

“Continuity and Change in Egyptian-Israeli Relations, 1973-97”

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For 25 years, tension, mistrust, and strain have characterized Egyptian-Israeli relations. Cairo and Jerusalem have made disagreeing with one another an art form. They have established and codified norms of disenchantment. Though coldness and uneasiness have marked their dialogue, and their treaty relationship has bent severely, it has never broken. Uniformity of Arab anti-Israeli feelings are passing to a series of separate Arab state attitudes towards Israel. In the meantime, Egypt and Israel are likely to continue to irk, confound, and disappoint each other. Their present frosty relationship not only reflects past chapters of disappointment and disillusionment, but contains competitive outlooks for how Middle Eastern nations and peoples might relate to one another.

Whether in bilateral relations or with regard to a variety of other Middle Eastern issues, Egypt and Israel retain unrealistic expectations of each other. The relationship has withstood a variety of long-standing attitudinal (mis)perceptions, regional and international political changes, and unanticipated governmental upheavals. Though both Jerusalem and Cairo regularly suspect the other of nefarious intentions about current and future military preparedness, neither country seeks a major confrontation with the other. Each believes that the other has not done enough to stimulate additional understanding and agreement between Israel and her Arab neighbours. Both are firmly committed not to anger the United States too much, too often, or to such a degree that economic and military assistance from Washington might be threatened or curtailed.

At a minimum, Egypt and Israel are obliged by treaty to have a non-belligerent physical relationship. However, neither is obligated or inclined to change the mutually distrustful emotional feelings that are the legacies from their rocky and disputatious past. For Egypt, Israel has not moved fast enough in returning to Arab control all territories taken in the June 1967 War and has been willing to impose its physical will on Arab lands and people. For Israel, Egypt has been all too slow to implement full normalization of diplomatic relations, too reluctant to tone down its verbal attacks against Israel, and too willing to foster Arab resistance to normalized relations with Israel. From the resilient continuity of their

unfriendly affiliation, one discovers common and repetitive themes and therefore lessons that might be learned about Arab-Israeli relations in non-war environments.

PRAGMATIC ACCOMMODATIONS (1973-79)

Egypt and Israel feared each other as enemies prior to the October 1973 War. The war did little to alter attitudes of hatred or mistrust. It did however introduce the possibility that Israel's most trusted ally, the United States, might find a way to resolve the new and unsavory physical status quo. For Jerusalem and Cairo, conditions at the end of the war were almost intolerable. Egypt wanted its 15,000-strong Third Army saved from pending destruction at the hands of some vengeful Israeli generals; Israel wanted its POWs returned as quickly as possible. Pragmatic reality demanded that Cairo and Jerusalem consider trusting Washington, if not one another. The war -- and Washington's interest, focus, and incessant urge to change the physical status quo -- did nothing to change encrusted national attitudes each possessed of the other. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's intervention evolved into shuttle diplomacy which in turn resulted in a step-by-step process resulting in negotiated agreements. American engagement in Egyptian-Israeli negotiations focused on territorial issues and changed physical realities on the ground in Sinai. For the next quarter-century, U.S. engagement in Arab-Israeli diplomacy focused on guaranteeing and supporting the concrete distance between Cairo and Jerusalem. Neither American presidents, nor their secretaries of state, nor special Middle East envoys attempted to change each country's fundamental attitudes towards the other. Pragmatic accommodations dominated Egyptian-Israeli diplomacy because psychological attitudes were not susceptible to alteration. Most immediately, the status quo demanded reduction of American-Soviet brinkmanship in the Middle East, and the separation of entangled Egyptian and Israeli armies. American diplomacy concentrated on the timetables, distances, conditions, assurances, and degree of Israeli withdrawal from territories taken in the June 1967 War; it did not focus on defining the nature, depth, and manner in which Israel would receive peace in exchange. Asymmetrical concepts were embedded in U.S.-sponsored, Israeli-sanctioned, and Egyptian-catalyzed Arab-Israeli diplomacy. Neither Israel's leaders nor its people ever doubted Egypt's legitimacy, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. On the contrary, Egypt's leaders and citizens were at best severely divided on Zionism's legitimate nature, the sovereignty of a Jewish State, and dimensions of Israel's borders. Israelis always concentrated on preserving security and seeking acceptance; Egyptians focused on restoring honour and sustaining prestige. Only Israelis could provide territory, only the Egyptians could provide peace.

EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI GOALS

Most of the core political objectives which Egypt and Israel imported into the October 1973 War survived it intact. Israel sought recognition by its neighbours. Egypt wanted to sustain its leadership role in the Arab state system. On non-Israeli-related matters, according to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, 'the Arab world was divided before, during, after the October 1973 war'.¹ And on Israeli-related matters, Egypt's view was different from the rest. These cherished attitudes continued to be held alongside a new reality of negotiating with Washington. There was little in the functional discourse with Washington that forced either Egypt or Israel to change their core objectives. Above all, Cairo wanted Sinai's expeditious return to Egyptian sovereignty. To achieve that end, it needed positive relations with the United States. It also sought to obtain an undetermined but increasingly specific amount of military and financial assistance from Washington. To insure its domestic water requirements, Egypt needed positive and workable relations with Nile River riparian states. In addition, it sought to retain and sustain without much compromise its self-declared leadership in the Arab world. Under Sadat, Egypt vocally supported Palestinian self-determination and a 'comprehensive peace', but was willing to suspend those objectives when either delayed Egypt's primary interest of recovering all of Sinai. Cairo strongly advocated the land-for-peace formula (as it interpreted United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967), which evolved into the framework of Arab-Israeli negotiations. Egypt never wavered from its interpretation that the Resolution's call for 'withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories taken in the recent conflict' meant withdrawal from all the territories. It retained its view that Israel was an aggressive usurper of Palestinian and Arab rights and needed to relinquish those rights (lands) as a priority to any consideration of accommodation. And if necessary, under the proper conditions and assurances, Egypt might agree to negotiate a non-resort-to-force agreement -- or perhaps, if pushed, a non-belligerency agreement -- with Israel. Israel brought into the October 1973 War a fear of the Arabs. Despite its military superiority, Israel lived with an extra historical chromosome. With the horrendous memory of the Holocaust ever-present in their minds, Israelis were consumed with survival and security. Their single most important external relationship was with Washington, because the United States helped protect their existence. In their not-so-friendly neighbourhood, Israelis wanted to achieve recognition, acceptance, and legitimacy from Arab capitals. In order to reduce the prospects for war with Arab states, they focused on building up their own military and finding ways to remove Egypt from the anti-Israel coalition like the one that was formed by its contiguous neighbours prior to the June 1967 War. Israel was willing to negotiate under the premises of UNSC Resolution 242 but only if it could determine what

territories to return, over what period of time, and under what conditions. And in return, Israel wanted to exchange peace for land. It defined peace not as non-belligerency, but as a complete peace with full cultural, commercial, diplomatic, and political tentacles implied and applied. For Israel, peace included all the trappings of normal relations between states: tourism, business contracts between Egyptian and Israeli nationals, academic and scientific exchanges, unrestricted use of the Suez Canal, abandonment of the Arab economic boycott of Israel, and behaviour at international forums such as the United Nations and UNESCO, where Israel would not be attacked or berated.

Cairo's insistence on opening negotiations with the United States was an objective of the October 1973 War. In the years preceding the war, President Sadat wanted the U.S. to help him restore Sinai to Egyptian sovereignty. He wanted Washington and Moscow to exert collective pressure on Israel to withdraw from all of Sinai and all of the other territories which Israel had won in the June 1967 War. Unlike Syria, Sadat had little intention of destroying Israel. After the 1973 War, he told the then Jordanian Foreign Minister, Zaid Rifa'i, that it was 'a war for movement not a war for liberation. For me, I [Sadat] would cross the canal and stop'.² By contrast, said Syria's foreign minister at the time, Abd al-Halim Khaddam, 'for Syria it was a war of liberation, not a war of movement; the objectives of the war were to liberate Golan and Sinai. The Syrian forces advanced according to the plan, the Egyptian forces, however, just passed the canal and stopped'.³ Nabit al-Eraby, presently Egypt's Ambassador to the United Nations, who at the time worked in the Egyptian foreign ministry, recalled that Sadat entered the war 'not to attain military objectives, but to influence the political process'.⁴ According to Joseph Sisco who was assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs at the time and his deputy, Roy Atherton, Sadat went to war because he could not get negotiations started otherwise. Said Sisco, 'the decision to go to war was precisely to get what he wanted, namely -- a negotiation'.⁵

The October War was Sadat's political key that would initiate, pursue, and sustain a diplomatic process. Apparently, Sadat never told Asad that he had only limited military objectives in the war. Sadat took an enormous political risk that he would succeed in taking Israel by surprise and not be dislodged from the east side of the canal by an Israeli counter-attack. He apparently did not contemplate a crushing Egyptian defeat, or even a threat of one; that the survival of his Third Army, surrounded by the Israelis halfway through the war, would make changing the status quo through negotiations so urgent and compelling; or that he would be tied as tightly, deeply, or quickly to American negotiating intervention as he was.

EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI INTERACTION

Existentialist fear enveloped Israel during the war. Its fighting of the war was predicated on the notion of survival. Israeli leaders did not have diplomacy on their minds when they counter-attacked in the middle of the war, but rather retribution and retaliation. Trauma consumed the society. It took Israel a very long time after the 1973 War to believe that Sadat could be trusted. During that war, Israel was reluctantly pulled into U.S.-sponsored negotiations with Egypt. Washington had resupplied Israel with much-needed weapons during the war and Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir was somewhat obliged to listen to its premier superpower ally. She was also consumed with having Israeli POWs returned as soon as possible. Israel reluctantly trusted the American intervention in negotiating a satisfactory resolution to the war's aftermath: disengagement of troops, return of POWs, and putting tripwires in place that would deter another Arab surprise attack against Israel or prevent the emergence of a Palestinian state. Meir possessed the notion that Kissinger would not do anything to sacrifice Israeli security; this contrasted with the reality that Kissinger had to preserve Washington's role as mediator. She trusted Kissinger, but not fully. For example, a week after the war ended, the U.S. Secretary of State told Meir that if Israel did not cease jeopardizing the well-being of the surrounded Third Army, the United States would send supplies directly to them.⁶

Kissinger choreographed the December 1973 Geneva Middle East Peace Conference so that an Egyptian-Israeli military disengagement agreement could emerge as a precooked result of the conference. Sadat in January 1974 agreed with Israeli leaders on the number of Egyptian tanks that should remain on the east bank of the liberated Suez Canal, that relatively small amount of land Egypt took with great difficulty during the October War. Sadat astonished his chief of staff, General Muhammad Abd al-Ghani al-Gamasy, by accepting the presence of a very tiny compliment of Egyptian tanks there. According to Gamasy, Sadat told him, 'my dear general, we are talking about a long period of policy. Peace will not be hurt by 10 tanks, or 20 tanks, or 30 tanks. We are planning for peace with the Americans [not the Israelis]'.⁷

In the post-1973 War period Israeli leaders, especially Golda Meir, did not trust Sadat. For that matter neither Yitzhak Rabin, Menachem Begin, Yigal Allon nor Moshe Dayan trusted Sadat or his intentions. Every time Israel negotiated and signed another agreement with Egypt, every Israeli or American who came in contact with Sadat was asked the same question about his intentions: could he be trusted and was he sincere. Skepticism dominated Israeli decision-making about Egypt's intentions during and after the signing of the January 1974 and September 1975 disengagement agreements. Israeli skepticism

regarding Sadat was sufficiently great that in March 1975 it was willing to sharpen differences with the United States. Rather than make additional territorial concessions in Sinai without obtaining the political agreement it sought with Egypt, Israel was willing to risk the possibility of U.S. limitations on arms assistance and financial aid. Israel's strategic goal was a peace treaty with Egypt which implied Egypt's withdrawal from the Arab-Israeli conflict as an active military participant. From 1977 onwards, when he was foreign minister, Moshe Dayan always asked the question, 'Would Egypt sign a separate peace?' It is not clear whether Dayan fully understood that for Sadat, signing a separate peace with Israel did not mean that Egypt would jettison connections or leadership to the Arab world or support of the Palestinian cause. Israeli government skepticism about Sadat's intentions, or even clarity about what those intentions were, did not abate when President Jimmy Carter replaced Gerald Ford in 1977. Israel was prisoner to a concept that Arab leaders could not and would not make a true and real peace with Israel. Gamal Abdel Nasser had done his job well in terms of influencing Israeli doubts about trusting Arab leaders. Sadat's public diplomacy of disparaging Israel, but sporadic private attempts to reach agreements with it, did little to instill among Israelis a sense of logic or trust in his behaviour. When Israeli leaders and their foreign ministry personnel had doubts about President Carter's attitudes towards Israel, when they developed chagrin about his public remarks about a Palestinian homeland or Israel's need to consider negotiating with the PLO, doubts about Sadat or his intentions could not be even addressed until they were certain that their relationship with Washington was on more solid ground.

After the Egyptian president's unexpected November 1977 trip to Jerusalem, Sadat felt offended that Begin did not reply in kind with a similar magnanimous gesture, like a public promise to withdraw from all of Sinai or remove the settlements there. Begin and Dayan were not interested in gestures, they were interested in trading land in Sinai for a peace treaty with Egypt but with little if any territorial withdrawals on the other fronts. Except for a few occasions, when Sadat and Begin met, they talked past each other. Their personalities clashed, causing a willing President Carter to become the intermediary between the two protagonists. In almost two weeks of negotiation at Camp David, Sadat and Begin only met twice. And when the two did meet in bilateral talks, tension characterized their relationship. That tension was repeatedly reinforced when Israeli and Egyptian negotiators met. Sadat's advisers were particularly reluctant to either advocate or support a separate agreement with Israel, especially one which did not explicitly spell out some guarantee for the Palestinians and withdrawal on other fronts.

American officials associated with Egyptian-Israeli negotiations were not only surprised at Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, but were equally

dismayed at the surprises he presented them and his increasing willingness to reach something less than a comprehensive peace with the Israelis.

In the months before the September 1978 Camp David talks, Egyptian-Israeli relations were sour at best. Israeli officials did not trust either President Carter or his national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski. Carter was intensely irritated with the slow pace of the Middle East peace negotiations. Sadat and Begin continued to be deeply distrustful of each other, and diplomatic exchanges between them continued to be sterile.⁸ Carter invited Begin and Sadat to Camp David to resolve the crisis in relations between them. The atmosphere surrounding Egyptian-Israeli negotiations was anything but clear.

For Egypt and Israel, the Camp David Accords, the framework dealing with the Palestinians, was a written agreement, where both sides agreed to disagree. It was a signed agreement, witnessed by the United States, but contained profound distrust about what was intended, what was promised -- the settlements, Jerusalem, etc. The Egyptians wanted 'linkage' between the Egyptian-Israeli treaty and progress towards Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza. Begin rejected the concept of linkage. Just like the prelude to Camp David, at Camp David, and afterwards, there was mistrust between Egyptians and Israelis, differing interpretations of what needed to be accomplished and what was accomplished and promised at Camp David. At the Blair House talks in Washington in October 1978, initial optimism gave way to disputes over substance: timing of Israeli withdrawals, establishment of diplomatic relations, possibilities of revising a treaty after five years, U.S. commitments to both sides, problems relating to Israel's demand for guaranteed oil supplies, and Egypt's request for a timetable for ending the Israeli military government in the West Bank and Gaza. President Carter had to intervene in the talks in Washington and again with a more dramatic presidential visit to Egypt and Israel in March 1979. Israeli leaders continued to mistrust American mediation; Cairo and Washington bristled over Israeli cabinet decisions to continue building settlements; tension and misunderstanding between Egypt and Israel did not abate.

In Article VI of the 26 March 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, Israel insisted on a commitment from Egypt to make its treaty with Israel a diplomatic priority over previous agreed upon defence arrangements with the Arab world. But in Sadat's perception, having signed such a treaty with such an article did not remove Egypt from its natural Arab orbit. To be sure, Egypt was ostracized by an angry Arab world for much of the 1980s, but Egypt and Egyptians still saw themselves as integral if not central to the future of the Arab world.

On the other hand, Israel's priority remained detaching Egypt's strategic involvement in any future Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel remained focused on existence, defence, security, and fear of the next war. Israelis often doubted whether they were signing an agreement with an individual or a country; they had self-doubts about giving up Sinai, an asset of strategic depth, and about returning the oil fields and the airfields. But Israel and Israelis wanted and expected more. Sadat's historic trip, Egypt's recognition of Israeli existence, the signing of the Camp David Accords and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty signified a breakthrough of enormous proportions and with equally enormous expectations of what would transpire next. Israel and Israelis wanted to believe that if the key psychological barrier was broken in terms of Arab (read Egyptian) negative attitudes towards the Jewish State, then peace would follow between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Those self-imposed and unrealistic expectations held by Israeli leaders and the Israeli public were met by disillusionment and profound reassessment about exchanging land for a hollow contextual peace.

For Egypt, its peace treaty with Israel was another interim agreement on the path towards total Israeli withdrawal from all of the territories taken in the June 1967 War, not merely the fulfillment of Sadat's goal of the return of Sinai to Egyptian sovereignty. Egypt fulfilled its goal of using diplomacy to liberate Sinai from Israeli control. Land was returned, but no one demanded that Egypt give Israel peace, at least the way Israelis defined it. Egypt's treaty relationship with Israel did mean its freedom from the costly conflict with Israel. It did not mean that Egypt was going to give up either its commitment to a comprehensive peace or stop advocating self-determination and an independent state for the Palestinians. Egypt's ability to promote these ends was temporarily truncated by the isolation placed on it by the remainder of the Arab world; yet neither Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, nor Begin's response with autonomy for the Palestinians, nor the signing of the Camp David Accords, nor the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty changed the long-term objectives or perceptions in either Cairo or Jerusalem. A new dynamic of direct negotiations did occur; Washington reloaded its diplomatic guns with negotiating expertise, but a real long-term change in Egyptian-Israeli attitudes towards one another did not materialize.

Before Sadat's assassination in October 1981, Egypt and Israel set the precedents for their cold peace or cool normalization. Just a month after Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Begin was personally hurt by the verbal epithets thrown at him in particular as a 'Shylock and a fascist'. Articles, anecdotes, and cartoons in the Egyptian press depicted Jews as immoral, hypocritical, unreliable, unmanly, intransigent, insecure, greedy, ill-intentioned, and chronically suspicious of everyone.⁹ Begin appealed to Sadat directly and to his foreign

ministers such as Muhammad Ibrahim Kamel in January 1978 to have such articles quashed.¹⁰ For his own part, Begin was not averse to indicting the Egyptian media in public for its anti-Semitic remarks, something he did at the Knesset within a week after rebuking Foreign Minister Kamel. When Israel invaded Lebanon in March 1978, the Egyptian daily *Akhbar al-Yawm*, described Begin as 'intransigent and defiant', and the invasion itself as a 'Hitlerite military adventure'.¹¹ Cairo's *al-Juhuriyah* described the invasion as 'part of the Zionist attempt to annihilate the Palestinian people, whose principles were laid down by Herzl, and whom Begin has been one of the most efficient advocates since Dyar Yassin'.¹² Disputes about settlements and over the definition and application of Palestinian autonomy added fuel to a smoldering fire of dislike and animosity. In 1980, Israel's first ambassador to Egypt was socially boycotted and the Israeli embassy staff faced difficulties in renting apartments in Cairo. Almost no tourism from Egypt to Israel materialized and few commercial deals were negotiated. Academic and cultural exchanges were stillborn. Major professional associations in Egypt, like the lawyers, engineers, physicians, and General Federation of Trade Unionists formally boycotted agreements with Israel and banned participation in the normalization process. In a very public manner, Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister, Hassan al-Tuhami, called Jews 'treacherous and hypocritical' and said that it was not in vain that they were 'labeled such in history books and that Israel was a *shibh dawla* (quasi-state) doomed to disappear'.¹³

The very difficult and unsatisfactory autonomy talks which took place in 1979 and 1980 only added to the tension between Egyptians and Israelis. Each act of violence between Palestinians and Israelis became a reason to suspend or stop the autonomy talks; any unilateral Israeli action in the territories -- from building settlements, to changing laws, to the deportation of Palestinians -- rejuvenated Egyptian beliefs that Israel was not interested in comprehensive peace. In Israel, the media did not tire of charging Egypt of bad faith. In March 1980, whether true or not, reference to a 'secret document' emanating from the Egyptian foreign ministry was reported in the Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot* which claimed that Egyptian officials were instructed to keep cooperation with Israel to a minimum.¹⁴ In 1980, an Israeli foreign ministry report analyzing the normalization process said that there was 'an Egyptian tendency, particularly at the sub-presidential level, [to] deliberately slow down progress and the rate of normalization, and that progress could have been more substantial had the Egyptians been more forthcoming'.¹⁵

INSTITUTIONALIZING THE NORM OF DISTRUSTFUL RELATIONS
(1979-1990s)

By the early 1980s, a pattern of Egyptian-Israeli bilateral behaviour had been established. Both Israel and Egypt believed that the other would not go to war. Both wanted to remain at least relatively close to Washington. The shift of the international community's preoccupation and regional concern to events in and around the Persian Gulf directed attention away from additional efforts to resolve outstanding issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Adamantly opposed to what Sadat had done, the Arab world had no interest in broadening Arab-Israeli negotiations. In the early 1980s, neither the Israeli, Egyptian, or American governments were prepared or able to give attention to broader issues unresolved from previous Egyptian-Israeli negotiations. Egypt and Israel had a negotiated treaty in which Israeli withdrawals were set to a timetable; in return Egypt provided diplomatic recognition. Egypt wanted to sustain its ties with the Arab world and Israel had grand expectations about full normalization with Egypt over a short period of time.

What is so remarkable is that the Egyptian-Israeli treaty withstood repeated disintegration from a series of events, each of which alone might have caused Cairo to at least suspend adherence to the treaty. Egypt never publicly offered to scrap its relationship with Israel. President Husni Mubarak's immediate priority was not his relationship with Israel, but Egypt's crying economic and infrastructure needs. Preparing for war again with Israel would have drained Egypt to the point of implosion. So for the next decade and a half, the Egyptian-Israeli treaty bent, but it did not break. Israeli actions against Arab targets and management of the Palestinians were sufficient for any Egyptian government to call into question adherence to the treaty. Israeli policies fueled Egyptian domestic opposition to the treaty. Moreover, unfulfilled Egyptian expectations of a 'peace dividend' were met with disillusionment which carried over into general negative attitudes towards Israel. Besides the emotional issue of Israel's control over Jerusalem, more than a dozen non-bilateral issues presented themselves as volatile explosives, each separately and collectively capable of torpedoing the treaty. Egyptian reaction to Israeli-initiated events demonstrated that Cairo was not going to crawl under the Nile and forget its interests in the rest of the Arab world. Each of the following contributed to Egypt's distaste for Israeli leaders and its policies, receiving broad Egyptian governmental criticism and media outrage:

- Palestinian autonomy talks not reaching fruition
- Israel's bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in June 1981
- Application of Israeli law to the Golan Heights in December 1981
- Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 and the Sabra and Shatilla

Palestinian refugee camp massacres three months later

- Israel's prolonged presence and non-withdrawal from South Lebanon
- Continued growth and expansion of Jewish settlements
- The bombing of the PLO's Tunis headquarters in October 1985
- Israel's administration of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza
- The outbreak and Israel's management of the Palestinian intifada in December 1987
- Soviet Jewish immigration (1988-91), seen as a threat to Palestinian demographic control of the West Bank
- The deportation of HAMAS activists to Lebanon in December 1992
- The killing of Palestinians in the Hebron mosque in February 1993
- The opening of the Western Wall tunnel in September 1996
- Delay in implementing an agreement on Hebron in 1996

These issues saw regular harsh criticism leveled at Israel and Israelis from the Egyptian press. Moreover, disputatious bilateral issues contributed to the reinforcement of Egyptian-Israeli mutual ill-will. These included the dispute over the land in Taba, Egyptian 'care' of Israeli nationals on Egyptian soil, and Egyptian characterization of the Israeli prime minister, Israelis, Zionists, and Jews.

Initially, in the autumn and winter of 1980, a whole series of positive exchange visits occurred between high-ranking Egyptian and Israeli officials. Sadat wanted to show Washington that his commitment to his treaty with Israel was intact. Israel had still to fulfill its obligation to withdraw from all of Sinai by April 1982. By the late spring of 1981, especially after Israel's bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor three days after a Begin-Sadat summit, Egyptian-Israeli cultural, trade, tourist, and commercial relations were put into deep freeze. Begin's reelection as prime minister in June 1981, Sadat's assassination in October, Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, and the massacre in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon in September 1982, all intervened to work against developing a positive atmosphere in Egyptian-Israeli relations.

Egypt did not voluntarily recluse itself from the Arab world. Its isolation was imposed by angry Arab capitals. Repeated Arab world

condemnation of its recognition of Israel influenced the Egyptian government to do the minimum in normalizing relations with Israel. But it also generated powerful motivation among Egyptians to show to their Arab brethren that the diplomatic process was the most advantageous to pursue if Israeli-held territories and assets were to be returned to Arab sovereignty. Constantly, Israeli leaders remained unsure about whether the exchange of oil and land could be balanced with the intangibles of peace. No American mediator monitored, rewarded, or punished either side for failing to change the psychology of mistrust. Israel pursued a security axiom towards the rest of the Arab world by implementing the obverse of the Golden Rule -- 'Do Unto Others Before They Do Unto You'.

For the remainder of the decade and into the 1990s, the Egyptian government believed that its negotiations and treaty with Israel did not preclude vigorous and uninterrupted support for the Palestinian cause or stark opposition to Israeli policies applied to the Arab world or in the Golan Heights, West Bank, Jerusalem or Gaza territories. Likewise, Cairo did not relinquish any desire to play a significant or central role in the inter-Arab system.

In 1983, when asked about why one should sustain the E-I Treaty in 1983, President Mubarak said,

What is the meaning of the annulment of the Camp David agreement?... Shall I return Sinai to Israel? ... It means the declaration of a state of war with Israel. If I want to declare a state of war, it is imperative for me to be militarily prepared. In other words, I should halt development and focus on the evolution of services. I should concentrate all my efforts on war. Who will foot the bill for war? The Arabs? I do not know. Suppose that we obtained the necessary funding from them -- no less than L50-60 billion for armaments to enable the Army to stand its ground. Who will give me arms to fight Israel? The US will not give me arms to fight Israel. Furthermore, Europe also will not give me arms. [As for the Soviets, they]... will impose terms on us -- and this is another matter... 16

Addressing the connection between Egypt's Arab commitments and Cairo's relationship with Israel, Mubarak said in 1987,

I would like to tell our brothers in Syria that the peace treaty is not against the Palestine question. When we sign a treaty we sign it because we are convinced of it. We did not and will not violate the [1950 Arab] Collective Defence Pact. We do not accept relinquishing one inch of land and will not negotiate over Palestine without the Palestinian people's representatives. But if someone asks me to violate Egypt's commitments and cancel the treaty, I will ask him to what use will this be to him and me? We are committed to peace and all the Arabs are committed to solving the issue peacefully. 17

More specifically, Egyptian leaders linked progress on the Palestinian issue with progress in normalizing Egyptian attitudes and relations towards Israel. Not only was Egypt withholding progress in normalization with Israel, but in the 1980s it pressed Washington to upgrade the term 'legitimate rights' for the Palestinians to 'Palestinian self-determination'. Butros Ghali, the Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, said in an interview in Cairo's October magazine on 20 July 1986 that 'relations between Egypt and Israel would not reach a stage of full normalization, quantitatively and qualitatively unless a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis materializes'.

For Israelis, their relationship with Egypt in the 1980s fell far short of expectations. Cairo was in violation of Israel's deepest hope and expectation that a real, true, separate peace would restrain Egypt from advocating on behalf of other Arabs with territorial grievances against Israel. Despite the points already made about an absence of trust or goodwill flowing from Egypt to Israel, Israel had accomplished the task by 1979 of assuring itself at least for the intermediate future that Egypt would not be part of an Arab war coalition against Israel. Israel's main motivation for moving into Lebanon in 1982 was not meant to test Egypt's intentions on the linkage question -- an Arab state was attacked by Israel, what would Egypt do? Israel's intention was to eradicate or destroy the PLO infrastructure in southern Lebanon.

As part of Egypt's view of Israel, the prolonged negotiation over the disputed land in Taba, a mere 1.29 sq km, added to Egyptian perceptions that Israel was a sly and untrustworthy negotiating partner. Resolution of the Taba dispute saw Cairo return its ambassador to Israel after a four year absence.

In characterizing Israel's harsh treatment of the Palestinians in 1986, the Egyptian media referred to it as 'expansionist and intransigent in nature' which made 'it a menace to the entire region'.¹⁸ In criticizing Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir personally, al-Akhbar said,

'Shamir's obstinacy and solitary position to the widespread support for the international conference signifies his desire to perpetuate the grave situation in the Middle East. His concept... indicates that riots, tension, and brutal acts of repression by Tel Aviv's forces will continue'.¹⁹ Typical of the continuing vitriolic condemnation of Israel and Israelis, the editorial in al-Jumhuriyah in September 1986 noted,

Actually the various parties in Israel do not differ on the objective. They want more territorial expansion and they want to expel the Arabs and slaughter them and they want to cut off the heads which try to rise. They want the Arabs to be submissive sacrificial sheep without rights. They want them to work in silence without claiming any citizenship rights because they are regarded as living in the occupied territory temporarily. If a Jew can do the work done by an Arab then the latter is dismissed or killed.'²⁰

In the mid and late 1980s, Israelis recoiled with anger as they witnessed on Egyptian soil repeated attacks against their citizens and diplomats. In August 1985, an Israeli diplomat was killed in Cairo; in October 1985 an Egyptian soldier killed five Israeli tourists, and then was hailed by some in the Egyptian press as a national hero; in March 1986 Israeli diplomats were attacked as they left the International Book Fair, and in February 1990 nine Israeli tourists were killed and 21 wounded in Sinai when masked men attacked an Israeli tourist bus.

With the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada in December 1987, a four-year winter blasted against Israel. Relentlessly, the Egyptian media vilified Israel and its leaders, comparing them to Nazis, the South African government, and equating Israel as barbaric, murderous, and blood-thirsty.²¹ No nuance was employed by the Egyptian media in describing Israeli actions:

As for those who planned to consolidate the Zionist entity on the land by deluding themselves that the Palestinian national personality would disappear through deportation and extermination, oppression and collective massacre -- all these methods, which are more horrible than those of the Nazis and Fascists -- their hopes collapsed in the face of Palestinian determination to lead a legitimate national struggle... Many of the illusions which served Israel in imposing its control over the Gaza Strip and West Bank

cities have drowned in a sea of blood of children and youngsters.²²

The occasion of Israel's handling of the Palestinian uprising, its embattled portrayal by the international media, and its reluctance to move forward towards a comprehensive peace was used by Egypt to support the Palestinians. Cairo indicted Israel for slowness in initiating Israeli-Palestinian talks and continuously voiced support for Palestinian statehood. Egypt did not withdraw its ambassador from Tel Aviv as it had done after Israel's 1982 invasion into Lebanon, and Egyptian officials continued to meet with their Israeli counterparts; but the flow of traffic was distinctly from Israel to Egypt. Egypt picked its Israeli interlocutors, and though ministerial meetings were held with Likud party members, there was a clear preference to meet with Labour party stalwarts, or at least those who leaned towards a compromise with the Palestinians. Noticeably, President Mubarak refused to meet with Likud Prime Minister Shamir, because he felt such a meeting would be 'fruitless'.²³ From 1987 until after the convocation of the Madrid Middle East Peace Conference in October 1991, Egyptian sources leveled two distinctive kinds of censure against Israel. One emanated from official government circles. It focused on the procedure, substance, and possible outcomes of achieving a negotiated settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. It was mild in tone, but firm in policy preference. The second came from the secular and Islamic Egyptian press. It was viciously rancorous, hurling attacks against Israel, Israelis, Zionists, and Jews.

The Egyptian media provided a clear outline of Egypt's view of its peace with Israel and what should happen next in the peace process. Despite a very frosty relationship with the PLO in late 1989 and throughout 1990, Egypt did not diminish its commitment to Palestinian aspirations. Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Butros Ghali said in May 1991, 'We have recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians. We do not always agree with it, we disagreed with its support for Saddam Hussein during the Gulf crisis, but a role is reserved for the PLO'.²⁴ And President Mubarak stated in July: 'The dialogue with the Palestinians is continuing and does not stop, because the Palestinian issue is not the exclusive province of Arafat or anyone else. It is an issue of the whole people, and Egypt has worked from the outset to ensure that the Palestinian issue is the issue of a people and a state, not a question of refugees'.²⁵

In 1991, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa remarked that 'peace [with Israel] is no luxury, but a need'.²⁶ Egyptian Presidential adviser, Usama al-Baz said that 'most Arabs and Israelis realize that their future security does not lie in the acquisition of sophisticated weapons, ... but only through mutual recognition and coexistence... What poses a

threat is certain policy lines, and not Israel's presence in the heart of the Arab world or the Arab presence around Israel'.²⁷ And in the prelude to the Madrid Conference, al-Baz said that 'talk about a final solution for the Palestinian problem has been postponed for the time being, because the Arab parties have accepted the principle of a gradual solution of the Palestinian issue.'²⁸ Skeptical Israeli analysts could easily conclude, as they have in 1997 from such remarks ²⁹ that long-term Egyptian objectives have been consistent in using diplomacy to bring Israel back to the June 1967 borders and thereafter resolve the question of Palestine through Israel's possible demise either territorially or demographically.

In interviews in April 1992, March 1994, and January 1995 President Mubarak reiterated that pragmatism motivates Egypt's relationship with Israel, that there is 'no alternative to diplomacy in the new world order'; that 'peace was made by Egypt, no one else' and that 'we regret not implementing Camp David... today 75 per cent of the occupied territories are covered by settlements. We had them in our hands without settlements'; and that 'if I cooperate strategically with Israel or anyone else, then it is because I have an interest'.³⁰

Meanwhile, the Egyptian press attacked Israeli leaders and particularly Shamir in the most severest of anti-Semitic terms. The Egyptian paper, al-Musawwar titled an article, 'Shamir -- Hitler number two, must go away before his loathsome crimes finish his own people off'.³¹ A cartoon on the front cover of Ruz al-Yusuf portrayed Shamir in Nazi garb, decorated with both a swastika and the Star of David, raising his right arm in a Nazi salute and holding a club in his left.³²

In the years before the Madrid Conference, President Mubarak, other leading Egyptian politicians and the media constantly criticized Shamir for tardiness, procrastination, foot-dragging, and inflexibility for refusing to consider going to an international conference. Egyptian vituperation did halt at the step of Israeli leaders; during 1991, Israel was variously accused in the Egyptian media of 'trying to harm Egyptian tourism and agriculture, undermining the Egyptian economy by the use of counterfeit dollars and society by drugs or AIDS, planning to deplete Egyptian water reserves, and using the Israel Academic Centre in Cairo for espionage purposes'.³³

With Saddam Hussein's defeat in 1991, Egypt, having taken the lead Arab role in helping to organize the Arab part of the anti-Iraq international coalition, rode a heady crest. Egypt felt it was on the road to vindication with its choice of diplomacy rather than war with Israel. In the period from the end of the Gulf War through the meeting of the Madrid peace conference, Egyptian officials laid out their signposts for a

comprehensive diplomatic solution to the Arab-Israel conflict.

Arab capitals that had never before considered joining the American-atalyzed diplomatic effort joined in the process. But the Gulf War itself, and its diplomatic aftermath witnessed only a temporary reduction in the intensity and frequency of anti-Israeli sentiment emanating from Cairo. Negative sentiment against any peace with Israel poured out after the Madrid conference, this time more frequently from Egyptian Muslim sources: 'Islam does not sanction peace with usurpers of Islamic lands and holy places... submission to the Zionist enemy... selling out the Palestine question ... for the benefit of the Jews'.³⁴ The Egyptian fundamentalist Islamic press was full of hatred for Israel and Jews. Lamenting the Arab race to legitimize relations with Israel, Dr. Ahmad al-Malat, an Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood official, said in December 1994 that despite all the concessions Arabs have made to Israel, 'the "sense of jihad" is still very much alive in the heart of people who have opted for jihad until the Palestinian soil is liberated from the "dirt of the Jews"'. However, these mujahidin (strugglers) are now being accused of "terrorism and extremism" by Arafat, who wants to appease the Jews'.³⁵

Until the election of Yitzhak Rabin in June 1992, the Egyptian media hurled invective after onslaught at Israeli leaders, especially the prime minister. Once Rabin replaced Shamir, the level and rate of invective directed at Israel, at least from official governmental circles and the secular Egyptian press, subsided noticeably. A week after he took office, Rabin visited Cairo, the first meeting that an Egyptian president had with an Israeli prime minister in six years; Mubarak promised a return visit to Israel (which came at Rabin's funeral in November 1995). A whole wave of Israeli politicians subsequently visited Egypt in 1992-93. Heightened Egyptian expectations that Rabin would make critical concessions to the Syrians and to the Palestinians did not materialize; anger resurfaced from official government circles and the Egyptian media. Egyptian impatience turned to angry criticism when Rabin expelled some 400 plus HAMAS activists in December 1992. In 1994 and 1995, Egypt maintained a vigorous advocacy against Israel. In censuring Israel's refusal to sign the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty in 1995, Egyptian Foreign Minister Musa had become a one-man protagonist indicting Israel almost daily for six months prior for its unqualified and uncompromising reluctance to sign the treaty.

Hollowness and anxiety continued to typify Israel's relationship with Egypt. Those feelings did nothing to diminish Israel's strategic preference for keeping Egypt out of any Arab circle contemplating the use of military force against her. Gradually, in public suppositions Israeli leaders articulated an Egyptian policy: Cairo was shaping a policy for

keeping a minimum peace with Israel while seeking to preserve its central spot in the inter-Arab political system. Cairo would encourage Egyptian nationals to embrace Israel only gingerly if at all. In September 1989, the then Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin remarked that President Mubarak had 'managed to prove to the Arab world specifically, but also to the entire world in general, that it is possible to return, and that Egypt can stand its own ground and attain a respectable place in the Arab and African world without giving up the peace agreement or the Israeli Embassy in Cairo and the fact that the Israeli flag flies over that city'.³⁶ Showing his displeasure with Egypt's stinginess in normalizing relations with Israel, the Director General of the Ministry of Defence, Major-General David Ivri, said in April 1992, 'The peace with Egypt is not peace, it is actually a cease-fire that has continued for 15 years; Mubarak has not created any Egyptian interest in Israel's continued existence.'³⁷ Defence Minister Moshe Arens repeated this charge, prompting Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa to reply that such statements 'reflect stiffness of mind, disregard for ongoing world developments, and desire to abort the peace process as a whole'.³⁸

In July 1991, Prime Minister Shamir gave his very negative estimate of relations with Egypt: 'Normalization [with Egypt]', he said,

has sunk into oblivion; there is no normalization now. So many years after signing the peace treaty, there are no normal trade relations with Israel; there is no cultural cooperation; there is no Egyptian tourism to Israel. It is as if Israel and Egypt were not living in peace but were two absolute alien and estranged countries. This situation should come to an end.³⁹

Yitzhak Rabin, certainly more understanding in his assessment, though no less critical of the slowness in Israel's normalization with Egypt, said just three months before his election as prime minister in June 1992: 'I am admittedly disappointed by the lack of satisfactory progress in normalizing ties between two countries at peace; however, I am also aware that the Egyptians have difficulties in promoting normalization before the peace process gathers momentum, especially in the Israeli-Palestinian sphere'.⁴⁰

While 'official' Egypt did what was necessary to sustain a pragmatic and cool relationship with Israel, the Egyptian media was condemnatory of Israeli policies. Once the Oslo agreements were signed, Cairo shifted into a faster gear in pressuring Israel to be more forthcoming with the Palestinians. Gladly, Egypt took up the role of the

major intermediary played by the Norwegians in achieving the Oslo Accords. Egypt became more than the main avenue for discussion for negotiating and implementing agreements; Cairo became the central advocate of the Palestinian view on negotiations with the Israel. At every possible juncture, Cairo accused Israel of tardiness in negotiations. The opening of bilateral and multilateral negotiations between and among Israel and its Arab neighbours after 1991 did little to diminish the barrage of negative epithets showered on Israel and Israelis.

Official Egypt continued to make the distinction between the need to sustain the minimum of substance demanded from the peace treaty relationship with Israel, regularly criticizing Israeli slowness in negotiating concessions for the Palestinians. In the aftermath of the February 1994 killing of Palestinians in Hebron, the official Egyptian media accused the Israeli government and its army of planning and executing the massacre.⁴¹ By the end of 1994, Egypt hosted the tripartite summit of Syria and Saudi Arabia, primarily aimed at slowing the normalization of relations between Israel and other Arabs states. According to Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin, that summit and Egyptian goals reflected the existence of 'mixed feelings' about normalization .⁴²

As the Oslo II Accords were signed in 1995, Egypt kept its lukewarm bilateral relationship with Israel. During that year, whether taking the lead from official Cairo or not, Dr. Yusuf al-Qardawi, an Egyptian Muslim scholar, staunchly advocated boycotting Israeli products. 'Zionist goods may not be bought', he claimed,

Buying them should be deemed one of God's greatest prohibitions, for they are goods that come to us from an enemy who occupies our lands -- al-Aqsa Mosque, Hebron, and other places -- and who seizes and usurps lands. Boycotting them is the duty of all Muslims. Buying their goods is reprehensible.⁴³

Particularly vexing for Cairo was the election of Benjamin Netanyahu as Israel's prime minister in May 1996. Gone from government was Egypt's preferred partner in negotiations, the Israeli Labour party. After the election, especially towards the end of August, Cairo increasingly berated Israel for not implementing the withdrawal from Hebron and then assigned total blame to the Netanyahu government for instigating the Palestinian-Israeli violence that flowed from the opening of the Hasmonean Tunnel in Jerusalem in September 1996. Cairo increasingly became the central axis for influencing Arab attitudes and the pace of Arab normalization with Israel. This was a key

mechanism for Mubarak to assert Egypt's role in inter-Arab politics. While Cairo hosted an economic conference in November 1996, which included Israeli participation, in the days prior to the conference President Mubarak linked the possible convocation of the conference and the level of Israel's participation in it to the Israeli government's conduct in negotiations with the Palestinians. Just prior, not after the conference, Egypt announced the arrest of two individuals (one of whom was an Israeli citizen) on suspicion of spying for Israel. In addition, in the days before the conference opened in early November the Egyptian press hurled epithets against Israel, its policies and leaders. Egypt's media expressed fear of an economic takeover of the region by Israel. Though the conference was held and Israelis participated, bilateral Egyptian-Israeli relations before, during, and after the conference were filled with tension. 44

In late 1996 and early 1997, Egypt continued to mistrust Israeli intentions while Israel continued to chafe under Egyptian criticism from official governmental circles and from various elites. Opinion pieces written in the Israeli and Egyptian press typified those attitudes. Apart from Cairo's increasing willingness to stand behind a hardline Palestinian negotiating attitude towards Israel over the issue of Israel's military withdrawal from Hebron, Israeli commentator Ron Ben-Yishai, writing in November 1996 in *Yediot Aharonot*, noted that,

all the Israeli intelligence bodies are certain that the Egyptians are still committed to peace with Israel -- not out of the love of Zion, but because they wish to preserve strategic ties with the United States and the annual flow of billions of dollars from Washington... Egyptian opposition leaders have been demanding that Israel be dwarfed to its natural size; today it is official policy. Israeli intelligence has reached the conclusion that two important elements of this policy are the Egyptian support for a Palestinian State in the territories and the efforts to neutralize Israel's nuclear abilities.45

In January 1997, editorials in the Israeli daily *Ma'ariv* typified Israeli press consternation about the interfering and nefarious role Egypt was playing in the Hebron negotiations. These editorials called on the Israeli government to 'mark the negative role being played by Egypt in these talks', accused Cairo of 'sowing discord between Israel and the Palestinians', called Cairo's involvement in the negotiations 'arrogant interference' and argued that it was 'unacceptable that every move in the peace process will be conditional on the approval of President

Mubarak'.46

However, Israel's strategic view to use Cairo as a focal point for normalization with the Arab world remained intact, as outlined by Dr. Dore Gold, Netanyahu's foreign policy adviser,

... Israel recognizes Egypt's primary role. For us, any media campaigns with Egypt disturb us and harm the peace process. What we want is to build a positive relationship with Egypt, one that could become a model for other countries in the region, so that the peace process can be broadened. The worst thing that could happen is for the [Israeli] people to see the relationship with Egypt deteriorating. We do not want this to happen.⁴⁷

With the Hebron agreement finalized in mid-January 1997, Cairo radio proudly noted that the 'signing of this agreement undoubtedly highlights the importance of Egypt's role and the efforts President Husni Mubarak has been making to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East'.⁴⁸ Obviously Cairo relishes being the role model that Israel would like in the process of normalization, however in neither the content nor tone which Egypt demonstrates.

CONCLUSIONS AND REPEATED AXIOMS

After the October 1973 War, Egypt and Israel took the major step to remove war as a political and strategic option with the other. But in signing the March 1979 Peace Treaty, respective negative attitudes of each other have changed much more slowly. Deeply rooted skepticism of the other's intentions have only mildly dissipated. Israel's treaty with Egypt has not brought the normalization Israelis wanted; many Egyptians still do not accept Israel as a reality. But the Egyptian-Israeli treaty relationship based upon direct negotiations with American mediation opened the critical door to the Israel-PLO mutual recognition of September 1993 and the Jordanian-Israeli treaty in October 1994. Significantly for Israel, Sadat's policies and those pursued by Mubarak vis-à-vis Israel have destroyed the 'Israel hatred consensus' which had uniformly existed in the Arab world. No matter how difficult Israeli-Palestinian negotiations may be in the future or how angry Egypt is with Israel and vice-versa on a bilateral matter, the mode of communication is no longer all-out struggle and war, but still only angry verbal exchanges.

On the macro-level, there was an Arab-Israeli conflict based solely on armed struggle. For some Middle Eastern states and

organizations, there still remains an uncompromising conflict with Israel; for others it is no longer a conflict but a matter of defining respective national relationships with Israel and defining Israel's future role in the Middle East. Sadat broke the uniform Arab consensus of isolating Israel. A quarter century after the October War, there are relatively frequent high-level exchanges between Arab and Israeli politicians and businessmen. Israeli tourists are found in numerous Arab capitals; Israeli and Arab academics and artists exchange visits and no longer meet just at neutral sites. Tensions are reduced over specific political issues and have in many cases generated a common Arab-Israeli cause towards curbing state-sponsored terrorism or creating lucrative and joint commercial ventures. The conferences in Amman, Cairo, and Casablanca have all aimed at developing economic foci and cooperative interchange between Arab, Israeli, and other businessmen. Today's discussion is not about saving an Egyptian army from annihilation or about the return of Israeli POWs; today's discussion is not about an Arab boycott of Israel, but how fast economic normalization with Israel should proceed.

On the micro-level, from the mind and from the words of 'official Egypt', Israel has done too little too slowly for the recognition that Sadat gave to Israel. Israel's pace in returning the territories taken in the June 1967 War and its policies towards the Palestinians, other Arabs, and in creating settlements in the West Bank, have increased Egyptian irritation towards Israel. Neither the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty nor normalization as defined by 'official Cairo' or the media have greatly altered negative views of Israel or Israelis. An impression exists that there is some lessening in verbal attacks against Jews and Zionism, at least in terms of frequency. In disagreements between Israel and Arab sides over specific issues in Arab-Israeli negotiations, Egypt has willingly defended Arab positions. In part, Cairo has used the reinvigorated Arab-Israeli negotiating peace process to revalidate its credentials as the champion of 'Arab rights'. For example, as engaged defender of the Palestinian view in negotiations over the 1997 Hebron withdrawal agreement or as a 'bridge', messenger service, or interlocutor in negotiations between Israel and Syria, Egypt sustains the same positions advocated by Anwar Sadat prior to and after the October 1973 War: Israel's return of all the 1967 territories and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State.

Israelis remain highly disappointed that a change in Egyptian attitudes towards them has fallen significantly short of what were initially unrealistic expectations. Egyptian recognition did not bring the normalized relations that Israelis wanted. Likewise, the process of negotiations over tangible assets and their return has not significantly altered Egypt's emotional attitudes towards Israel and Israelis. Until

'official Cairo' and especially the print media make a concerted and systematic effort to tone down verbal attacks against Israel, strain and anxiety will remain integral to the relationship.

Israelis are slowly coming to the unwanted but reluctantly accepted realization that their relationship with Egypt will not be like the United States enjoys with Canada. Israelis may have to realize that what criticism they hear and read from Cairo, while highly objectionable and contrary to the spirit of normalization, may be necessary for the political management of Egyptian domestic constituencies. In the absence of war for a quarter century between Israel and Egypt, both countries are learning to administer core ingredients of mistrust and tension that still characterize their relationship.

CHARACTERISTIC AXIOMS OVER THE LAST QUARTER CENTURY

Talks, negotiations, and agreements held on the official level between Israel and its Arab neighbours, including Egypt do not change necessarily or automatically negative emotional feelings and attitudes which Arabs, including Egyptians, may have for Israel. A signature does not change feelings. Israelis did not understand that the Egyptian-Israeli treaty was an interim agreement for Egypt's broader goal of a comprehensive peace -- which Cairo read as full Israeli withdrawal from the 1967 territories and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital.

Israel continues to feel that Egypt is inattentive to the realities of the Middle East, where there are still Arab and other Middle Eastern states interested in Israel's destruction and therefore Israel must still wield levers of power.

Israel wrongly expects that concessions on bilateral procedures or substance will change Arab attitudes positively towards Israel and Israelis. Returning tangible assets did not result in attitudinal changes. Mutual mistrust and Israel's profound disappointment with what it saw as meager Egyptian attitudinal shifts, left the bilateral atmosphere clouded by anger and recrimination. No guarantee exists that an exchange of tangible assets will see a corresponding change in psychological attitudes.

Israeli expectations remain too high. Israelis believe(d) that a separate peace with Egypt would force a logical conclusion of normal diplomatic relations. They believe(d) that detailed supervision and control of their relations with neighbours through monitors, mechanisms of enforcement, guarantees, and assurances will generate changes in attitudes towards Israel, Israelis, Jews, Zionism, the presence of a

Jewish State in the middle of the Muslim world.

On the formal level the treaty is meticulously preserved, but sharp accusations through the media are the norm of normalization.

A measure of Israeli skepticism remains: Is it Peace or Piece? After 18 years with a peace treaty with Egypt, Israelis are still skeptical about Egypt's long-term intentions, and remain cautious about long-term Egyptian objectives. One view holds that Egypt is pursuing a policy of 'phases', reducing Israel to its size of 1967, keeping relentless pressure on Israel to reduce its territory, allow the Palestinians to develop a state, and at some point in the next century, it will be possible for the Arab world not to have peace with Israel, but a piece of Israel.

Meaning of normalization, or its importance with Egypt has become bifurcated in the minds of Israelis. Attitudes of the general public differ significantly from the Israeli military. In the years after 1979, Israel paid very close attention to the level of normalization with Egypt. Would the Egyptian-Israeli treaty hold? As Israel has broadened its relations with other Arab states, the general public seems not to pay the same intense attention to Egypt as it did when Egypt was the only country on non-war terms. Especially after the 1991 Gulf War and the beginning of the Madrid process, and all the more so after 1993, with the signing of the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO, Israelis in general did not take the temperature of the Egyptian-Israeli relationship as frequently as they did in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, the Israeli military remains keenly attuned to evaluating Egyptian military capabilities and intentions, and the importance of Cairo staying out of a potential Arab war coalition against Israel.

Progress on other Arab-Israeli negotiation fronts does not guarantee warmer Egyptian attitudes towards Israel. Perhaps to the contrary, progress on other tracks has seen Egypt more stringent in a consistently relentless policy aimed at Israel's full withdrawal from all the territories won in the June 1967 War. And with various negotiations with Israel completed (Jordan) or in various stages of movement (Palestinians, Syria, and Lebanon) Egypt exerts efforts to limit the manner, breadth, and pace of real normalization with Israel.

As the final status talks draw closer and the clock goes on ticking, one might expect even tenser times to come in the Egyptian-Israeli relationship. In the hypothetical environment, what will Cairo do if the PLO, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan are in treaty relationships with Israel? Will Cairo continue to fault Israel for doing less than it promised? But if negotiations do not transpire between Israel and other Arab states, or the PLO-Israeli negotiations continue to go like a car with only 4 of 8

cylinders working, Egypt will be able to keep its level of normalization ow.

Israeli leaders believe that when Egypt 'rides' the Palestinian horse politically, it is merely reflecting Egypt's real negative intentions towards Israel. For a quarter century, Egypt's verbal war with Israel has not appreciatively dissipated; normalization has been systematically cool or cold. For Egypt, normalization means not having the Egyptian-Israeli relationship deteriorate to something beyond non-war. Among some in the Israeli establishment there is a belief that Egypt's peace with Israel is a sophisticated 'Trojan Horse'.

President Mubarak has evolved his policies into a political synthesis from both Sadat and Nasser. Vis-à-vis Israel, that has meant supporting the mechanism of diplomacy while insisting on Egypt's leadership role in inter-Arab affairs.

Significant regional and international changes affecting the political landscape of the Middle East have not greatly effected Egypt's attitude towards Israel or Israeli attitudes towards Egypt. Neither the demise of the Soviet Union, nor end of the Cold War in the Middle East, nor the Gulf War, nor even expansion of Arab-Israeli talks have altered attitudes or expectations of the other.

Egyptian opinion-makers have slowly come to the conclusion that there is a difference in policy options between Likud and Labour. However, the presence of the Labour party in office does not necessarily mean that shrill accusations against Israel have been or will be halted.

American support for Egypt has not waned because Cairo remains tough on Israel. Egypt has learned that if it engages in an active fashion in prodding Arab states and the PLO to keep active negotiations with Israel going, then Washington will not pressurize it to tone down the antagonistic verbal assaults sent officially and unofficially in Israel's direction. Washington has not exhorted Egypt sufficiently to have Cairo change its public demeanour in opposing Israeli policies which it finds objectionable. And there is no apparent interest or concerted effort on the part of the U.S. to admonish or punish Egypt for using harsh language against Israel.

U.S.-Egyptian relations -- Anwar Sadat intruded himself and Egypt strategically between the special U.S.-Israeli relationship. Washington made its developing and positive relations with Egypt a stepping stone to better relations with the moderate Arab states, Camp David and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty notwithstanding. Though Egypt was Washington's most trusted Arab ally for more than two decades, that special relationship is losing its lustre as other Arab states

and the Palestinians establish positive and strategic relations with the U.S. Despite a quarter-century of negotiations with Israel, Egypt retains resentment towards Washington because of its special relationship with Israel.

There is an emerging Israeli-Egyptian competition for leadership in the Middle East. Cairo does not want to lose the role or opportunity to remain at the forefront of regional inter-Arab politics and a bridge, if not the bridge for Israeli entry and acceptance in the region. Israelis for their part want to by-pass Cairo's desired gate-keeper or bridging role.

NOTES

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3. Author's interview with Abd al-Halim Khaddarn, 18 July 1993, Damascus.

4. Author's interview with Nabil al-Araby, 26 February 1993, Atlanta, Georgia.

5. Study Group on 'Lessons Learned From Arab-Israeli Negotiations', Remarks by Joseph Sisco and Roy Atherton (participants in Secretary of State Kissinger's 1973-76 'Shuttle Diplomacy'), United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C., 3 April 1991.

6. Edward R. F. Sheehan, *The Arabs, Israelis, and Kissinger: A Secret History of American Diplomacy in the Middle East*, New York, 1976, p.37.

7. Author's interview with General Muhammad Abd al-Ghani al-Gamasy, Chief of Operations of the Egyptian Armed Forces during the October 1973 War, 10 November 1992, Heliopolis, Egypt.

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10. Mohammed Ibrahim Kamel, *The Camp David Accords*, New York,

1986, pp.58-62.

11. Akhbar al-Yaum, 18 and 27 March 1978, or as quoted in FBIS-MENA, 22 and 31 March 1978 respectively.

12. Al-Jumhuriyah, 16 March 1978, or as quoted in FBIS-MENA, 17 March 1978.

13. Colin Legum, Haim Shaked, Daniel Dishon, eds, MECS, Vol.IV, 1979-80, pp. 115-16. For the Tuhami interview with Muscat's, al-Nahda, see as published by the Middle East News Agency (MENA), Cairo, 5 April 1980 and quoted in this MECS, P. 116.

14. Yediot Aharonot, 26 March 1980.

15. MECS, Vol.V, 1980-81, p.156.

16. Interview with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in al-Tadamun, 5 November 1983, as quoted from MECS, Volume VHI, 1983-84, pp.380-81. For a similar attitude expressed by Mubarak, see his interview in al-Ra'i al-Amm, 8 October 1986.

17. Interview with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, al-Ittihad (Abu Dhabi), 12 December 1987, as quoted in FBIS-NESA, 15 December 1987.

18. See al-Akhbar, 20 February and 8 April 1986.

19. Ibid., 25 November 1987.

20. Signed editorial by Muhammad al-Hayawan, al-Jumhuriyah, 3 September 1986.

21. See Itamar Rabinovich and Haim Shaked (eds), MECS, Vol.XI, 1987, p.351.

22. Al-Akhbar, 16 December 1987 and al-Ahram, 20 December 1987 as quoted from MECS, Vol. XI, 1987, p.351.

23. See Yediot Aharonot, 24 March 1989.

24. Davar, 15 May 1991, p.7.

25. Al-Hayat (London), 16 July 1991, p.5 as quoted in FBIS-NESA, 18 July 1991, p.8.

26. See Ami Ayalon, ed., MECS, Vol. XV, 1991, p.366.
27. Davar, 17 May 1991, p.14.
28. Remarks by Usama al-Baz, MENA, 26 July 1991 as quoted in FBIS-NESA, 5 August 1991.
29. See Yediot Aharonot (Sabbath supplement), 22 November 1996.
30. Remarks by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak as quoted from Egypt Radio Network, 30 April 1992, FBIS-NESA, 1 May 1992; quoted from MENA, 6 March 1994, by FBIS-NESA, 7 March 1994; Egypt Radio Network, 31 January 1995, as quoted in FBIS-NESA, 31 January 1995.
31. Al-Musawwar, 14 April 1989, as quoted in MECS, Vol.XIII, 1989, p.321.
32. MECS, Vol. XIII, 1989, p.321.
33. Ibid., Voi.XV, 1991, p.366.
34. Ibid., p.367.
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37. Jerusalem Post, 14 April 1992.
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39. Remarks by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, as quoted from Kol Israel, 29 July 1991, FBIS-NESA, 29 July 1991.
40. Davar (Passover Supplement), 17 April 1992.
41. See Ami Ayalon and Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, eds, MECS, Vol.XVIII, 1994, p.278.
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43. Al-Sbarq (Doha), 25 August 1995, p.10, as quoted in FBIS-NESA, 14

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44. See Ma'ariv, 11 November 1996.

45. Yediot Aharonot (Sabbath supplement), 22 November 1996.

46. Ma'ariv, 5, 12 January 1997. See for examples, Yediot Aharonot, 17 November 1996; Hatzofe, 16 December 1996; Ha'aretz, 5 January 1997.

47. Remarks by Dore Gold, 4 October 1996, taken from MBC (London), as quoted in FBIS-NESA, 4 October 1996.

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