

Sadat Maneuvers For Room Before Visit To U.S.

Egypt's President Anwar Sadat, on the eve of his scheduled visit to Washington on April 5-6, is maneuvering for his political existence by lining up support in Western Europe and the USSR for an expected bitter confrontation with the Carter Administration.

In addition, in a series of statements Sadat has indicated that he cannot endorse the provocative Carter conception of "peace," outlined in a scattered manner by Carter since a press conference in early March. First, Sadat said in a *Business Week* interview, published this week, that if there is no peace settlement this year, he will blame Carter, and not the Israelis. "Frankly, my people will blame the U.S., not Israel... They will blame the U.S. because it did not exert sufficient effort to reach a settlement while it could."

Then, in a televised interview with CBS, Sadat publicly castigated the Carter proposal to establish "defensible borders" for Israel outside the 1967 lines, a proposal that is unacceptable to the Arabs because it would legitimize Israeli occupation of Arab land. "It is a question of sovereignty," said Sadat.

The remarks by Sadat, who is not known for his opposition to the U.S., reflect a growing consensus within Egypt that Sadat's so-called "American connection" has not paid off. From the Egyptian military and from the left and students, tremendous pressure is building on the Egyptian leader to demonstrate that his continued pleas to the Arabs to trust in the U.S. have been worthwhile. A former editor of Egypt's largest daily newspaper *Al Ahram*, Mohamed H. Heykal, said today that the Arabs cannot rely on the U.S. to bring about peace, and said that Carter was trying to "dupe the Arabs."

On the international level, Sadat is seeking to gain allies for his expected showdown with Carter and NSC Director Zbigniew Brzezinski next week. Before coming to the U.S., Sadat is visiting both Bonn and Paris, stressing

to the Europeans the necessity to recognize the PLO in spite of U.S. and Israeli pressure. At a press conference in Bonn today, Sadat — whose economic crisis at home has pushed Egypt to the brink of total collapse — said that Europe and the Arabs must work together for a world economic revival, and called for the establishment of a Mediterranean "zone of peace." West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt responded to Sadat by adding that he would favor the convening of a Geneva Peace Conference in 1977.

In addition, Egypt and the USSR signed a trade agreement this week that represents a 14 percent increase of Egypt-Soviet trade in 1976. There are certain signs of a warming up of Egyptian-Soviet relations, indicated by Sadat's announcement that the USSR has agreed to supply Egypt with 50 Mig fighters that had been sent to the Soviet Union for repairs and new engines last year.

But the crucial question is whether Carter will continue his stated aim of forcing Sadat to accede to the demands of U.S. policy in the region, including to break Egypt's ties with the Palestine Liberation Organization. A State Department official said this week that although the demands that would be placed on Sadat might not set too well in Cairo, "We're not afraid that Sadat is going to be overthrown. He might be, but I doubt it." He said that Sadat's vehement opposition to the shape of Carter's Middle East policy was "just posturing."

"When they get behind closed doors, let their hair down, press the flesh, look at the eyeballs — then we'll know what the Egyptians really think," he said. "You have to scrape off the layer of posturing."

A West German columnist was more blunt. He noted that Sadat has been unable to discipline the PLO to follow Washington's dictates, and asked: "Do we need Sadat? The answer is no."

Israeli Hawks Brandish Preemptive Strike Threat

Key Israeli press last week threatened Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and allied Arab states with an Israeli preemptive first strike. Ze'ev Schiff, Israel's leading military correspondent and an acknowledged conduit for the country's warhawk faction led by former Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and current Defense Minister Shimon Peres, wrote in the daily *Ha'aretz*: "Israel has the moral duty

to take the initiative to attack first, from the moment that it becomes clear that Arabs are preparing to do it." Citing "Israeli intelligence reports" about Arab mobilizations, Schiff concluded, "The Arabs... court the risk of seeing themselves preempted." (See below).

Coming in the context of increased signs of National Security Council instigated terror in the region, the calls

for a preemptive strike in Israel are aimed particularly at Egypt — to force it to break with the Palestine Liberation Organization and accede to New York banks economic demands — and Saudi Arabia which has refused to participate in a bailout of the International Monetary Fund.

Then, in an act of hostility to the Arab nations, Israeli aircraft yesterday provided air support for the armed militias of Lebanese Christian commander Camille Chamoun, who is now engaged in a campaign to liquidate the Palestinians in the south of Lebanon. The Israeli actions are a dangerous action against Syrian peacekeeping forces in Lebanon in particular, who have refrained from going south to avoid incurring an Israeli strike against Damascus as threatened by Israeli Defense Minister Shimon Peres a month ago.

Dayan and his allies, asserts a former Israeli parliamentarian (see below), are trying to “create a mood” that Israel’s survival is in jeopardy and that war preparation must begin. According to that source, Dayan is preparing a coup d’état against Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin much like the coup Dayan carried out against former Prime Minister Levi Eshkol that opened the way for the June, 1967 Middle East war. Dayan is now threatening to quit Rabin’s Labour Party and form an alliance with pro-war Generals Ariel Sharon and Ezer Weizman and with the ultra-rightist Likud opposition bloc if the Labour Party does not change its electoral platform and drop the sections calling for an Israeli withdrawal from the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Prime Minister Rabin personally issued an order for an immediate halt to the preemptive strike threats in the press, while government officials close to Rabin are letting it be known that there is merit in recent Arab peace proposals and that Israel must respond with proposals of its own. The *Christian Science Monitor* reports that Rabin is particularly open to the Saudis, who are viewed favorably because of their potential role in funding a regional economic development program and stabilizing the region.

On March 28, the government-linked *Jerusalem Post* editorially attacked Dayan for issuing an “ultimatum” to the Labour Party to drop its pro-peace policies and reported that Rabin is resisting Dayan’s demands. The newspaper *Davar*, associated with the government-allied Histadrut labor confederation, accused the *Ha’aretz* for playing up the “Arab war threat” rumors unnecessarily.

‘It Is The Season Of The Generals’

The following is an interview with a former member of the Israeli Knesset (Parliament):

Q: What do you make of the preemptive strike talk coming out of Israel?

A: Israel is a nation of whiners. They always think they are in great danger. They think the world is out to annihilate them. They fear Carter and they yearn for Kissinger like a security blanket. Carter said, You must evacuate

all the territories, and the Israelis get worried. They don’t care about whether he said eight years or 800. All they care about is the territories. Israel is not interested in peace.

The present situation is warped because of the election. Peres and Dayan are behind the trouble. They and others want to depict Rabin as a great nebbish, a nothing, a failure. They say that he came back from the U.S. with nothing.

Q: So you see a conspiracy against Rabin by the hawks?

A: Of course. The military hawks are moving to undercut Rabin. Rabin is crazy and stupid, as I have told you, but he is Israel’s only authentic dove. Those moving against him are Sharon, Dayan, Ezer Weizmann. It is the season of the generals. What is bad is that Gen. Tal, who is sort of a dove and a real intellectual, is talking about a preemptive strike on the grounds that in three years the Arabs will have become superior and Israel will have no chance.

What works against this is that there is no real military argument for a preemptive strike. Israel has a 21-day supply of military arms, not just nine days as previously, and this gives some assurance. Even Tal admits that Israel could win any war in five days.

My feeling is that there will be no preemptive strike, at least until May 17, the elections. Then there may be real trouble.

Q: Can Yadin, leader of the Democratic Movement for Change, join Dayan and Begin?

A: No. Yadin will not go with Begin. He cannot. Begin has no credibility. Begin is being pressured to withdraw from the race, to let someone else head the opposition Likud bloc. Then, maybe Yadin will join. But watch Shmuel Tamir; he is the real leader of the outfit.

You know, Dayan is knocking at Begin’s door daily. But there is a problem. Dayan is a non-person, a liability. He is a lonely man.

Of course, *Ha’aretz* likes Dayan. That newspaper is the mouthpiece of Peres and Dayan. It is no accident that that is the newspaper that watergated Rabin and is now pushing the preemptive strike line. The staff of the paper is hugely pro-Dayan. The publisher of the paper, Shoken, is the son of the man who 15 years ago took in six of eight Dayanists into the paper, and they have remained loyal to Dayan ever since.

Q: Will there be a coup as in 1967?

A: No, I doubt it. It can’t happen now. If Rabin reveals himself, if he shows his true character, a real program, and offers far-reaching concessions, his popularity will rise dramatically.

The hawks cannot force Rabin into making a preemptive strike before the elections. But they can create a mood, however, in the population. The problem is that Rabin is stupid, really stupid. He insists like a bulldog on the Labour Party platform that calls for withdrawal from the occupied territories, including the West Bank, which is the reason that Dayan is quitting the party. But Rabin won’t go any farther than that.

Israeli Chief Of Staff:

'I Do Not Rule Out A Preemptive War'

The following is an interview with Israeli Chief of Staff Mordechai Gur broadcast Jan. 16 by the Israel Defense Forces:

Q: Is there a realistic possibility of a preemptive strike?

A: You must certainly remember that immediately after I was appointed Chief of Staff I said at one meeting that the option of a preemptive war or of a preemptive strike remained at the disposal of the State of Israel as it had been in the past. I said this because in the wake of the Yom Kippur war and as a consequence of its, several assumptions developed to the effect that in the new political situation that option was no longer open to the state.

I thought that assumption was wrong. A single case, like the Yom Kippur war, however sad and difficult it was, cannot be used for making inferences about the future of the State of Israel. My assumption is that the stronger the army is, the greater our freedom of political maneuver will be. When I say the freedom of political maneuver is greater, this also includes the capability of making the first strike and the capability of setting out on a preventive war...

We ourselves are in a state of preparedness for war. This is not merely a slogan. It is an operational fact, because the Arabs capable of starting a war at any time.

Israel In Mood For Preemptive Strike

The following is an interview with a spokesman of the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.:

Q: Who is behind the preemptive strike talk coming out of Israel these days?

A: The talk about the need for a preemptive strike reflects a certain mood, a certain fear in Israel that, given the lessons of the Yom Kippur war, Israel should not neglect war preparations and always be aware that despite efforts to make peace, war is always an option to be

ready for. There is a definite feeling in Israel that the current political process — the elections, the talk about a settlement — should not prevent Israel from taking measures in preparation for a first strike.

Gen. Tal, an advisor to the Minister of Defense, is the one who triggered the whole thing off. Tal is interesting. He's definitely dovish, and he's an outsider, not particularly close to anyone — not to Peres either. His ideas don't reflect anyone but himself. So, if he expresses some concern over the need for a preemptive strike, you can be sure that the base of support for the thing is broad.

Rabin's call for a stoppage of newspaper coverage of the thing is due only to the fact that he might have felt that the whole issue is not really propitious at this time, what with elections coming up. In any case, Rabin and his calls for a halt can't influence anyone.

There Are A Thousand Scenarios For A Mideast War

The following is an interview with a State Dept. official:

Q: How do you evaluate the talk in Israel of the need for a preemptive strike?

A: The Israelis are manic-depressive. They panic easily. But in the end, the real power rests with Rabin, at least until the May 17 election. Rabin is in hot water, of course, with the suicide of Housing Minister Ofer, the attempt by Peres to win the Labour Party nomination, the illegal bank account in the U.S., and so forth. But nonetheless, it is required that the Prime Minister give the order for a preemptive strike. No matter how mean the fight gets domestically, and it gets pretty rough in the trenches, everybody in Israel believes in the system. Ultimately, Rabin will determine things, and I don't think there can be a coup. After May, however, and the elections, well — who knows? There are a thousand scenarios.

Arab Revenge For Entebbe On NSC Agenda

This week, a line clearly emerged in the U.S. press and elsewhere pinpointing the Middle East as a strategic target of a major "terrorist incident." Making public National Security Council scripts for terror-counter-terror, State Department expert Douglas Heck announced in the *Washington Post* March 29: "We're overdue for another (Arab terrorist) episode in retaliation for Entebbe. I expected it before now."

The *Washington Post* indicated that such a retaliation was likely to occur over the recently announced secret trial in Israel against five alleged Palestinian terrorists, jailed in Israel for the past year, who are charged with trying to shoot down an El Al passenger plane in Kenya. Three of the prisoners are reportedly members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The trial is

thus a timely pretext for terrorist reprisals likely to be directed by Wadi Haddad, an operative of Interpol and Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Policy Studies, who is directly tied to the two NATO-controlled gangs, the Baader Meinhoff and the Japanese Red Army.

Looking forward to such a contingency, the Israeli Foreign Ministry this week made known its "regret that the international community has so far failed to find an efficient way to combat the Palestinian terror organizations."

The real target of any new Arab terror, however, is not the Israelis but the Arab nations, particularly Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Max Kampelman, executive director of the Committee on the Present Danger, identified Saudi Arabia and Egypt as the Arab states whose governments