

Arthur I. Waskow

# Sadat in Israel, and afterward

**I**t is not often that you can see a whole society melt and take new shape before your eyes. I was in Israel from Nov. 13 to 23, to attend a conference on peace in the Middle East (called months ago by an Israeli magazine, *New Outlook*). I saw the transformation of Israel from grim despair, fear, and suspicion to careful hope.

The catalyst was, of course, the visit of President Sadat of Egypt.

Two stories, one from the "bottom" and one from the "top" of Israeli society:

Two days after Sadat had gone home, one of the American Jewish peace activists who had attended the conference was having dinner with conservative relatives in Tel Aviv. The family got to talking about Sadat.

Suddenly the wife turned to her husband and said, "I have never told you. Since our boy was six years old, I have cried myself to sleep every year on his birthday, because it brought him one year nearer to the army, to the war, to being killed. And while I was carrying the second one, I prayed every day that it should not be a boy."

The husband, his voice shaking: "But we have been married 14 years, and never have you said to me you felt this way!"

The wife: "There was no use. There was never any hope before that anything could change."

And from a hard-headed Israeli leader, Amnon Rubinstein, Dean of Law at Tel Aviv University: "When I try to put it into words, when I try to say out loud that the President...of Egypt...is coming to Knesset, to Jerusalem...to the capitol of Israel...my voice trembles."

## Sadat intervenes in Israeli politics.

In Israel, the Sadat visit not only opened up hope that peace is possible, but made that hope a potential political force. In the Knesset responses to Sadat, even though it was a moment when pressure for a show of unity before the world was very high, and even though Prime Minister Begin ignored the Palestinians, Shimon Peres (leader of the Labor party opposition and ordinarily no dove) mentioned the right of the Palestinians to "express their identity in a way that does not endanger the security of Israel—perhaps in association with Jordan, but that is not for me to say." This went further than the Labor leader would have been expected to go, toward opening up the possibility of real Palestinian self-determination in exchange for a secure peace.

But Israeli political sentiment is now poised on a knife-edge. If Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and the PLO could unite around the Sadat platform—"full peace" for Israel within the 1967 boundaries, in exchange for Palestinian self-determination on the West Bank and Gaza—then a large political wave in Israel might push toward this position. Such a political wave would probably begin by wanting to go only part way. Such a stance would force Begin to move or resign, and if the Arabs were both united and firm upon the offer of "full peace," Israeli opinion would continue to shift.

But if the Tripoli line holds and Syria, the PLO, and other Arab states refuse to join negotiations, then Israeli opinion will relapse into its old fear, bitterness, and suspicion—but now these attitudes will be focused on Syria and the PLO, rather than "all Arabs." There are groups in Israeli society that want a comprehensive peace in which most or all of the West Bank is returned—either because these groups believe that any other kind of peace will be shaky and short, or because these groups believe that the West Bank will dilute the Jewishness of Israel. But these currents will be weakened, and those currents that want most of all to hold the West Bank and that will welcome the chance to make a separate peace with Sadat will be strengthened.

Of course Syria and the PLO are claiming that a separate Israeli/Egyptian peace was the inevitable result of the Sadat initiative. I do not agree. The Syrian response is making that a more likely outcome—but even now it need not be. The Syrians argue that Sadat got nothing for his gesture—but they are ignoring that he got a major shift in Israeli politics. Sadat moved past normal government-to-government diplomacy. In effect, he was "running for Prime Minister of Israel."

In these terms, Sadat did well. Abba Eban has predicted that by January there will be a political crisis in Israel over the West Bank issue. Deputy Prime Minister Yigael Yadin, head of the moderate reformist *Dash* (Democratic Movement for Change) has publicly criticized Begin's continued hard line on the West Bank. So the potential is high for a hard fight inside the Israeli political system, and the formation of a centrist coalition of the liberals, *Dash*, and the Labor party that would be able to make peace.

## Begin intervenes in Arab politics.

While Sadat is trying to be clear enough to create a political crisis behind Begin, Begin is trying to be tough enough to create a political crisis for Sadat. The political crisis Begin wants is one in which Syria irrevocably breaks with Egypt and Egypt has to choose whether to make a separate peace with Israel, or to make war against Israel. Begin believes Egypt cannot choose war, and so will have to choose a separate peace.

So far, the Syrians have mournfully, but steadily, gone along with this scenario. They (and their Soviet friends) have ignored the openings in Israeli politics and focused on what Begin says. They cite his ignoring the Palestinians as the reason for their own rejection of Sadat's initiative—but this leads to a vicious circle: (a) Begin takes a hard line which (b) Syria and the PLO use as either a reason or a justification to take their own hard line, which (c) strengthens home-front support in Israel for Begin's hard line and (d) moves toward a separate peace between Egypt and Israel—exactly the motion that (e) strengthens Syria and the PLO in taking a hard line.

This vicious circle tends to strengthen the likelihood of a settlement that leaves the West Bank and Gaza under Israeli occupation. Such a settlement may be available in a separate Israeli/Egyptian peace, but not in a comprehensive peace. Indeed, Begin may very well have hoped that Syria and the PLO would isolate themselves from Sadat's initiative so that Sadat's only option would become a separate peace.

If so, Syria and the PLO are falling into his trap. They are doing so with such vigor that even Israelis who prefer a comprehensive peace are likely to wonder whether Syria and the PLO really want a comprehensive settlement themselves, even with Palestinian self-determination, or are hoping to prevent peace.

## The U.S. woos Syria.

The U.S. government was convinced even before the Sadat visit that Syria was the key to peace. Indeed, the U.S. government's coolness toward the Sadat initiative stemmed from President Carter's focus on involving Syria in the peace negotiations. The U.S. seems to have decided several months ago that U.S. influence in Egypt was at its zenith, that Egypt was ready to make peace, that even the PLO was close, and that the remaining stumbling block was Syria. Some PLO people have even claimed that it was the Syrian influence inside the PLO that has been important in preventing the PLO from publicly and clearly accepting the UN Resolution 242. (But PLO doves would have a vested interest in seeing or describing the world that way; so the claim should be taken with salt.)

The Syrian/Soviet relationship (along with the Carter administration's desire

to develop detente) would then explain why the U.S. felt it had good reasons to seek with the Soviets what became the joint U.S./Soviet statement. But as U.S. policy focused away from Egypt, Sadat grew restive. He told Israelis that the major reason for the timing of his proposal to visit Jerusalem was his unhappiness with the joint U.S./Soviet statement. Reciprocally, of course, the U.S. feared that an Egyptian initiative would infuriate Syria and the Soviets, inhibit the new American approach, and damage detente.

## Sadat offers Syria carrots, sticks.

What, then, about Egypt? First, is Sadat really after a separate peace—as Syria and the PLO fear? I think not. Such a peace would leave him utterly isolated from all the Arabs, even his main source of funds—Saudi Arabia. Even though the Egyptian people want peace, the politically active do not want to buy it at the expense of selling out the Palestinians and isolating Egypt. So Sadat has internal reasons as well as external to avoid a separate peace. I believe he is pursuing a subtler policy—separate negotiations but no separate peace. Sadat is trying stick-and-carrot politics on Syria and the PLO. The stick is the threat that he will make a separate peace—and toward the PLO, the threat that he will try to find other Palestinians for Israel to deal with. The carrot is his promise of getting Israel to agree soon on an over-all peace plan. Then, he hopes, Syria and the PLO would tacitly "fit into" it by negotiating with Israel on the aspects of the plan that concern each of them.

In short, Sadat has taken the burden of "going first"—hoping he can thereby get Israel to "go second" on the principle of Palestinian self-determination, whereupon Syria and the PLO can "go third"

on recognizing Israel. The crucial point will be whether any Egyptian offer of peace in exchange for the West Bank/Gaza, rather than an offer from Syria and the PLO, will be enough to trigger a major political debate inside Israel.

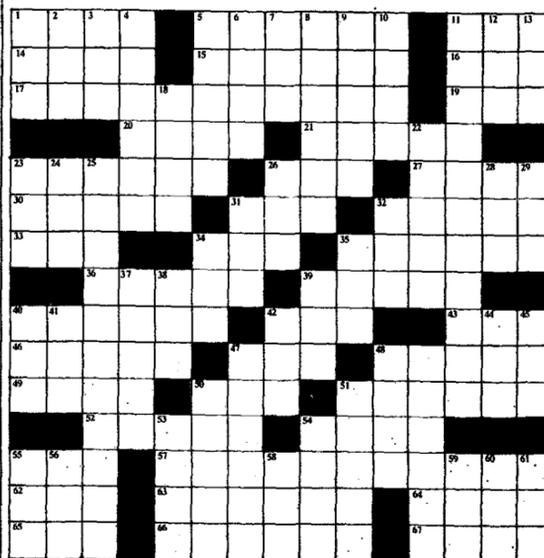
If not, and if Begin holds to a hard line in the West Bank, Sadat will have to decide whether to make a separate peace after all, or rejoin the other Arab states and threaten war. If Begin thinks Egypt cannot choose war, he will be strongly tempted to continue with a line so hard that Sadat has no carrot for Syria and the PLO, and is more isolated and forced to choose a separate peace. The race between Sadat to be clear enough to create a political crisis behind Begin, and Begin to be tough enough to create a political crisis for Sadat is an underlying reality at Cairo.

In order to make an offer of peace-for-the-West-Bank more credible in Israeli eyes, Sadat is holding out the possibility that if the PLO and Syria harden still more in refusing to negotiate, he can encourage the Palestinian people to use some new arrangements—other than the PLO—to express their self-determination. For example, elections in the West Bank, Gaza, and the Palestinian Diaspora—supervised perhaps by a special committee of the UN, or even by a special Arab grouping led by Egypt. But it is almost certain that before West Bank-Gaza Palestinians would agree to take part in such elections, they would have to be convinced that Israel had clearly offered and the PLO had clearly rejected, Palestinian self-determination on the basis of peace with Israel.

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## Naked, in chains

By David Mermelstein



- 4 THE COMMITTEE TO \_\_\_\_\_ BANK LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA
- 5 One Hardy heroine
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ Grey
- 7 Priestly vestment
- 8 Betes \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Pinned
- 10 Soaked: Poetic
- 11 SITE OF MASSACRE
- 12 Cut off
- 13 Eventually
- 18 Hastens
- 22 Tapestry
- 23 Thick mass of hair
- 24 \_\_\_\_\_ Beame
- 25 LAND OF APARTHEID
- 26 Chew the \_\_\_\_\_
- 28 Literary monogram
- 29 Type of ship: Abbr.
- 31 Word on towel
- 32 Bathing top
- 34 Can precede school or war
- 35 \_\_\_\_\_ Hall
- 37 Word in French toast
- 38 Relative of st. or rd.
- 39 Amount: Abbr.
- 40 2 x DCC
- 41 25 DOWN RICH IN THIS
- 42 \_\_\_\_\_ Smith, racist leader of Rhodesia
- 44 Scottish facial features
- 45 Alternative to BMT or IND
- 47 \_\_\_\_\_ Tull
- 48 Island near Timor
- 50 Soup
- 51 German breads
- 53 Slightly open
- 54 Bacchanal's cry
- 55 Fore's campaign
- 56 Movie, in Roman numbers
- 58 Land of \_\_\_\_\_
- 59 Suit's complement
- 60 Before
- 61 Neck color

### Across:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Kenyatta
- 5 BLACK NATIONALISTS' NAME FOR 25 DOWN
- 11 \_\_\_\_\_ & the Family Stone
- 14 Sloping access
- 15 Claws
- 16 Farming implement
- 17 MARTYRED LEADER
- 19 Word in classified ad
- 20 French river
- 21 Make golfing standard again
- 23 Somewhat passe alternative to "people," in radical rhetoric
- 26 Burns' org., familiarly
- 27 Student evaluations: Abbr.
- 30 Woodwinds
- 31 Owls
- 32 \_\_\_\_\_ Litovsk
- 33 Little, in Caen
- 34 Fruit stone
- 35 More serious
- 36 Alexander and Peter
- 37 Resembling
- 40 California desert
- 42 "...to better \_\_\_\_\_ perch for the night..."

- 43 Hawaiian wreath
- 46 Author of *The Red Badge of Courage*
- 47 Gould or Rockefeller
- 48 More skillful
- 49 Nimble
- 50 \_\_\_\_\_ Hogan
- 51 Most depressed
- 52 Concerning the aesthetic realm
- 54 \_\_\_\_\_ and Civilization
- 55 Jacques' friend
- 57 RACIST PRIME MINISTER
- 62 CORPORATION WITH INVESTMENTS IN 25 DOWN
- 63 Condition of being fundamental
- 64 Ireland's former name
- 65 \_\_\_\_\_ Maria (liqueur)
- 66 Br. imperialist in Africa
- 67 Real estate document

### Down:

- 1 Between sophs. and srs.
- 2 Cereal grass
- 3 Fr. title of respect: Abbr.

Solution next week.

## LIFE IN THE U.S.

# Environmental & mental pollution cause sickness

**E**very year roughly two million Americans die. Of these, about 750,000—or over one-third—die of heart diseases; 350,000—or a sixth—of cancers; 200,000 of stroke (blood clots and hemorrhages in the brain); over 100,000 of respiratory diseases (especially pneumonia, bronchitis, emphysema and dust-inhalation-related lung diseases); 45,000 from motor vehicle accidents; over 40,000 in infancy; 40,000 from diabetes; and over 30,000 from cirrhosis of the liver. This very brief list accounts for over three quarters of all deaths.

Today's most common afflictions result from the adverse conditions of life and work to which people are subjected, but which under more supportive conditions, would either disappear altogether or appear much later in life. More to the point, today's afflictions come from two kinds of pollution.

Environmental pollution—both in the workplace and out—is the best known. The list of environmental abuses seems virtually endless and—because many chemicals currently in use are privately-held corporate secrets—unknown.

Among the known deadly effects, however, are asbestosis and lung- and organ-lining cancers of asbestos workers, black lung of coal miners, byssinosis among textile workers, bladder and liver cancers and reproductive and nervous disorders among chemical workers and workers with chemicals like agricultural workers, leukemia among people exposed

to large amounts of radiation, and a variety of respiratory disorders from auto exhaust and other pollutants in metropolitan areas.

In some recently published, color-coded maps of cancer "hot-spots," the highest rates of many types of cancer deaths, particularly female breast cancer, were concentrated in the metropolitan areas of the industrial Northeast. The National Cancer Institute, which produced the maps, says that 80 to 90 percent of all cancer results from "environmental additives."

### Emotional pollution.

Another, more insidious form of pollution leading to sickness might be called emotional pollution. Life in this country, for both working and middle class people, is overwhelmingly one of competition and insecurity. Fears of joblessness and career failure, as well as the inhumane nature of many work processes are now being identified as the cause of a variety of emotional and bodily ailments.

Prominent among those ailments is hypertension, commonly called high blood pressure. In 1965 a group of auto workers was studied—at the request of the United Auto Workers union—before, during and after a plant closing. As the time moved from announcement to closing to unemployment, blood pressures, blood cholesterol levels, "colds" and other respiratory infections, and emotional and family problems worsened significantly. The increase in blood pressure



Photos by Steve Cagan