfortunately, Clinton’s struggles illustrate that American policy is not enough to seal the deal. But American policymakers should be ready when an initiative emerges from the Middle East.
Appendix A

U.N. Resolution 242, November 22, 1967

The Security Council,
Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,
Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,
Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,
1. Affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:
   (i) Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
   (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;
2. Affirms further the necessity
   (a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;
   (b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;
   (c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;
3. Requests the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;
4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

U.N. Resolution 338, October 22, 1973

The Security Council
1. Calls upon all parties to the present fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions they now occupy;
2. Calls upon the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts;
3. Decides that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations shall start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East.
Appendix B

Joint Communiqué by the Government of the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, October 1, 1977

Having exchanged views regarding the unsafe situation which remains in the Middle East, U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Member of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. A. A. Gromyko have the following statement to make on behalf of their countries, which are cochairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East:

1. Both governments are convinced that vital interests of the peoples of this area, as well as the interests of strengthening peace and international security in general, urgently dictate the necessity of achieving, as soon as possible, a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This settlement should be comprehensive, incorporating all parties concerned and all questions.

The United States and the Soviet Union believe that, within the framework of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem, all specific questions of the settlement should be resolved, including such key issues as withdrawal of Israeli Armed Forces from territories occupied in the 1967 conflict; the resolution of the Palestinian question, including insuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people; termination of the state of war and establishment of normal peaceful relations on the basis of mutual recognition of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence.

The two governments believe that, in addition to such measures for insuring the security of the borders between Israel and the neighboring Arab states as the establishment of demilitarized zones and the agreed stationing in them of U.N. troops or observers, international guarantees of such borders as well as of the observance of the terms of the settlement can also be established should the contracting parties so desire. The United States and the Soviet Union are ready to participate in these guarantees, subject to their constitutional processes.

2. The United States and the Soviet Union believe that the only right and effective way for achieving a fundamental solution to all aspects of the Middle East problem in its entirety is negotiations within the framework of the Geneva peace conference, specially convened for these purposes, with participation in its work of the representatives of all the parties involved in the conflict including those of the Palestinian people, and legal and contractual formalization of the decisions reached at the conference.

In their capacity as cochairmen of the Geneva conference, the United States and the U.S.S.R. affirm their intention, through joint efforts and in their contacts with the parties concerned, to facilitate in every way the resumption of the work of the conference not later than December 1977. The cochairmen note that there still exist several questions of a procedural and organizational nature which remain to be agreed upon by the participants to the conference.

3. Guided by the goal of achieving a just political settlement in the Middle East and of eliminating the explosive situation in this area of the world, the United States and the U.S.S.R. appeal to all the parties in the conflict to understand the necessity for careful
consideration of each other's legitimate rights and interests and to demonstrate mutual readiness to act accordingly.

Appendix C

In the name of God, the Gracious and Merciful.
Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Peace and the mercy of God Almighty be upon you and may peace be for us all, God willing. Peace for us all on the Arab land, and in Israel as well, as in every part of this big world, which is so complexed by its sanguinary conflicts, disturbed by its sharp contradictions, menaced now and then by destructive wars launched by man to annihilate his fellow man. Finally, amidst the ruins of what man has built and the remains of the victims of Mankind, there emerges neither victor nor vanquished. The only vanquished remains man, God's most sublime creation, man whom God has created - as Ghandi the apostle of peace puts it: to forge ahead to mould the way of life and worship God Almighty.

I come to you today on solid ground, to shape a new life, to establish peace. We all, on this land, the land of God; we all, Muslims, Christians and Jews, worship God and no one but God. God's teachings and commandments are love, sincerity, purity and peace.

I do not blame all those who received my decision - when I announced it to the entire world before the Egyptian People's Assembly - with surprise and amazement. Some, gripped by the violent surprise, believed that my decision was no more than verbal juggling to cater for world public opinion. Others, still, interpreted it as political tactics to camouflage my intention of launching a new war. I would go as far as to tell you that one of my aides at the Presidential Office contacted me at a late hour following my return home from the People's Assembly and sounded worried as he asked me: "Mr. President, what would be our reaction if Israel should actually extend an invitation to you?" I replied calmly, I will accept it immediately. I have declared that I will go to the end of the world; I will go to Israel, for I want to put before the People of Israel all the facts.

I can see the point of all those who were astounded by my decision or those who had any doubts as to the sincerity of the intentions behind the declaration of my decision. No one would have ever conceived that the President of the biggest Arab State, which bears the heaviest burden and the top responsibility pertaining to the cause of war and peace in the Middle East, could declare his readiness to go to the land of the adversary while we were still in a state of war. Rather, we all are still bearing the consequences of four fierce wars waged within thirty years. The families of the 1973 October War are still moaning under the cruel pains of widowhood and bereavement of sons, fathers and brothers.

As I have already declared, I have not consulted, as far as this decision is concerned, with any of my colleagues and brothers, the Arab Heads of State or the confrontation States. Those of them who contacted me, following the declaration of this decision, expressed their objection, because the feeling of utter suspicion and absolute lack of confidence between the Arab States and the Palestinian People on the one hand, and Israel on the other, still surges in us all. It is sufficient to say that many months in which peace could have been brought about had been wasted over differences and fruitless discussions on the procedure for the convocation of the Geneva Conference, all showing utter suspicion and absolute lack of confidence.

But, to be absolutely frank with you, I took this decision after long thinking, knowing that it constitutes a grave risk for, if God Almighty has made it my fate to assume the responsibility on behalf of the Egyptian People and to share in the fate-determining responsibility of the Arab Nation and the Palestinian People, the main duty dictated by this
responsibility is to exhaust all and every means in a bid to save my Egyptian Arab People and the entire Arab Nation the horrors of new, shocking and destructive wars, the dimensions of which are foreseen by no other than God himself.

After long thinking, I was convinced that the obligation of responsibility before God, and before the people, make it incumbent on me that I should go to the farthest corner of the world, even to Jerusalem, to address Members of the Knesset, the representatives of the People of Israel, and acquaint them with all the facts surging in me. Then, I would leave you to decide for yourselves. Following this, may God Almighty determine our fate.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there are moments in the life of nations and peoples when it is incumbent on those known for their wisdom and clarity of vision to overlook the past, with all its complexities and weighing memories, in a bold drive towards new horizons. Those who, like us, are shouldering the same responsibility entrusted to us, are the first who should have the courage to take fate-determining decisions which are in consonance with the circumstances. We must all rise above all forms of fanaticism, self-deception and obsolete theories of superiority. The most important thing is never to forget that infallibility is the prerogative of God alone.

If I said that I wanted to save all the Arab People the horrors of shocking and destructive wars, I most sincerely declare before you that I have the same feelings and bear the same responsibility towards all and every man on earth, and certainly towards the Israeli People.

Any life lost in war is a human life, irrespective of its being that of an Israeli or an Arab. A wife who becomes a widow is a human being entitled to a happy family life, whether she be an Arab or an Israeli. Innocent children who are deprived of the care and compassion of their parents are ours, be they living on Arab or Israeli land. They command our top responsibility to afford them a comfortable life today and tomorrow.

For the sake of them all, for the safeguard of the lives of all our sons and brothers, for affording our communities the opportunity to work for the progress and happiness of man and his right to a dignified life, for our responsibilities before the generations to come, for a smile on the face of every child born on our land - for all that, I have taken my decision to come to you, despite all hazards, to deliver my address.

I have shouldered the prerequisites of the historical responsibility and, therefore, I declared - on 4 February 1971, to be precise - that I was willing to sign a peace agreement with Israel. This was the first declaration made by a responsible Arab official since, the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Motivated by all these factors dictated by the responsibilities of leadership, I called, on 16 October 1973, before the Egyptian People's Assembly, for an international conference to establish permanent peace based on justice. I was not in the position of he who was pleading for peace or asking for a ceasefire.

Motivated by all these factors dictated by duties of history and leadership, we signed the first disengagement agreement, followed by the second disengagement agreement in Sinai. Then we proceeded trying both open and closed doors in a bid to find a certain path leading to a durable and just peace. We opened our hearts to the peoples of the entire world to make them understand our motivations and objectives, and to leave them actually convinced of the fact that we are advocates of justice and peace-makers.
Motivated by all these factors, I decided to come to you with an open mind and an open heart, and with a conscious determination, so that we might establish permanent peace based on justice.

It is so fated that my trip to you, the trip of peace, should coincide with the Islamic feast, the holy Feast of Courban Bairam, the Feast of Sacrifice when Abraham - peace be upon him - great-grandfather of the Arabs and Jews, submitted to God; I say when God Almighty ordered him, and to Him Abraham went, with dedicated sentiments, not out of weakness, but through a giant spiritual force and by a free will, to sacrifice his very own son, prompted by a firm and unshakable belief in ideals that lend life a profound significance.

This coincidence may carry a new meaning to us all, which may become a genuine aspiration heralding security and peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us be frank with each other, using straight-forward words and a clear conception, with no ambiguity. Let us be frank with each other today while the entire world, both East and West, follows these unparalleled moments which could prove to be a radical turning point in the history of this part of the world, if not in the history of the world as a whole. Let us be frank with each other as we answer this important question: how can we achieve permanent peace based on justice?

I have come to you carrying my clear and frank answer to this big question, so that the people in Israel as well as the whole world might hear it, and so that all those whose devoted prayers ring in my ears, pleading to God Almighty that this historic meeting may eventually lead to the results aspired to by millions, might also hear it.

Before I proclaim my answer, I wish to assure you that, in my clear and frank answer, I am basing myself on a number of facts which no one can deny.

The first fact: no one can build his happiness at the expense of the misery of others.

The second fact: never have I spoken or will ever speak in two languages. Never have I adopted or will adopt two policies. I never deal with anyone except in one language, one policy, and with one face.

The third fact: direct confrontation and a straight line are the nearest and most successful methods to reach a clear objective.

The fourth fact: the call for permanent and just peace, based on respect for the United Nations resolutions, has now become the call of the whole world. It has become a clear expression of the will of the international community, whether in official capitals, where policies are made and decisions taken, or at the level of world public opinion which influences policy-making and decision-taking.

The fifth fact: and this is probably the clearest and most prominent, is that the Arab Nation, in its drive for permanent peace based on justice, does not proceed from a position of weakness or hesitation, but it has the potential of power and stability which tells of a sincere will for peace. The Arab-declared intention stems from an awareness prompted by a heritage of civilization that, to avoid an inevitable disaster that will befall us, you and the entire world, there is no alternative to the establishment of permanent peace based on justice - peace that is not shaken by storms, swayed by suspicion, or jeopardized by ill intentions.

In the light of these facts which I meant to place before you the way I see them, I would also wish to warn you in all sincerity; frankness makes it incumbent upon me to tell you the following:

First: I have not come here for a separate agreement between Egypt and Israel. This is not part of the policy of Egypt. The problem is not that of Egypt and Israel. Any separate
peace between Egypt and Israel, or between any Arab confrontation State and Israel, will not bring permanent peace based on justice in the entire region. Rather, even if peace between all the confrontation States and Israel were achieved, in the absence of a just solution to the Palestinian problem, never will there be that durable and just peace upon which the entire world insists today.

Second: I have not come to you to seek a partial peace, namely to terminate the state of belligerency at this stage, and put off the entire problem to a subsequent stage. This is not the radical solution that would steer us to permanent peace.

Equally, I have not come to you for a third disengagement agreement in Sinai, or in the Golan and the West Bank. For this would mean that we are merely delaying the ignition of the fuse; it would mean that we are lacking the courage to confront peace, that we are too weak to shoulder the burdens and responsibilities of a durable peace based on justice.

I have come to you so that together we might build a durable peace based on justice, to avoid the shedding of one single drop of blood from an Arab or an Israeli. It is for this reason that I have proclaimed my readiness to go to the farthest corner of the world.

Here, I would go back to the answer to the big question: how can we achieve a durable peace based on justice?

In my opinion, and I declare it to the whole world from this forum, the answer is neither difficult nor impossible, despite long years of feud, blood vengeance, spite and hatred, and breeding generations on concepts of total rift and deep-rooted animosity. The answer is not difficult, nor is it impossible, if we sincerely and faithfully follow a straight line.

You want to live with us in this part of the world. In all sincerity, I tell you, we welcome you among us, with full security and safety. This, in itself, is a tremendous turning point; one of the landmarks of a decisive historical change.

We used to reject you. We had our reasons and our claims, yes. We used to brand you as "so-called" Israel, yes. We were together in international conferences and organizations and our representatives did not, and still do not, exchange greetings, yes. This has happened and is still happening.

Yet, today I tell you, and declare it to the whole world, that we accept to live with you in permanent peace based on justice. We do not want to encircle you or be encircled ourselves by destructive missiles ready for launching, nor by the shells of grudges and hatred. I have announced on more than one occasion that Israel has become a fait accompli, recognized by the world, and that the two super powers have undertaken the responsibility of its security and the defence of its existence.

As we really and truly seek peace, we really and truly welcome you to live among us in peace and security.

There was a huge wall between us which you tried to build up over a quarter of a century, but it was destroyed in 1973. It was a wall of a continuously inflammable and escalating psychological warfare. It was a wall of fear of the force that could sweep the entire Arab Nation. It was a wall of propaganda, that we were a Nation reduced to a motionless corpse. Rather, some of you had gone as far as to say that, even after 50 years, the Arabs
would not regain any strength. It was a wall that threatened always with the long arm that
could reach and strike anywhere. It was a wall that warned us against extermination and
annihilation if we tried to use our legitimate right to liberate the occupied territories. Together
we have to admit that that wall fell and collapsed in 1973.

Yet, there remained another wall. This wall constitutes a psychological barrier
between us. A barrier of suspicion. A barrier of rejection. A barrier of fear of deception. A
barrier of hallucinations around any action, deed or decision. A barrier of cautious and
erroneous interpretations of all and every event or statement. It is this psychological barrier
which I described in official statements as representing 70 percent of the whole problem.

Today, through my visit to you, I ask you: why don't we stretch our hands with faith
and sincerity so that, together, we might destroy this barrier? Why shouldn't ours and your
will meet with faith and sincerity, so that together we might remove all suspicion of fear,
betrayal and ill intentions? Why don't we stand together with the bravery of men and the
boldness of heroes who dedicate themselves to a sublime objective? Why don't we stand
together with the same courage and boldness to erect a huge edifice of peace that builds and
does not destroy? An edifice that is a beacon for generations to come - the human message for
construction, development and the dignity of man? Why should we bequeath to the coming
generations the plight of bloodshed, death, orphans, widowhood, family disintegration, and
the wailing of victims?

Why don't we believe in the wisdom of God conveyed to us by the Proverbs of
Solomon:

"Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil; but to the counsellors of peace is joy.
Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife."

Why don't we repeat together from the Psalms of David:

"Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands
toward thy holy oracle. Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity,
which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts. Give them according to
their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours."

To tell you the truth, peace cannot be worth its name unless it is based on justice,
and not on the occupation of the land of others. It would not be appropriate for you to demand for
yourselves what you deny others. With all frankness, and with the spirit that has prompted me
to come to you today, I tell you: you have to give up, once and for all, the dreams of conquest,
and give up the belief that force is the best method for dealing with the Arabs. You should
clearly understand and assimilate the lesson of confrontation between you and us.

Expansion does not pay. To speak frankly, our land does not yield itself to bargaining.
It is not even open to argument. To us, the national soil is equal to the holy valley where God
Almighty spoke to Moses - peace be upon him. None of us can, or accept to, cede one inch of
it, or accept the principle of debating or bargaining over it.

I sincerely tell you that before us today lies the appropriate chance for peace, if we are
really serious in our endeavours for peace. It is a chance that time cannot afford once again. It
is a chance that, if lost or wasted, the plotter against it will bear the curse of humanity and the
curse of history.

What is peace for Israel? It means that Israel lives in the region with her Arab
neighbours, in security and safety. To such logic, I say yes. It means that Israel lives within
her borders, secure against any aggression. To such logic, I say yes. It means that Israel
obtains all kinds of guarantees that ensure those two factors. To this demand, I say yes. More
than that: we declare that we accept all the international guarantees you envisage and accept. We declare that we accept all the guarantees you want from the two super powers or from either of them, or from the Big Five, or some of them.

Once again, I declare clearly and unequivocally that we agree to any guarantees you accept because, in return, we shall obtain the same guarantees.

In short, then, when we ask: what is peace for Israel, the answer would be: it is that Israel live within her borders with her Arab neighbours, in safety and security within the framework of all the guarantees she accepts and which are offered to the other party. But how can this be achieved? How can we reach this conclusion which would lead us to permanent peace based on justice?

There are facts that should be faced with all courage and clarity. There are Arab territories which Israel has occupied by armed force. We insist on complete withdrawal from these territories, including Arab Jerusalem.

I have come to Jerusalem, as the City of Peace, which will always remain as a living embodiment of coexistence among believers of the three religions. It is inadmissible that anyone should conceive the special status of the City of Jerusalem within the framework of annexation or expansionism, but it should be a free and open city for all believers.

Above all, the city should not be severed from those who have made it their abode for centuries. Instead of awakening the prejudices of the Crusaders, we should revive the spirit of Ornar ibn el-Khattab and Saladdin, namely the spirit of tolerance and respect for rights. The holy shrines of Islam and Christianity are not only places of worship, but a living testimony of our uninterrupted presence here politically, spiritually and intellectually. Let us make no mistake about the importance and reverence we Christians and Muslims attach to Jerusalem.

Let me tell you, without the slightest hesitation, that I did not come to you under this dome to make a request that your troops evacuate the occupied territories. Complete withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 is a logical and undisputed fact. Nobody should plead for that. Any talk about permanent peace based on justice, and any move to ensure our coexistence in peace and security in this part of the world, would become meaningless, while you occupy Arab territories by force of arms. For there is no peace that could be in consonance with, or be built on, the occupation of the land of others. Otherwise, it would not be a serious peace.

Yes, this is a foregone conclusion which is not open to discussion or debate - if intentions are sincere and if endeavours to establish a just and durable peace for ours and the generations to come are genuine.

As for the Palestinians cause, nobody could deny that it is the crux of the entire problem. Nobody in the world could accept, today, slogans propagated here in Israel, ignoring the existence of the Palestinian People, and questioning their whereabouts. The cause of the Palestinian People and their legitimate rights are no longer ignored or denied today by anybody. Rather, nobody who has the ability of judgement can deny or ignore it.

It is an acknowledged fact received by the world community, both in the East and in the West, with support and recognition in international documents and official statements. It is of no use to anybody to turn deaf ears to its resounding voice which is being heard day and night, or to overlook its historical reality. Even the United States, your first ally which is absolutely committed to safeguard Israel's security and existence, and which offered and still offers Israel every moral, material and military support - I say - even the United States has opted to face up to reality and facts, and admit that the Palestinian People are entitled to
legitimate rights and that the Palestinian problem is the core and essence of the conflict and that, so long as it continues to be unresolved, the conflict will continue to aggravate, reaching new dimensions. In all sincerity, I tell you that there can be no peace without the Palestinians. It is a grave error of unpredictable consequences to overlook or brush aside this cause.

I shall not indulge in past events since the Balfour Declaration sixty years ago. You are well acquainted with the relevant facts. If you have found the legal and moral justification to set up a national home on a land that did not all belong to you, it is incumbent upon you to show understanding of the insistence of the People of Palestine on establishing, once again (sic) a state on their land. When some extremists ask the Palestinians to give up this sublime objective, this, in fact, means asking them to renounce their identity and every hope for the future.

I hail the Israeli voices that called for the recognition of the Palestinian People's rights to achieve and safeguard peace. Here I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that it is no use to refrain from recognizing the Palestinian People and their rights to statehood and rights of return.

We, the Arabs, have faced this experience before, with you and with the reality of Israeli existence. The struggle took us from war to war, from victims to more victims, until you and we have today reached the edge of a horrifying abyss and a terrifying disaster, unless, together, we seize the opportunity, today, of a durable peace based on justice.

You have to face reality bravely as I have done. There can never be any solution to a problem by evading it or turning a deaf ear to it. Peace cannot last if attempts are made to impose fantasy concepts on which the world has turned its back and announced its unanimous call for the respect of rights and facts. There is no need to enter a vicious circle as to Palestinian rights. It is useless to create obstacles. Otherwise the march of peace will be impeded or peace will be blown up.

As I have told you, there is no happiness to the detriment of others. Direct confrontation and straight-forwardness are the short-cut and the most successful way to reach a clear objective. Direct confrontation concerning the Palestinian problem, and tackling it in one single language with a view to achieving a durable and just peace, lie in the establishment of their state. With all the guarantees you demand, there should be no fear of a newly-born state that needs the assistance of all countries of the world. When the bells of peace ring, there will be no hands to beat the drums of war. Even if they existed, they would be soundless.

Conceive with me a peace agreement in Geneva that we would herald to a world thirsty for peace, a peace agreement based on the following points:

First: ending the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories occupied in 1967.

Second: achievement of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian People and their right to self-determination, including their right to establish their own state.

Third: the right of all states in the area to live in peace within their boundaries, which will be secure and guaranteed through procedures to be agreed upon, which provide appropriate security to international boundaries, in addition to appropriate international guarantees.

Fourth: commitment of all states in the region to administer the relations among them in accordance with the objectives and principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly the principles concerning the non-resort to force and the solution of differences among them by peaceful means.

Fifth: ending the state of belligerency in the region.
Ladies and Gentlemen, peace is not the mere endorsement of written lines; rather, it is a rewriting of history. Peace is not a game of calling for peace to defend certain whims or hide certain ambitions. Peace is a giant struggle against all and every ambition and whim. Perhaps the examples taken from ancient and modern history teach us all that missiles, warships and nuclear weapons cannot establish security. Rather, they destroy what peace and security build. For the sake of our peoples, and for the sake of the civilizations made by man, we have to defend man everywhere against the rule of the force of arms, so that we may endow the rule of humanity with all the power of the values and principles that promote the sublime position of Mankind.

Allow me to address my call from this rostrum to the People of Israel. I address myself with true and sincere words to every man, woman and child in Israel.

From the Egyptian People who bless this sacred mission of peace, I convey to you the message of peace, the message of the Egyptian People who do not know fanaticism, and whose sons, Muslims, Christians, and Jews, live together in a spirit of cordiality, love and tolerance. This is Egypt whose people have entrusted me with that sacred message, the message of security, safety and peace. To every man, woman and child in Israel, I say: encourage your leadership to struggle for peace. Let all endeavours be channelled towards building a huge edifice for peace, instead of strongholds and hideouts defended by destructive rockets. Introduce to the entire world the image of the new man in this area, so that he might set an example to the man of our age, the man of peace everywhere.

Be the heralds to your sons. Tell them that past wars were the last of wars and the end of sorrows. Tell them that we are in for a new beginning to a new life - the life of love, prosperity, freedom and peace.

You, bewailing mother; you, widowed wife; you, the son who lost a brother or a father; you, all victims of wars - fill the earth and space with recitals of peace. Fill bosoms and hearts with the aspirations of peace. Turn the song into a reality that blossoms and lives. Make hope a code of conduct and endeavour. The will of peoples is part of the will of God.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I came to this place, with every beat of my heart and with every sentiment, I prayed to God Almighty, while performing the Curban Bairarn prayers, and while visiting the Holy Sepulchre, to give me strength and to confirm my belief that this visit may achieve the objectives I look forward to, for a happy present and a happier future.

I have chosen to set aside all precedents and traditions known by warring countries, in spite of the fact that occupation of the Arab territories is still there. Rather, the declaration of my readiness to proceed to Israel came as a great surprise that stirred many feelings and astounded many minds. Some opinions even doubted its intent. Despite that, the decision was inspired by all the clarity and purity of belief, and with all the true expression of my People's will and intentions.

And I have chosen this difficult road which is considered, in the opinion of many, the most difficult road. I have chosen to come to you with an open heart and an open mind. I have chosen to give this great impetus to all international efforts exerted for peace. I have chosen to present to you, and in your own home, the realities devoid of any schemes or whims, not to manoeuvre or to win a round, but for us to win together, the most dangerous of rounds and battles in modern history - the battle of permanent peace based on justice.
It is not my battle alone, nor is it the battle of the leadership in Israel alone. It is the battle of all and every citizen in all our territories whose right it is to live in peace. It is the commitment of conscience and responsibility in the hearts of millions.

When I put forward this initiative, many asked what is it that I conceived as possible to achieve during this visit, and what my expectations were. And, as I answered the questioners, I announce before you that I have not thought of carrying out this initiative from the concept of what could be achieved during this visit, but I have come here to deliver a message. I have delivered the message, and may God be my witness.

I repeat with Zechariah, "Love right and justice."

I quote the following verses from the holy Koran:

"We believe in God and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes and in the books given to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets from their lord. We make no distinction between one and another among them and to God we submit."

This text comes from the website of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, www.mfa.gov.il, and is the English translation of Sadat's speech in Arab issued by the Egyptian Office of the President.
The Camp David Accords

The Framework for Peace in the Middle East

Preamble

The search for peace in the Middle East must be guided by the following:

The agreed basis for a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Israel and its neighbors is United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, in all its parts.

After four wars during 30 years, despite intensive human efforts, the Middle East, which is the cradle of civilization and the birthplace of three great religions, does not enjoy the blessings of peace. The people of the Middle East yearn for peace so that the vast human and natural resources of the region can be turned to the pursuits of peace and so that this area can become a model for coexistence and cooperation among nations.

The historic initiative of President Sadat in visiting Jerusalem and the reception accorded to him by the parliament, government and people of Israel, and the reciprocal visit of Prime Minister Begin to Ismailia, the peace proposals made by both leaders, as well as the warm reception of these missions by the peoples of both countries, have created an unprecedented opportunity for peace which must not be lost if this generation and future generations are to be spared the tragedies of war.

The provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the other accepted norms of international law and legitimacy now provide accepted standards for the conduct of relations among all states.

To achieve a relationship of peace, in the spirit of Article 2 of the United Nations Charter, future negotiations between Israel and any neighbor prepared to negotiate peace and security with it are necessary for the purpose of carrying out all the provisions and principles of Resolutions 242 and 338.

Peace requires respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force. Progress toward that goal can accelerate movement toward a new era of reconciliation in the Middle East marked by cooperation in promoting economic development, in maintaining stability and in assuring security.

Security is enhanced by a relationship of peace and by cooperation between nations which enjoy normal relations. In addition, under the terms of peace treaties, the parties can, on the basis of reciprocity, agree to special security arrangements such as demilitarized zones, limited armaments areas, early warning stations, the presence of international forces, liaison, agreed measures for monitoring and other arrangements that they agree are useful.

Framework

Taking these factors into account, the parties are determined to reach a just, comprehensive,
and durable settlement of the Middle East conflict through the conclusion of peace treaties based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 in all their parts. Their purpose is to achieve peace and good neighborly relations. They recognize that for peace to endure, it must involve all those who have been most deeply affected by the conflict. They therefore agree that this framework, as appropriate, is intended by them to constitute a basis for peace not only between Egypt and Israel, but also between Israel and each of its other neighbors which is prepared to negotiate peace with Israel on this basis. With that objective in mind, they have agreed to proceed as follows:

**West Bank and Gaza** Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinian people should participate in negotiations on the resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. To achieve that objective, negotiations relating to the West Bank and Gaza should proceed in three stages:

Egypt and Israel agree that, in order to ensure a peaceful and orderly transfer of authority, and taking into account the security concerns of all the parties, there should be transitional arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza for a period not exceeding five years. In order to provide full autonomy to the inhabitants, under these arrangements the Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing authority has been freely elected by the inhabitants of these areas to replace the existing military government. To negotiate the details of a transitional arrangement, Jordan will be invited to join the negotiations on the basis of this framework. These new arrangements should give due consideration both to the principle of self-government by the inhabitants of these territories and to the legitimate security concerns of the parties involved.

Egypt, Israel, and Jordan will agree on the modalities for establishing elected self-governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza. The delegations of Egypt and Jordan may include Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza or other Palestinians as mutually agreed. The parties will negotiate an agreement which will define the powers and responsibilities of the self-governing authority to be exercised in the West Bank and Gaza. A withdrawal of Israeli armed forces will take place and there will be a redeployment of the remaining Israeli forces into specified security locations. The agreement will also include arrangements for assuring internal and external security and public order. A strong local police force will be established, which may include Jordanian citizens. In addition, Israeli and Jordanian forces will participate in joint patrols and in the manning of control posts to assure the security of the borders.

When the self-governing authority (administrative council) in the West Bank and Gaza is established and inaugurated, the transitional period of five years will begin. As soon as possible, but not later than the third year after the beginning of the transitional period, negotiations will take place to determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza and its relationship with its neighbors and to conclude a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan by the end of the transitional period. These negotiations will be conducted among Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. Two separate but related committees will be convened, one committee, consisting of representatives of the four parties which will negotiate and agree on the final
status of the West Bank and Gaza, and its relationship with its neighbors, and
the second committee, consisting of representatives of Israel and
representatives of Jordan to be joined by the elected representatives of the
inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza, to negotiate the peace treaty between
Israel and Jordan, taking into account the agreement reached in the final status
of the West Bank and Gaza. The negotiations shall be based on all the
provisions and principles of UN Security Council Resolution 242. The
negotiations will resolve, among other matters, the location of the boundaries
and the nature of the security arrangements. The solution from the negotiations
must also recognize the legitimate right of the Palestinian peoples and their just
requirements. In this way, the Palestinians will participate in the determination
of their own future through:

The negotiations among Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the representatives of the
inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to agree on the final status of
the West Bank and Gaza and other outstanding issues by the end of the
transitional period.

Submitting their agreements to a vote by the elected representatives of the
inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza.

Providing for the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank
and Gaza to decide how they shall govern themselves consistent with
the provisions of their agreement.

Participating as stated above in the work of the committee negotiating the
peace treaty between Israel and Jordan.

All necessary measures will be taken and provisions made to assure the
security of Israel and its neighbors during the transitional period and
beyond. To assist in providing such security, a strong local police force
will be constituted by the self-governing authority. It will be composed
of inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. The police will maintain
liaison on internal security matters with the designated Israeli,
Jordanian, and Egyptian officers.

During the transitional period, representatives of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and
the self-governing authority will constitute a continuing committee to
decide by agreement on the modalities of admission of persons
displaced from the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, together with
necessary measures to prevent disruption and disorder. Other matters of
common concern may also be dealt with by this committee.

Egypt and Israel will work with each other and with other interested parties
to establish agreed procedures for a prompt, just and permanent
implementation of the resolution of the refugee problem.

Egypt-Israel

Egypt-Israel undertake not to resort to the threat or the use of force to settle
disputes. Any disputes shall be settled by peaceful means in accordance with
the provisions of Article 33 of the U.N. Charter.

In order to achieve peace between them, the parties agree to negotiate in good faith
with a goal of concluding within three months from the signing of the
Framework a peace treaty between them while inviting the other parties to the
conflict to proceed simultaneously to negotiate and conclude similar peace treaties with a view the achieving a comprehensive peace in the area. The Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel will govern the peace negotiations between them. The parties will agree on the modalities and the timetable for the implementation of their obligations under the treaty.

**Associated Principles**

Egypt and Israel state that the principles and provisions described below should apply to peace treaties between Israel and each of its neighbors - Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Signatories shall establish among themselves relationships normal to states at peace with one another. To this end, they should undertake to abide by all the provisions of the U.N. Charter. Steps to be taken in this respect include:

- full recognition;
- abolishing economic boycotts;
- guaranteeing that under their jurisdiction the citizens of the other parties shall enjoy the protection of the due process of law.

Signatories should explore possibilities for economic development in the context of final peace treaties, with the objective of contributing to the atmosphere of peace, cooperation and friendship which is their common goal.

Claims commissions may be established for the mutual settlement of all financial claims.

The United States shall be invited to participated in the talks on matters related to the modalities of the implementation of the agreements and working out the timetable for the carrying out of the obligations of the parties.

The United Nations Security Council shall be requested to endorse the peace treaties and ensure that their provisions shall not be violated. The permanent members of the Security Council shall be requested to underwrite the peace treaties and ensure respect or the provisions. They shall be requested to conform their policies an actions with the undertaking contained in this Framework.

For the Government of Israel:
Menachem Begin

For the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt:
Muhammed Anwar al-Sadat

Witnessed by:
Jimmy Carter, President of the United States of America

*Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel*

In order to achieve peace between them, Israel and Egypt agree to negotiate in good faith with a goal of concluding within three months of the signing of this framework a peace treaty between them:
It is agreed that:

The site of the negotiations will be under a United Nations flag at a location or locations to be mutually agreed.

All of the principles of U.N. Resolution 242 will apply in this resolution of the dispute between Israel and Egypt.

Unless otherwise mutually agreed, terms of the peace treaty will be implemented between two and three years after the peace treaty is signed.

The following matters are agreed between the parties:

- the full exercise of Egyptian sovereignty up to the internationally recognized border between Egypt and mandated Palestine;
- the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from the Sinai;
- the use of airfields left by the Israelis near al-Arish, Rafah, Ras en-Naqb, and Sharm el-Sheikh for civilian purposes only, including possible commercial use only by all nations;
- the right of free passage by ships of Israel through the Gulf of Suez and the Suez Canal on the basis of the Constantinople Convention of 1888 applying to all nations; the Strait of Tiran and Gulf of Aqaba are international waterways to be open to all nations for unimpeded and nonsuspendable freedom of navigation and overflight;
- the construction of a highway between the Sinai and Jordan near Eilat with guaranteed free and peaceful passage by Egypt and Jordan; and
- the stationing of military forces listed below.

**Stationing of Forces**

No more than one division (mechanized or infantry) of Egyptian armed forces will be stationed within an area lying approximately 50 km. (30 miles) east of the Gulf of Suez and the Suez Canal.

Only United Nations forces and civil police equipped with light weapons to perform normal police functions will be stationed within an area lying west of the international border and the Gulf of Aqaba, varying in width from 20 km. (12 miles) to 40 km. (24 miles).

In the area within 3 km. (1.8 miles) east of the international border there will be Israeli limited military forces not to exceed four infantry battalions and United Nations observers.

Border patrol units not to exceed three battalions will supplement the civil police in maintaining order in the area not included above.

The exact demarcation of the above areas will be as decided during the peace negotiations.

Early warning stations may exist to insure compliance with the terms of the agreement.

United Nations forces will be stationed:

- in part of the area in the Sinai lying within about 20 km. of the Mediterranean Sea and adjacent to the international border, and
- in the Sharm el-Sheikh area to insure freedom of passage through the Strait of Tiran; and these forces will not be removed unless such removal is approved by the Security Council of the United Nations with a unanimous vote of the five permanent members.

After a peace treaty is signed, and after the interim withdrawal is complete, normal relations will be established between Egypt and Israel, including full recognition, including
diplomatic, economic and cultural relations; termination of economic boycotts and barriers to the free movement of goods and people; and mutual protection of citizens by the due process of law.

**Interim Withdrawal**

Between three months and nine months after the signing of the peace treaty, all Israeli forces will withdraw east of a line extending from a point east of El-Arish to Ras Muhammad, the exact location of this line to be determined by mutual agreement.

For the Government of Israel:
Menachme Begin

For the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt:
Muhammed Anwar al-Sadat

Witnessed by:
Jimmy Carter, President of the United States of America

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**Annex to the Framework Agreements**

**Prime Minister Begin to President Carter**

The President
Camp David
Thurmont, Maryland

September 17, 1978

Dear Mr. President:

I have the honor to inform you that during two weeks after my return home I will submit a motion before Israel's Parliament (the Knesset) to decide on the following question:

If during the negotiations to conclude a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt all outstanding issues are agreed upon, "are you in favor of the removal of the Israeli settlers from the northern and southern Sinai areas or are you in favor of keeping the aforementioned settlers in those areas?"

The vote, Mr. President, on this issue will be completely free from the usual Parliamentary Party discipline to the effect that although the coalition is being now supported by 70 members out of 120, every member of the Knesset, as I believe, both of the Government and the Opposition benches will be enabled to vote in accordance with his own conscience.

Sincerely yours,
Menachem Begin
President Carter to President Sadat

His Excellency
Anwar Al-Sadat
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Cairo

September 22, 1978

Dear Mr. President:

I transmit herewith a copy of a letter to me from Prime Minister Begin setting forth how he proposes to present the issue of the Sinai settlements to the Knesset for the latter's decision.

In this connection, I understand from your letter that Knesset approval to withdraw all Israeli settlers from Sinai according to a timetable within the period specified for the implementation of the peace treaty is a prerequisite to any negotiations on a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

Enclosure: Letter from Prime Minister Begin

President Sadat to President Carter

His Excellency
Jimmy Carter
President of the United States

September 17, 1978

Dear Mr. President:

In connection with the "Framework for a Settlement in Sinai" to be signed tonight, I would like to reaffirm the position of the Arab Republic of Egypt with respect to the settlements:

All Israeli settlers must be withdrawn from Sinai according to a timetable within the period specified for the implementation of the peace treaty.

Agreement by the Israeli Government and its constitutional institutions to this basic principle is therefore a prerequisite to starting peace negotiations for concluding a peace treaty.

If Israel fails to meet this commitment, the "framework" shall be void and invalid.

Sincerely,

Mohamed Anwar El Sadat
President Carter to Prime Minister Begin

His Excellency
Menachem Begin
Prime Minister of Israel

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I have received your letter of September 17, 1978, describing how you intend to place the question of the future of Israeli settlements in Sinai before the Knesset for its decision. Enclosed is a copy of President Sadat’s letter to me on this subject.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

Enclosure: Letter from President Sadat

President Sadat to President Carter

His Excellency
Jimmy Carter
President of the United States

September 17, 1978

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing you to reaffirm the position of the Arab Republic of Egypt with respect to Jerusalem.

Arab Jerusalem is an integral part of the West Bank. Legal and historical Arab rights in the city must be respected and restored.

Arab Jerusalem should be under Arab sovereignty.

The Palestinian inhabitants of Arab Jerusalem are entitled to exercise their legitimate national rights, being part of the Palestinian People in the West Bank.

Relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 267, must be applied with regard to Jerusalem. All the measures taken by Israel to alter the status of the City are null and void and should be rescinded.

All peoples must have free access to the City and enjoy the free exercises of worship and the right to visit and transit to the holy places without distinction or discrimination.

The holy places of each faith may be placed under the administration and control of their representatives.

Essential functions in the City should be undivided and a joint municipal council composed of an equal number of Arab and Israeli members can supervise the carrying out of these functions. In this way, the city shall be undivided.

Sincerely, Mohamed

Anwar El Sadat
Prime Minister Begin to President Carter

The President  
Camp David  
Thurmont, Maryland  
17 September 1978

Dear Mr. President:  

I have the honor to inform you, Mr. President, that on 28 June 1967 - Israel's parliament (The Knesset) promulgated and adopted a law to the effect: "the Government is empowered by a decree to apply the law, the jurisdiction and administration of the State to any part of Eretz Israel (Land of Israel - Palestine), as stated in that decree."

On the basis of this law, the government of Israel decreed in July 1967 that Jerusalem is one city indivisible, the capital of the State of Israel.

Sincerely,  
Menachem Begin

President Carter to President Sadat

His Excellency  
Anwar al-Sadat  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
Cairo

Dear Mr. President:  

I have received your letter of September 17, 1978, setting forth the Egyptian position on Jerusalem. I am transmitting a copy of that letter to Prime Minister Begin for his information.


Sincerely,  
Jimmy Carter

President Sadat to President Carter

His Excellency  
Jimmy Carter  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

September 17, 1978
Dear Mr. President:

In connection with the "Framework for Peace in the Middle East," I am writing you this letter to inform you of the position of the Arab Republic of Egypt, with respect to the implementation of the comprehensive settlement.

To ensure the implementation of the provisions related to the West Bank and Gaza and in order to safeguard the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, Egypt will be prepared to assume the Arab role emanating from these provisions, following consultations with Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinian people.

Sincerely,
Mohamed Anwar El Sadat

*President Carter to Prime Minister Begin*

His Excellency
Menachem Begin
Prime Minister of Israel

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I hereby acknowledge that you have informed me as follows:
In each paragraph of the Agreed Framework Document the expressions "Palestinians" or "Palestinian People" are being and will be construed and understood by you as "Palestinian Arabs."

In each paragraph in which the expression "West Bank" appears it is being, and will be, understood by the Government of Israel as Judea and Samaria.

Sincerely,
Jimmy Carter

Appendix E

Peace Treaty Between Israel and Egypt

March 26, 1979
The Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Government of the State of Israel;

Preamble

Convinced of the urgent necessity of the establishment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338;

Reaffirming their adherence to the "Framework for Peace in the Middle East Agreed at Camp David," dated September 17, 1978;

Noting that the aforementioned Framework as appropriate is intended to constitute a basis for peace not only between Egypt and Israel but also between Israel and each of its other Arab neighbors which is prepared to negotiate peace with it on this basis;

Desiring to bring to an end the state of war between them and to establish a peace in which every state in the area can live in security;

Convinced that the conclusion of a Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel is an important step in the search for comprehensive peace in the area and for the attainment of settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects;

Inviting the other Arab parties to this dispute to join the peace process with Israel guided by and based on the principles of the aforementioned Framework;

Desiring as well to develop friendly relations and cooperation between themselves in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law governing international relations in times of peace;

Agree to the following provisions in the free exercise of their sovereignty, in order to implement the “Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty Between Egypt and Israel:”

Article I

1. The state of war between the Parties will be terminated and peace will be established between them upon the exchange of instruments of ratification of this Treaty.

2. Israel will withdraw all its armed forces and civilians from the Sinai behind the international boundary between Egypt and mandated Palestine, as provided in the annexed protocol (Annex I), and Egypt will resume the exercise of its full sovereignty over the Sinai.

3. Upon completion of the interim withdrawal provided for in Annex I, the parties will establish normal and friendly relations, in accordance with Article III (3).

Article II

The permanent boundary between Egypt and Israel in the recognized international boundary between Egypt and the former mandated territory of Palestine, as shown on the map at Annex II, without prejudice to the issue of the status of the Gaza Strip. The Parties recognize this boundary as inviolable. Each will respect the territorial integrity of the other, including their territorial waters and airspace.
Article III

1. The Parties will apply between them the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law governing relations among states in times of peace. In particular:
   a. They recognize and will respect each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence;
   b. They recognize and will respect each other's right to live in peace within their secure and recognized boundaries;
   c. They will refrain from the threat or use of force, directly or indirectly, against each other and will settle all disputes between them by peaceful means.
2. Each Party undertakes to ensure that acts or threats of belligerency, hostility, or violence do not originate from and are not committed from within its territory, or by any forces subject to its control or by any other forces stationed on its territory, against the population, citizens or property of the other Party. Each Party also undertakes to refrain from organizing, instigating, inciting, assisting or participating in acts or threats of belligerency, hostility, subversion or violence against the other Party, anywhere, and undertakes to ensure that perpetrators of such acts are brought to justice.
3. The Parties agree that the normal relationship established between them will include full recognition, diplomatic, economic and cultural relations, termination of economic boycotts and discriminatory barriers to the free movement of people and goods, and will guarantee the mutual enjoyment by citizens of the due process of law. The process by which they undertake to achieve such a relationship parallel to the implementation of other provisions of this Treaty is set out in the annexed protocol (Annex III).

Article IV

1. In order to provide maximum security for both Parties on the basis of reciprocity, agreed security arrangements will be established including limited force zones in Egyptian and Israeli territory, and United Nations forces and observers, described in detail as to nature and timing in Annex I, and other security arrangements the Parties may agree upon.
2. The Parties agree to the stationing of United Nations personnel in areas described in Annex I. The Parties agree not to request withdrawal of the United Nations personnel and that these personnel will not be removed unless such removal is approved by the Security Council of the United Nations, with the affirmative vote of the five Permanent Members, unless the Parties otherwise agree.
3. A Joint Commission will be established to facilitate the implementation of the Treaty, as provided for in Annex I.
4. The security arrangements provided for in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article may at the request of either party be reviewed and amended by mutual agreement of the Parties.

Article V

1. Ships of Israel, and cargoes destined for or coming from Israel, shall enjoy the right of free passage through the Suez Canal and its approaches through the Gulf of Suez and the Mediterranean Sea on the basis of the Constantinople Convention of 1888, applying to all nations, Israeli nationals, vessels and cargoes, as well as persons, vessels and cargoes destined for or coming from Israel, shall be accorded non-discriminatory treatment in all matters connected with usage of the canal.
2. The Parties consider the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba to be international waterways open to all nations for unimpeded and non-suspendable freedom of navigation and overflight. The parties will respect each other's right to navigation and overflight for access to either country through the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba.

Article VI
1. This Treaty does not affect and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations.
2. The Parties undertake to fulfill in good faith their obligations under this Treaty, without regard to action or inaction of any other party and independently of any instrument external to this Treaty.
3. They further undertake to take all the necessary measures for the application in their relations of the provisions of the multilateral conventions to which they are parties, including the submission of appropriate notification to the Secretary General of the United Nations and other depositaries of such conventions.
4. The Parties undertake not to enter into any obligation in conflict with this Treaty.
5. Subject to Article 103 of the United Nations Charter in the event of a conflict between the obligation of the Parties under the present Treaty and any of their other obligations, the obligations under this Treaty will be binding and implemented.

Article VII
1. Disputes arising out of the application or interpretation of this Treaty shall be resolved by negotiations.
2. Any such disputes which cannot be settled by negotiations shall be resolved by conciliation or submitted to arbitration.

Article VIII
The Parties agree to establish a claims commission for the mutual settlement of all financial claims.

Article IX
1. This Treaty shall enter into force upon exchange of instruments of ratification.
2. This Treaty supersedes the Agreement between Egypt and Israel of September, 1975.
3. All protocols, annexes, and maps attached to this Treaty shall be regarded as an integral part hereof.
4. The Treaty shall be communicated to the Secretary General of the United Nations for registration in accordance with the provisions of Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Done at Washington, D.C. this 26th day of March, 1979, in triplicate in English, Arabic, and Hebrew languages each text being equally authentic. In case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.
Agreed Minutes to Article I, IV, V and VI and Annexes I and II of the Treaty of Peace

Article I
Egypt's resumption of the exercise of full sovereignty over the Sinai provided for in paragraph 2 of Article I shall occur with regard to each area upon Israel's withdrawal from the area.

Article IV
It is agreed between the parties that the review provided for in Article IV (4) will be undertaken when requested by either party, commencing within three months of such a request, but that any amendment can be made only by mutual agreement of both parties.

Article V
The second sentence of paragraph 2 of Article V shall not be construed as limiting the first sentence of that paragraph. The foregoing is not to be construed as contravening the second sentence of paragraph 2 of Article V, which reads as follows:

“The Parties will respect each other's right to navigation and overflight for access to either country through the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba.”

Article VI (2)
The provisions of Article VI shall not be construed in contradiction to the provisions of the framework for peace in the Middle East agreed at Camp David. The foregoing is not to be construed as contravening the provisions of Article VI (2) of the Treaty, which reads as follows:

“The Parties undertake to fulfill in good faith their obligations under this Treaty, without regard to action of any other Party and independently of any instrument external to this Treaty.”

Article VI (5)
It is agreed by the Parties that there is no assertion that this Treaty prevails over other Treaties or agreements or that other Treaties or agreements prevail over this Treaty. The foregoing is not to be construed as contravening the provisions of Article VI (5) of the Treaty, which reads as follows:

“Subject to Article 103 of the United Nations Charter, in the event of a conflict between the obligations of the Parties under the present Treaty and any of their other obligations, the obligation under this Treaty will be binding and implemented.”

Annex I
Article VI, Paragraph 8, of Annex I provides as follows: “The Parties shall agree on the nations from which the United Nations forces and observers will be drawn. They will be drawn from nations other than those which are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.” The Parties have agreed as follows:

“With respect to the provisions of paragraph 8, Article VI, of Annex I, if no agreement is reached between the Parties, they will accept or support a U.S. proposal concerning the composition of the United Nations force and observers.”
Annex III

The Treaty of Peace and Annex III thereto provide for establishing normal economic relations between the Parties. In accordance herewith, it is agreed that such relations will include normal commercial sales of oil by Egypt to Israel, and that Israel shall be fully entitled to make bids for Egyptian-origin oil not needed for Egyptian domestic oil consumption, and Egypt and its oil concessionaires will entertain bids made by Israel, on the same basis and terms as apply to other bidders for such oil.

For the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt: A. Sadat

For the Government of Israel: M. Begin

Witnessed by: Jimmy Carter

Jimmy Carter, President of the United States of America

Attached Letters

Letter from Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar El Sadat to President Jimmy Carter, March 26, 1979

Dear Mr. President,

This letter confirms that Israel and Egypt have agreed as follows:

The Governments of Israel and Egypt recall that they concluded at Camp David and signed at the White House on September 17, 1978, the annexed documents entitled “A Framework for Peace in the Middle East agreed at Camp David” and “Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt.”

For the purpose of achieving a comprehensive peace settlement in accordance with the above-mentioned Frameworks, Israel and Egypt will proceed with the implementation of those provisions relating to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. They have agreed to start negotiations within a month after the exchange of the instruments of ratification of the Peace Treaty. In accordance with the “Framework for Peace in the Middle East,” the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is invited to join the negotiations. The Delegations of Egypt and Jordan may include Palestinians as mutually agreed. The purpose of the negotiations shall be to agree, prior to the elections, on the modalities for establishing the elected self-governing authority (administrative council), define its powers and responsibilities and agree upon other related issues. In the event Jordan decides not to take part in the negotiations, the negotiations will be held by Israel and Egypt.

The two Governments agree to negotiate continuously and in good faith to conclude these negotiations at the earliest possible date. They also agree that the objective of the negotiations is the establishment of the self-governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza in order to provide full autonomy to the inhabitants.

Israel and Egypt set for themselves the goal of completing the negotiations within one year so that elections will be held as expeditiously as possible after agreement has been
reached between the parties. The self-governing authority referred to in the “Framework for Peace in the Middle East” will be established and inaugurated within one month after it has been elected, at which time the transitional period of five years will begin. The Israel military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn, to be replaced by the self-governing authority, as specified in the “Framework for Peace in the Middle East.” A withdrawal of Israeli armed forces will then take place and there will be a redeployment of the remaining Israeli forces into specified security locations.

This letter also confirms our understanding that the United States Government will participate fully in all stages of negotiations.

Sincerely yours,

For the Government of Israel:

Menachem Begin

For the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt:

Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat

Letter from President Anwar El Sadat to President Jimmy Carter, March 26, 1979

Dear Mr. President:

In response to your request, I can confirm that, within one month after the completion of Israel’s withdrawal to the interim line as provided for in the Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel, Egypt will send a resident ambassador to Israel and will receive a resident Israeli ambassador in Egypt.

Sincerely,

A. Sadat
Mohammed Anwar El Sadat

Letter from President Jimmy Carter to Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, March 26, 1979

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I have received a letter from President Sadat that, within one month after Israel completes its withdrawal to the interim line in Sinai, as provided for in the Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel, Egypt will send a resident ambassador to Israel and will receive in Egypt a resident Israeli ambassador.

I would be grateful if you will confirm that this procedure will be agreeable to the Government of Israel.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter
Letter from Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to President Jimmy Carter, March 26, 1979

Dear Mr. President,
I am pleased to be able to confirm that the Government of Israel is agreeable to the procedure set out in your letter of March 26, 1979, in which you state:

“I have received a letter from President Sadat that, within one month after Israel completes its withdrawal to the interim line in Sinai, as provided for in the Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel, Egypt will send a resident ambassador to Israel and will receive in Egypt a resident Israeli ambassador.”

Sincerely,

Menachem Begin

Letter from President Carter to Prime Minister Begin about the Deployment of a UN or an Alternate Multinational Force, March 26, 1979

Dear Mr. President: [Prime Minister:]
I wish to confirm to you that subject to United States Constitutional processes:

In the event of an actual or threatened violation of the Treaty of Peace between Israel and Egypt, the United States will, on request of one or both of the Parties, consult with the Parties with respect thereto and will take such other action as it may deem appropriate and helpful to achieve compliance with the Treaty.

The United States will conduct aerial monitoring as requested by the Parties pursuant to Annex I of the Treaty.

The United States believes that the Treaty provision for permanent stationing of United Nations personnel in the designated limited force zone can and should be implemented by the United Nations Security Council. The United States will exert its utmost efforts to obtain the requisite action by the Security Council. If the Security Council fails to establish and maintain the arrangements called for in the Treaty, the President will be prepared to take those steps necessary to ensure the establishment and maintenance of an acceptable alternative multinational force.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

These documents can be found in William Quant, *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics*, 397-406.
Appendix F


U.N. Partition Plan, 1947

Allocation of territory after the 1948 War
Land conquered by Israel in 1967

Cease fire lines on October 23rd, 1973
Land Israel returned in Sinai II agreement

Phased Israeli withdrawal as called for in the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty
Bibliography

Primary Sources:


Secondary Sources:


