



# Jimmy Carter's Middle East Legacies

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## Carter's Personal and Foreign Policy Pathology

Jimmy Carter is the longest surviving former president in American history. As the thirty-ninth president, he held office from 1977–81. Among the fourteen American presidents since the end of World War II, Carter is one of four (Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Trump) who came to office with limited foreign policy experience. When Carter entered the White House, he knew less about international affairs than perhaps any president since Calvin Coolidge (1923–29). To his credit, however, he was highly adept at grasping detail and understanding intricate operational plans; he read voraciously and absorbed copious amounts of information easily. Unfortunately, Carter often saw big issues in black and white. He had the crisp mind of an engineer and saw most projects as having a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Carter possessed a self-confidence that bordered on self-righteousness. According to Mark Siegel, “Carter was very sure of his decisions; he was right, and people were wrong. Carter believed that he was going to do the moral thing and if you disagreed [with] it, then you were immoral.”<sup>1</sup> In 1984, the former president told an interviewer, “I did what I thought was best for the country, and I didn't worry much about the domestic political consequences. I could overcome

them.”<sup>2</sup> Carter’s longtime domestic affairs adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, noted that Carter had an “overriding guiding principle of presidential governance to do the things that had to be done, in the belief that since he was doing the right thing, he would ultimately be rewarded by the American people with another term.”<sup>3</sup> Eizenstat wrote, “Carter felt that foreign policy in general, and the Middle East in particular, should be insulated from domestic politics.”<sup>4</sup> According to one of his biographers, Peter Bourne, Carter “tended to view self-serving constituency groups as threatening to distract him from what he believed was the right thing for the country. In his dealings with Congress, he assumed that as reasonable people, if they understood his approach, he would earn their respect.”<sup>5</sup>

When he took office, “Carter did not have a world view, especially of the Soviets,” explained Mark Bermant, an NSC staffer at that time.” He had a short-term view of what he wanted; the Soviets were doing things that should have evoked a much sharper response from the President.”<sup>6</sup> Robert Pastor, who worked with me at the Carter Presidential Center in the early 1980s and was on Carter’s National Security Council (NSC) staff as lead Latin American affairs adviser, categorized Carter’s foreign policy as lacking an overarching view, calling it, “Ready, Shoot, Aim.” As Carter campaigned for office, he developed certain ideas about the world and notably brought to his post his personal preferences, which were dominated by his moral righteousness, the notion of doing good, equality for the many, and resolving disputes. Quite quickly his foreign policy took on the characteristic of a “moral crusade.” He was open to a variety of views that would influence his approach to foreign policy, which allowed him to “mediate” between the different ideas presented to him. In so doing, he essentially rejected former Secretary of State Kissinger’s monopoly on foreign policy making. This reinforced his preference for finding the middle ground on multiple issues. He limited arms sales as an instrument of US foreign policy (with exceptions made to Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and other states during his term in office); to curtail the influence of the CIA; to be less secretive in policy making, which meant being more public in announcing new variations of policy such as stating to Israel in March 1977 that it “could have defensible borders” but also that it should return to almost the pre-June 1967 borders; and to promote human rights by opposing dictators and helping the poor across the world.<sup>7</sup>

Once Carter was set on a particular idea, he did not cease to advocate for it. His formula for resolving the Arab–Israel conflict was rooted in several distinct goals: finding a comprehensive resolution—not through bilateral agreements but rather evolving from a peace conference; providing political rights to the Palestinians; and Israeli withdrawal from territories it secured in the June 1967 War. He continued to trumpet these ideas for the remainder of his life, whether the political reality in the Middle East allowed them to be implemented or not. While

running for office, Carter adopted this roadmap as his outline for the resolution of the conflict. It had come directly from Zbigniew Brzezinski, his national security adviser, who was the author of the December 1975 Brookings Institute report entitled “Toward Peace in the Middle East.”<sup>8</sup> Brzezinski was emphatic: “It shaped my view; I shaped it; I pushed for a particularly broad strategy approach.”<sup>9</sup> Carter adopted the Brookings report as his administration’s roadmap. For example, the report called for a specific role for the Palestinians; the concept of trading land for peace in stages to the June 5, 1967, borders; and the rejection of a step-by-step diplomatic approach in favor of a comprehensive approach. It was not until after Anwar Sadat’s unexpected visit to Jerusalem in November 1977 that the Carter administration, particularly Brzezinski, began to realize that such a wide-ranging approach was fast giving way to budding Egyptian–Israeli bilateralism. Even then, Brzezinski tasked his national security staff with finding a way to channel Begin’s limited proposed autonomy/self-rule for the Palestinians into the evolution of a Palestinian entity or state.

Throughout 1978, at the Camp David negotiations until the end of his administration and afterward, Carter stayed true to these four premises. After meeting with President Hafez Assad of Syria in March 1987 on one of our three trips to the Middle East in the 1980s, Carter stated at a press conference at the Damascus Sheraton that Assad said that “he would go to a properly structured international conference,” which he did not say in our meeting. On the way to the airport to continue on to Israel, I said to Carter, “Assad did not say that to us in our meeting,” to which he replied, “I know, but what is Assad going to do —go to a press conference and refute what I said?” Carter did something similar two decades later. In his 2006 book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, he wrote that UN Resolution 242 “required” or “mandated” Israeli withdrawal, when in fact the resolution spoke about “a withdrawal.” Carter had clear views on process and substance and did not waver from them, even if what he said was inaccurate.

On many occasions, Carter acknowledged to me and to others, especially when we had meetings with Middle East scholars at Tel Aviv University or the University of Jordan, that while he had some knowledge of the Middle East from rigorous bible study and teaching, he was not familiar with the region’s political history. He lacked an appreciation of the vibrancy and depth of local political cultures and ideologies, and he failed to understand the difference between Arab leaders or the competition that was constantly ongoing between them. As hard as Carter tried to have them conform to his idea of a comprehensive peace achieved at an international conference, none of those he squired—Arafat (PLO), Assad (Syria), Hussein (Jordan), Sadat (Egypt), or Rabin and Begin (Israel)—agreed to the procedures for which he persistently advocated. All refused to cede national decision making to any other party,

including Carter. Obviously, they all had national ideologies along with real and imagined aspirational borders about which they were not willing to compromise.

Carter failed to appreciate that each Middle Eastern leader ascended to rule over his organization or people by playing hardball with adversaries. He dismissed the importance of all local issues and refused to allow them to interfere with his objective of generating a comprehensive solution for Middle East peace. Carter would often take a precisely negotiated diplomatic concept and reshape it in his own words. He did not comprehend the depth of hatred harbored by the PLO for King Hussein, by Assad for the PLO, or by the PLO and Israel for each other. Carter mistakenly believed that if the president of the United States offered his patronage, time, logic, and rewards, sides to the conflict could negotiate a contractual understanding. He focused on achieving a series of objectives: finding acceptable PLO representation to negotiations; having the PLO accept UNSC 242; inviting the Soviet Union to co-convene a Middle East conference; and establishing Israel's willingness to stop building settlements and withdraw from the West Bank, Jerusalem, or other territories. While he realized that the Palestinian refugee question was a political issue to be resolved, he did not grasp the consequences of their efforts to return to pre-1967 Israel borders. In his meeting with Assad in Geneva in May 1977, when the Syrian leader mentioned that Palestinian refugees would need to return to Israel proper as part of the solution to the conflict, Carter told him, "I have to look into this; this is the first time it is being raised."<sup>10</sup>

Carter failed to see why Sadat and Israeli leaders were so keenly opposed to an international conference, preferring instead to engage in bilateral negotiations in which outcomes would likely be known in advance. Both remained vigorously opposed to inviting Moscow to participate in any process of negotiation. Carter wholeheartedly embraced Sadat as a great statesman, a person he often said was the most impressive world leader he had ever met—"a brother." But what Carter did not fully understand from the moment he met Sadat in Washington in April 1977 was that the Egyptian president was not going to let anything block him from attaining his objective of having Sinai returned to Egyptian sovereignty. That had been Sadat's objective all along and was at the core of his decision to attack Israel in October 1973. What Carter and his White House team did not realize was that Sadat was the spark plug that jumped started the diplomatic car whenever the engine idled or went dead. Carter and Begin certainly played their parts in achieving agreements between Israel and Egypt, but Sadat was the essential catalyst, seeking Arab endorsement of his negotiations with Israel and the support of the Palestinians. Yet Sadat had his breaking point. He was willing to ignore Arab objections to his independent course and to his making a separate peace—all the while providing public endorsement for

the achievement of Palestinian political rights, but still primarily promoting Egyptian national interests.

### **Carter, Brzezinski, and Other Policy Advisers**

According to Robert Strauss, who was deeply involved in Carter's 1976 and 1980 election campaigns, "Carter ran as an outsider, and the great mistake he made was he wanted to stay an outsider."<sup>11</sup> The former president relied upon those who helped elect him to help him govern. But his Georgia loyalists lacked the openness or competence to work with Washington decision-makers. According to Madeleine Albright and Frank Moore—White House operatives working with Congress—the administration suffered from inexperience, understaffing, too many pieces of legislation being sent to the Hill too quickly, and the hiring of secretaries over staff people, at least in the first six months.<sup>12</sup>

Carter allowed or encouraged one person, Zbigniew Brzezinski, his national security adviser, to shape his world view, including, of course, his understanding of the Middle East. Brzezinski was inclined to favor the use of force in international affairs, while Secretary of State Cyrus Vance believed that most matters should be negotiated or handled diplomatically. As a former Columbia professor who was deeply immersed in Soviet studies, Brzezinski persuaded Carter never to trust Soviet intentions and not to be overly concerned about an Arab oil embargo like the one imposed in the immediate aftermath of the October 1973 Yom Kippur War.

It made sense to Carter that another oil embargo had to be avoided lest prices be driven higher, which would cause economic distress to the American electorate, and that would hurt his prospects for reelection. To avoid alienating Arab oil-producing interests (Brzezinski meant primarily Saudi Arabia), Carter vigorously advocated for a resolution to the Palestinian issue, which he considered a top regional priority for Riyadh and other Persian Gulf monarchies.<sup>13</sup> The irony was that as fervently as Carter tried, he could not satisfy the Saudis or the others by trying to achieve Palestinian self-determination, and it was the high price of foreign oil in the summer and fall of 1980 that forced many Americans to answer "no" to Reagan's debate question "Are you better off today than you were four years ago when Mr. Carter took office?" Brzezinski believed that striving for a comprehensive peace would allow for American evenhandedness in foreign policy making on the Middle East, which would have meant a severe trimming of Israel's influence in Washington—and he made no secret of his desire to achieve that outcome.

For his part, Brzezinski controlled almost all the defense and foreign policy information that flowed to Carter. Brzezinski acknowledged that he and Carter "had a special relationship" and that they "complemented each other." He said that he

could “anticipate what he [Carter] was going to say” and that he “could anticipate how he was going to react.”<sup>14</sup> Moreover, Brzezinski was omnipresent at all bureaucratic levels when foreign and defense issues were discussed. Those who worked for him at the NSC noted that their memos became “kind of neutral-informative,” suggesting that those notes were not overly political and that Brzezinski at least initially separated his roles as advocate, adviser, coordinator, and honest broker. Brzezinski acknowledged that he eventually placed limitations on State Department personnel inputs into foreign policy. For example, already in the fall of 1978, State Department desk officer Henry Precht believed that the Shah’s days were numbered, but those views did not find their way to the president.<sup>15</sup> Brzezinski rarely allowed Carter to hold foreign or defense policy discussions without him. More than any other adviser except Hamilton Jordan, Brzezinski could and did interrupt Oval Office meetings at will. At Carter’s request, it was Brzezinski and not the secretary of state who most frequently explained administration policy to the media and public.<sup>16</sup>

Madeleine Albright noted: “No one can overestimate the closeness Brzezinski had with the president. Even though there were people in the administration, in the White House, who saw Brzezinski as a liability, the President did not. When it came down to it, Carter did not see Brzezinski as a liability and relied on him tremendously.”<sup>17</sup>

Brzezinski provided intellectual clarity and crispness, synthesized key points at a rapid rate, and provided actionable items for Carter. Brzezinski said of Carter in 1982:

He was a decent person; he would still be president if he was willing to take a position that at stake in the Iranian hostage issue is national honor, national security, and not lives, and therefore we will preserve national security and national honor, but not lives, and at some point bomb the hell out of Tehran and have the hostages killed. There would have been such a surge of patriotism and support for an embattled President; he would have been elected. But he would not do that. He knew he was losing the election in part because of that. He would not do anything of that sort to win, even though he was very ambitious and wanted to win very much.<sup>18</sup>

It was well known in the administration, in the State Department bureaucracy, and around Washington that Vance and Brzezinski clashed on many policy matters. In their exit interviews from diplomatic service, some State Department officials said that the gaps between the two were vast. Yet according to Brzezinski’s recollection, the differences—which he enormously understated—were “basically over how do we handle the relationship between arms control, SALT, and the effort to stabilize the American–Soviet relationship and peripheral Soviet expansionism, and later how do we handle Iran.”<sup>19</sup>

When Carter took office, he relied on advice from Vice President Walter Mondale; Secretaries of State Vance and Edmund Muskie; Defense Secretary Harold Brown; and CIA Director Stansfield Turner. None of Carter's advisers who happened to be Jewish—Stuart Eizenstat, Bob Lipshitz, Mark Siegel, Ed Sanders—played influential roles in Middle East policymaking, though they were engaged heavily and frequently with Israeli representatives as well as with leaders of the American Jewish community as needed. Robert Strauss and Sol Linowitz, both Jewish, briefly held positions as autonomy negotiators, but it was no longer a major focus for Carter after the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel was signed in March 1979. Two of Carter's closest and most loyal advisers from Georgia—Jody Powell and Hamilton Jordan—were attuned to the impact of foreign policy matters on Carter's standing with the electorate, but they knew little about the Middle East. It was Jordan and Powell who accompanied Carter on his March 1979 *Blitzkrieg* visit to Cairo and Tel Aviv to iron out the troublesome details standing in the way of a final draft of the Egyptian–Israeli Peace Treaty. According to Dick Viets, who was the deputy chief of the US embassy in Tel Aviv at the time, Powell and Jordan had to vigorously push Carter to recover from a moment of depression. This happened during those talks with Begin and his team in Jerusalem to resolve the sticky differences that still prevented Egypt and Israel from agreeing to the final terms of the treaty.

While in office, Carter was fortunate to have benefitted from an enormously talented group of high-level State Department personnel with experience in Arab–Israel affairs. Two extraordinary ambassadors—Herman Eilts in Cairo and Samuel Lewis in Tel Aviv—completely understood the mindsets of Sadat and Begin, respectively, and they played formidable roles in the 1978 and 1979 negotiations. There were almost a dozen other officials who had each served more than a quarter century as bureaucrats monitoring and reporting on the Middle East. When called upon, these individuals—Hal Saunders, David Korn, Morris Draper, Michael Sterner, Bill Kirby, and Nicholas Veliotis, to name a few—provided wisdom, expertise, and drafting capacities that were especially beneficial to Carter and the negotiating process. Bill Quandt at the NSC wrote penetrating assessments of the region and its leaders, as he aided the flow of information between the State Department and Brzezinski when the latter permitted it. In some ways, Carter's lack of foreign policy experience and general background on the Middle East was not widely known. An incredibly talented and compatible group of Middle East State Department specialists did the heavy lifting over a protracted period of time that narrowed many substantive differences between Egypt and Israel.

### **Carter, American Jews, and Israeli Leaders**

According to his domestic affairs adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, when Carter ran for office,

[Carter] had more than simply a newspaper interest or knowledge of the Middle East, but I do not think that he was grounded in all the nuances and all the symbolisms that go along with the Middle East. Carter had less contact with certain ethnic groups, particularly Catholic ethnic groups. He had a fair amount of contact with Jewish groups, but certainly not as much as one would have had from New York or Pennsylvania, or perhaps Massachusetts or other areas with large Jewish communities, just by virtue of the fact that there are so many more Jews in those areas, and so he would have had.<sup>20</sup>

In commenting about Carter's relationship with American Jews, Brzezinski noted that they "were not part of his circle,"<sup>21</sup> nor were they people with whom he regularly met. Furthermore, Brzezinski said that "Carter's feelings on Israel were always ambivalent. On the one hand, he felt that Israel was being intransigent. On the other, he genuinely did have an attachment to the country as the land of the Bible."<sup>22</sup> In my February 1991 interview with him, Carter said:

All the Jews were supportive of Scoop Jackson; he was their spokesman and was their hero. So, I was looked upon as an alien challenger, not unanimously, but overwhelmingly. So, I didn't feel obligated to them. ... Fritz [Walter Mondale], though, had been immersed in that Democratic Party, its liberal wing ... that was committed to Israel, so it was an act just like breathing to him—it wasn't like breathing to me. So, I was willing to break the shell more than he was.<sup>23</sup>

In the general elections in 1976, Carter won 72 percent of the Jewish vote, and his campaign raised 63 percent of its funds from Jewish sources. When he took office, Carter fully understood that Jews were critically important to his electoral success. According to Mark Siegel, who worked to get Carter elected, "Pat Cadell [Carter's pollster] told Carter on election night that if Jews had voted like other American Whites, Carter would have lost 103 electoral votes; New York alone would have made the difference."<sup>24</sup> Yet from the very outset of his presidency, Carter persistently made remarks and took policy initiatives that steadily widened the gap between his administration's outlook on Israel and the Middle East and supporters of Israel (Jewish and non-Jewish alike), American Jewish organizations, and backers of Israel in Congress. This eventually took its toll. When Carter ran for reelection in 1980, he received barely 40 percent of the Jewish vote.<sup>25</sup> In his Princeton thesis entitled "The Anti-Politics of Presidential Leadership: Jimmy Carter and American Jews," Peter Evan Bass provides an explanation of Carter's relationship with American Jews:

Jewish leaders never had an "idea" to latch onto. They could never gauge the depth of Carter's commitment to Israel because he never conveyed



conviction, but eclecticism ... Carter's combative style was instrumental in unnecessarily alienating a group that desperately wanted to help Carter moderate Begin's views and achieve a settlement. The evidence for his stubbornness ... is found throughout the period: ... refusing to change his rhetoric to accommodate growing Jewish fears [and] castigating Israel in the middle of the peace process, thus eroding the very Jewish support he had built ... The combative style of the Carter White House reflected the drive of a man ready to court confrontation with the Jewish community as well as Menachem Begin; that forcefulness reflected Carter's belief in the righteousness of his views and his belief that the Jews would eventually return to his camp and concede the rightness of his course.<sup>26</sup>

Why did Carter choose to tackle the Arab–Israeli conflict, one of the world's most intractable and complicated foreign policy issues at the time of his inauguration and one that was deeply interlaced with the struggle against USSR in the Cold War? His first public mention of the Middle East, Israel, the conflict, and the Palestinians came in an address that David Rockefeller and Brzezinski had asked him to deliver to the Trilateral Commission in Tokyo in 1975. At that event he said, "We must strive to maintain good relations with the Arab countries ... recognize that the major element of a settlement is the guaranteed right of Israel to exist as a viable and peaceful nation, [and the] rights of the Palestinians must be recognized as part of any final solution."<sup>27</sup> Carter told me on more than one occasion that the decision to tackle the Middle East emerged out of his relationship with Brzezinski. Vance, however, said that immediately after the election in November 1976, the three of them agreed that trying to resolve the conflict would be a priority, though he was more skittish than Carter and Brzezinski about the reaction of elements of the American Jewish community. Rabbi Alex Schindler, the then-president of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, was certain that Carter adopted Brzezinski's views of foreign policy at least during the first seven or eight months of the administration.<sup>28</sup>

By June 1977, Hamilton Jordan was so vexed with Carter's forceful and public criticism of Israel during the administration's first six months in office that he wrote a secret memorandum to the president, crisply warning him that his actions and statements were severely damaging his relationship with the American Jewish community, one that he vigorously argued needed to be repaired. Jordan wrote:

It would be a great mistake to spend most of our time and energies persuading the Israelis to accept a certain plan for peace and neglect a similar effort with the American Jewish community, since lack of support for such a plan from the American Jewish community could undermine our efforts with the Israelis. Our efforts to consult and

communicate must be directed in tandem at the Israeli government and the American Jewish community. I would advocate that we begin immediately with an extensive consultation program with the American Jewish community.<sup>29</sup>

Carter's relationship with the American Jewish community was never repaired and for the duration of his presidency remained fraught, for the most part. Despite warnings by Jordan and others and requests by American Jewish leaders to reduce or limit the administration's criticism of Israel and Begin, Carter plowed forward. He maintained his belief that he was in the right in promoting Palestinian rights and in censuring Israel for resisting his overtures. To expedite Israeli territorial concessions, Brzezinski put public pressure on Israel in an attempt to create the impression that Jerusalem was losing its strength on Capitol Hill. In his memoir, Brzezinski admitted that he had developed the 1978 package deal to supply Egypt, Israel, and Saudi Arabia with advanced F-15 fighter aircraft as a "strategy to paralyze the powerful Israeli lobby on the Hill."<sup>30</sup> Mark Siegel said that he "sensed it as early as October [1977] that Brzezinski wanted a confrontation, if a confrontation was necessary to demonstrate to the Israelis that they'd better be flexible [in the negotiations], because they [didn't] have the domestic support here that they thought that they had. I got that directly from Brzezinski."<sup>31</sup>

Lamenting to Brzezinski in early 1978, Carter said that "it was striking the degree to which some senators are afraid to stand up for the American national interest and will simply do the bidding of a powerful [Jewish] lobby."<sup>32</sup> The president tended to view the pro-Israel lobby as he did all other constituency groups: as "threatening to distract him from what he believed was the right thing for the country."<sup>33</sup>

### **International Affairs in Carter's Post-Presidency**

After leaving the White House, Carter used his presidential center in Georgia as a public podium for weighing in on an array of issues as well as for engaging in myriad far-ranging humanitarian projects and seeking support for those undertakings. For Carter, this post-White House life became a limitless second presidential term with no constraints from the Washington establishment, lobbying groups, or special interest elites. No other former president spoke out so often or so forcefully, publicly criticizing his successors for what he saw as their habitual shortcomings and failures. Presidents who followed him were often perturbed at what they believed were unwanted, ill-timed, and inappropriate intrusions into foreign policy realms, including sensitive regions such as the Middle East, North Korea, Sudan, and Latin America. Carter chose to intervene wherever he wanted, particularly motivated when his input was especially unwelcome. In dozens of

meetings I attended at the Carter Presidential Center in the late 1980s and '90s as Middle East Fellow, Carter openly told those present that he would be jetting off to Haiti, Nicaragua, or North Korea and that he had so informed a State Department official or the vice president. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice publicly rebuked him for planning to visit Hamas in 2006, but she had no impact on his decision to travel.<sup>34</sup> No former president appeared so frequently in print and in other media.<sup>35</sup>

Without exception, in the years after his presidency, Carter's favorite topic for discussion was the Middle East, particularly aspects of the Arab–Israeli or Israeli–Palestinian conflict. He was consumed by issues surrounding it; he devoted at least half a dozen of the thirty books he wrote after his presidential term to the subject. He penned more than three dozen op-eds on Israel and the Middle East and lectured extensively across the country, traveling to the Middle East more than a dozen times and regularly championing Palestinian political rights. By convening a global group of senior statespeople in 2007 that came to be known as “The Elders,” he created another megaphone with which to regularly chastise Israel and speak out on a dozen other matters. He clobbered Israel and its leaders repeatedly with unbridled criticism for settlement building, human rights violations, and the fraught relationship with Palestinians living in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. More than any other Middle Eastern or public figure anywhere, he spoke out perennially in favor of the creation of a Palestinian state and blamed Israeli leaders for not promoting Palestinian self-determination.

Rarely did the former president blame Palestinian leaders for their cronyism and corruption, their sclerotic and autocratic ways, or their repeated failures to develop civil society. He never reprimanded Yasser Arafat, Mahmoud Abbas, Hassan Nasrallah, or Bashar Assad for failing to stand up and declare an end to the conflict with Israel. More than any other public figure, for a decade he endorsed Hamas as a legitimate negotiating partner for Israel, granting its leadership enormous credibility by dint of his being a former US president.<sup>36</sup> For Israelis, their leadership, and their supporters around the world, Carter was persistently viewed as a menace in the international media and a hostile magnet to which more and more anti-Israeli voices were readily attracted.

As president and in retirement, Carter ran afoul of a succession of Israeli leaders and American Jewish supporters of Israel. Israelis of all political stripes staunchly opposed granting him the prerogative of determining the borders and security requirements of the Jewish State. In dozens of meetings conducted with Begin and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, the Carter administration informed them that Israel would have to return to pre-June 1967 lines (with slight modifications), halt settlement construction, and provide the means with which to establish a Palestinian state.<sup>37</sup> Almost from the outset of his presidency, while Prime

Minister Rabin was still in Washington for his March 1977 meeting with him, the president said that Israel “would have to deal with the PLO, have to withdraw to the [1967] borders with minor rectifications.”<sup>38</sup> When Hanan Bar-On, the number two at the Israeli embassy in Washington, told Rabin about Carter’s remarks, Rabin replied, “I don’t believe a word; I mean, you are fantasizing.” Then Rabin came out of a lunch meeting with Carter and said, he “really means it, this is not a revelation. It was a disaster.”<sup>39</sup> According to then-Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Roy Atherton, one of the most even-handed and able US officials to ever serve, “The very fact that the American president took these positions was very tough for Rabin politically; I do not know to what extent it contributed to the [election of Begin in May 1977].”<sup>40</sup> Israeli diplomats at the time, however, including Bar-On and Dan Pattir, who was Rabin’s media spokesperson, remained convinced that Carter’s frostiness with Rabin contributed to Labor’s defeat. Bar-On said to Vance, “It seems that the president wants Rabin to lose the elections.”<sup>41</sup> The Labor Party—in office for twenty-nine years—was ripe for defeat for many other reasons, but Carter’s remarks certainly did not help its chances at the polls.

Furthermore, Carter was public about differences, whereas Kissinger, Ford, and Nixon kept their disagreements with Israel private. Frequently, Carter promised Israeli leaders that he would go directly to the American people and claim that it was Israel and Begin that were the obstacles to peace. Dayan, as he did on several occasions, pleaded with Carter not to put public pressure on Israel. Openly revealing his disputes with Israel was not an exception but often the rule during Carter’s term. In the spring of 1980, his administration endorsed a UN Security Council resolution—whether intentionally or by mistake—that condemned the settlements and characterized portions of Jerusalem as “occupied.” The kerfuffle surrounding that UN vote was one of the reasons Carter was defeated in the New York Democratic primary by Senator Edward Kennedy. The latter lost his intraparty challenge to unseat an incumbent president, but the challenge weakened the Democratic Party’s chances against Reagan, as other factors piled up against Carter. These included the fact that fifty-two US hostages were held in Iran during his last year in office; the failed hostage rescue mission of April 1980; and Carter staying in the White House for months on end as if he were held hostage. According to Hamilton Jordan,

We had a divided Democratic party, a president who was trying to take that party—a liberal party—in a moderate direction; and second, we had bad economic circumstances. When we came into office, the price of a barrel of oil on the world market was eight dollars; when we left, it was thirty-two. That drove our economy and created an economic set of problems that I think made President Carter’s reelection impossible.<sup>42</sup>

## **Carter's Foreign Policy and the Middle East**

Carter's most notable clash with Begin was about the duration of a promised freeze in Israeli settlement construction. Carter thought it was five years, until autonomy was fleshed out and implemented, and Begin insisted that it was for the length of negotiations to reach the Egyptian Peace Treaty, which he assumed would not take more than three months. At the twenty-fifth anniversary forum of the Camp David negotiations in 2003, Carter said, "Begin agreed to a freeze in settlements during the autonomy negotiations, and Cy Vance agreed with me." According to Bill Quandt, who was at the Camp David negotiations but not at that meeting with Begin, Vance, Carter, and Aharon Barak (the Israeli attorney general), "There's nothing in writing about the settlements freeze; that was a gaffe. And when it came down to interpreting what it meant, Begin said, 'I agreed to three months, period, that's it.'"<sup>43</sup> According to Barak, "I have my notes [from the meeting]—three months. Then I called President Carter and I told him, 'Three months, this is what I wrote down.' So those are the facts as I have seen them."<sup>44</sup> For the next forty-plus years, Carter made the claim that the settlement freeze was for the duration of autonomy negotiations, and the settlement-building controversy became one of the most contentious issues in the US–Israeli relationship. For King Hussein and other Arab leaders, the issue was not whether the duration of the freeze in settlements was three months or five years; it was the reality that the United States would not and could not impose a freeze on settlements.

While in the White House and afterward, Carter adhered doggedly to specific concepts or principles and constantly trumpeted them. For example, he was locked into the idea of almost total withdrawal of Israeli forces from *all* the occupied territories, including Jerusalem; military assistance to Israel as needed; the halting of and, if possible, removal of settlements; a comprehensive peace based on an exchange of land; the convening of an international conference to facilitate direct or bilateral negotiations between the parties, holding either elections to create a "democratically" chosen Palestinian leadership or conduct a referendum to demonstrate Palestinian commitment to negotiations; the necessity of a trusted, impartial mediator, with Carter never shy to intimate that he was the ideal person for that undertaking; and the application of UN Security Council Resolution 242 in all its parts to all the territories—an imperative for the emergence of a Palestinian state based upon Palestinian self-determination. In the early 2000s, Carter advocated that Hamas be added to the mix of active Palestinian voices in negotiations with Israel, and he promoted a referendum among the Palestinians to generate that outcome. Carter had outlines, a process to follow, and an objective to achieve; one part fit or segued to the next part. These were the elements with which to secure a step-by-step result or transactional achievements; Carter placed no importance on the question of whether or how the philosophical or ideological aspects of hostilities between the parties could be overcome.

When we co-wrote the *The Blood of Abraham* in 1984, I asked Carter several times to change words describing Begin, because they characterized his outlook in the 1940s but were no longer valid in the 1980s. Carter simply told me, “Only one of us was president, and I am going to leave it in the book my way!” When he wrote his controversial 2006 book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, he knew better than any American diplomat the nuanced and detailed call contained in UNSC Resolution 242 for the “withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict.” Because of Carter’s staunch desire for Israeli withdrawal from lands that could become a Palestinian state, he quoted the resolution as saying: “mandates Israeli withdrawal” and “requires Israeli withdrawal.” He also called for the “withdrawal to the 1967 borders as specified in 242, and as promised in the Camp David Accords and Oslo Agreement.”<sup>45</sup> Begin never made such a promise. On this point, Quandt said that Carter was wrong.<sup>46</sup> The former president did not believe it was inappropriate to invent or to unilaterally change the content of what others had laboriously negotiated earlier, such as UNSC 242. He wanted full withdrawal and included the specious claim that the Israeli delegation—Begin, Dayan, and others—promised to pull back to the 1967 borders. When he wrote or spoke about the way he thought negotiations should be conducted, he often quoted private conversations that no one else could verify or took passages from American drafts at Camp David that mostly could not be checked. Not one devoted to historical accuracy, Carter dismissed inconvenient impediments and did not give much credence to others who criticized him for doing so. His passion drove him to insist that others comply with his designs.

### **Conclusions: Precedents and Legacies**

Despite his lack of foreign affairs experience,<sup>47</sup> Carter racked up several important foreign policy successes. While he sought to institute the application of human rights as a valued attribute in shaping American foreign policy, he did not apply a human rights standard uniformly to American friends and allies. Some, like Michael Armacost in his administration, thought it was a mistake to institutionalize the concern for human rights considerations.<sup>48</sup> Carter’s pre-election promises to withdraw US troops from Korea were vigorously opposed by State Department officials, especially Nicholas Platt.<sup>49</sup> Carter knew, for example, that SAVAK, the hated secret police in Iran, was brutalizing its population, yet he proclaimed in a toast to the Shah in Tehran in December 1977 that his leadership had “the respect and the admiration and love which your people give to you.”<sup>50</sup> At the same time, he ingratiated himself with the Shah, thus riling the Shah’s opponents. Carter secured two Panama Canal treaties, though more than a dozen senators who voted for them lost their seats between 1978–80. He meticulously negotiated with Moscow in the SALT II talks but was unable to persuade the Senate to ratify that nuclear arms agreement. Carter withdrew the treaty from Senate consideration in December 1979, in

part because the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan made him realize that both the Senate and the American people had no appetite for an agreement with Moscow.<sup>51</sup> His administration widened American diplomatic engagement with China while jousting with Soviet aggression in multiple geopolitical settings across the world, including in the horn of Africa, South Asia, and Latin America. His statements to the effect that he did not want to use force in achieving American foreign policy encouraged Soviet projection of power aimed at enhancing Moscow's presence and influence in East Asia, the Horn of Africa, and in the Persian Gulf.

Whatever his reservations in using force to implement and/or protect a policy, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in September 1979 stunned the administration. Carter succeeded in achieving the 1979 Egypt–Israel Peace Treaty, but it fell short of four intended corollary objectives: a comprehensive peace between Israel and its other Arab neighbors; a pathway to Palestinian self-determination; a cessation in construction of Israeli settlements; and success in persuading the PLO to join negotiations and accept Israeli legitimacy. In spring 1978, Carter pushed through the Senate the highly controversial sale to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Israel of military aircraft while also laying the foundation for the US Holocaust Commission. Both these moves caused controversy among American Jews. The outspoken Rabbi Avi Weiss of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale in New York viewed the establishment of the Holocaust Commission as a means through which Carter could try to placate American Jewish opposition to the administration's tilt away from Israel.<sup>52</sup> Throughout Carter's run for reelection, Weiss and others hounded him due to what were seen as overt pro-Arab advances. Others in the Jewish community welcomed the formation of the Holocaust Commission, though the airplane deal still aroused ire among Israel's supporters. Carter's good intentions to turn Menachem Begin's self-rule plans for the Palestinians into self-determination failed. After the September 1978 Camp David talks, progress in Palestinian autonomy negotiations stalled in place, because the administration prioritized the implementation of the treaty between Egypt and Israel. According to Bob Hunter, who served on the NSC, it was Sadat who wanted the autonomy negotiations postponed, shielding Carter from any domestic fallout that would cause him to lose the election.<sup>53</sup> With Carter's defeat, the Reagan administration was simply not interested in pushing for Palestinian self-rule.

When Carter left office in 1981, his administration had left a number of short- and long-term imprints on the Middle East, some of which were not immediately apparent but still had an extraordinary impact on the region. First, the 1979 treaty ended a historic and principal component of the Arab–Israeli conflict. Sadat and Begin had vision. They agreed upon essential tradeoffs to reach agreements. Both recognized that a treaty between the two countries would foster their respective national interests. In fact, enhancing national interests evolved into the

core motivation for Arab states [Jordan (1994), UAE, Bahrain, Morocco (2020), and Sudan (2023)] and the PLO (1993) to accept Israel as a reality. None of the Arab sides fully embraced Israel as a Jewish state, but they all realized that their own situation would be improved with a non-war or treaty relationship with Israel. Arafat and the PLO recognized Israel in 1993 so that they could finally take control over some land west of the Jordan River, considered to be part of the Palestinian patrimony. Sadat embraced Israel as a reality without demanding a prerequisite that first the Palestinians achieve self-determination or receive a promise of a process that would lead to one. No amount of Carter administration urging to advance Palestinian political rights persuaded Begin or Sadat. Of the states that surround Israel, Syria did not and has not changed its long-held view that sees Israel as artificial and illegitimate. And Lebanon in 2024 is no longer an independent state, as Iran informally dominates it. In each of the successive recognitions of Israel by Arab states, the precedent set by the Carter administration still held sway, including critical American undergirding of agreements, in the economic, military, and political fields, among others. Regional actors continue to rely on Washington's involvement. This was especially evident in the summer of 2024, when the Americans made great efforts to prevent the outbreak of a Hezbollah–Israel war and to promote an Israel–Hammas ceasefire, as well as to elaborate a plan for “the day after” in Gaza.

Second, Carter's efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace failed. The result was actually another step-by-step agreement repeating the incrementalism of Nixon, Kissinger, and Ford. The Camp David Accords and the Egypt–Israel Peace Treaty were collectively additional disengagement agreements. Given the political realities in the Middle East in 2024, a comprehensive resolution of the Arab–Israeli conflict seems next to impossible to achieve. That result certainly benefitted Egypt and Israel and kept the Soviet Union from regaining an important geographic toehold in Egypt.

Third, the Carter administration's relentless efforts to convene an international conference as a door to open mediation proved impossible. As a viable future mechanism with which to start or negotiate differences, it remains a highly unlikely procedure to be adopted in future Middle East peace process negotiations, especially as countries and leaders do not want to be in a forum in which others may speak for their interests.

Fourth, Carter's personal diligence in shepherding Israel and Egypt to narrow their differences set an extraordinarily high bar of expectations for future negotiations. Yet Arab states, the PLO, and the PA remain convinced that only when Washington is directly engaged in Arab–Israeli negotiations, or in urging Israeli withdrawal from land secured in war (as when Eisenhower sought Israeli withdrawal from Sinai in 1957), will such an Israeli pullback take place at the end of negotiations.



Fifth, Egypt's recognition of Israel perhaps did as much to reinforce Israeli sovereignty and international legitimacy with world Jewry and with the international community as did US President Harry Truman's recognition of Israel in 1948 and Israel's admission to the United Nations in 1949.

Sixth, throughout its term, the Carter administration challenged American Jewish and congressional support for Israel, but did not weaken that support over the decades that followed. The 1981 sale of AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia, a deal that was teed-up up before Carter left office, catalyzed American supporters of Israel to expand their demographic reach of interest. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and other national Jewish organizations enlarged their drives for congressional support for Israel in places where Jewish voters were not significant in numbers, and ultimately from enthusiastic Christian supporters.

Seventh, in any realm, actions not taken have enormous consequences. When the Camp David negotiations began, there were no more than 2,000–3,000 Jewish settlers in all of the West Bank. At no time except for a brief period did the Carter administration consider curtailing either economic or military assistance to Israel until it ceased settlement building. Carter challenged the American Jewish community for its support of the Begin government and its opposition to the promotion of legitimate Palestinian political rights. American Jewish leaders refused to stand in the way of Begin on settlement building. They could have done so but did not. Had Carter instituted a "reassessment" of American support for Israel, would that have curbed settlement building?

Eighth, the failure of the PLO leadership to embrace repeated covert requests by Carter and Reagan to participate in certain negotiations with the Jewish State relieved Israeli prime ministers of the challenge of dealing politically with the Palestinians. Arafat repeatedly intimidated West Bank and Gaza leaders to prevent their formal engagement with Israel, as he feared them as potential competitors. Dozens of Palestinian leaders told us that directly when Carter spoke at the American Consulate in Jerusalem in 1983. Throughout the 1980s, Israeli prime ministers had relative freedom to act in the territories as they saw fit, including encouraging the expansion of settlements. The PLO waited until September 1993 to fully recognize Israel and did so without receiving a promise of an Israeli settlement freeze or insisting on Palestinian self-determination. Arafat used the 1992–93 negotiating process to ensure his continued leadership. Lamenting numerous missed opportunities to challenge Israel, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said in 1992:

I wish they [the Arabs] had listened. They were not satisfied with Sadat; they say that there was no need for Camp David. We [Egypt] have regained our land and everything else, and we are keeping up with and

aiding the peace process. ... Today 75 percent of the occupied territories are covered with settlements. We had them in our hands without settlements.<sup>54</sup>

Ninth, the Carter administration oversaw the demise of the Shah's rule in Iran and the rise of the Islamic Republic. Could that have been prevented? There are too many variables to consider in order to answer that question here, assuming one may be found. At the time of the Shah's fall, it appeared like a regime change; at least the Carter administration did not see a theocratic Islamic Republic as having a multifarious, toxic, and long-term detrimental role to the stability of the Middle East. According to Ofira Seliktar's research on the fall of the Shah, "[T]he NSC Desk officer promoted the view that Khomeini was a 'reasonably moderate leader with whom the US could do business; he was neither anti-American nor anti-democratic and would become a figurehead, with US Ambassador to Iran saying that Khomeini was 'Ghandi-like,' and Andrew Young, the US Ambassador to the UN, saying 'that once the revolution was completed, Khomeini would be recognized as 'some kind of saint.'"<sup>55</sup> By 2024, Tehran had become the most formidable nemesis of Washington and Jerusalem in the region, a point emphasized by President Biden in October 2023 and restated by Prime Minister Netanyahu in his speech to congress in July 2024.

And tenth, American presidents who lack knowledge of foreign regions or experience in foreign policymaking may tend to arrive more quickly and comfortably at black or white answers to issues that confront them. Their personality preferences rather than regional realities have enormous influence in shaping policies. What is certain is that Carter as a former governor of Georgia had almost no comprehension of the anger that Shia clerics bore toward Sunni leaders, or the hatred that they already possessed for a Jewish state or for Jews as a people. In so many ways, Carter and his administration demonstrated ignorance of how the long history of the Middle East and the memories of its leaders were a source of mistrust between them. In 2024 that reality has not changed. More than forty years ago, Sadat and Begin accepted the land-for-peace formula, because both their countries were better off in the long term by engaging with one another.

In 2024, leaders negotiate with one another not to reach a conclusive end to their differences. They do so to buy time for domestic purposes and to prolong deeply held ideologies, and, so far, are simply not interested in engaging in a process that might bring their parts of the conflict to a negotiated finality. In the final analysis, Carter was terribly fortunate, because he inherited a working negotiating process, had talented State Department personnel, and dealt with strong, visionary leaders who were courageous and recognized each other's sovereignty.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> “Ken Stein Interview with Mark Siegel, Washington, DC,” Center for Israel Education (henceforth, CIE), July 21, 2010, <https://israeled.org/ken-stein-interview-with-mark-siegel-washington-dc/>.
- <sup>2</sup> Peter Evan Bass, “Interview with Jimmy Carter,” October 22, 1984, *The Collegiate Review*, VI:1 (1985).
- <sup>3</sup> Stuart E. Eizenstat, *President Carter: The White House Years* (New York, 2018), p. 558.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.
- <sup>5</sup> Peter Bourne, *Jimmy Carter: A Comprehensive Biography from Plains to Post-Presidency* (New York, 1997), p. 401.
- <sup>6</sup> Interview with Marshall Brement, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, April 11, 1980, <https://adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Brement,%20Marshall.1990.toc.pdf>.
- <sup>7</sup> Ofira Seliktar, *Failing the Crystal Ball Test: The Carter Administration and the Fundamental Revolution in Iran* (Westport, 2000), pp. 47–57.
- <sup>8</sup> Brookings Middle East Study Group, “Toward Peace in the Middle East,” (Washington, DC, 1975), <https://israeled.org/resources/documents/brookings-institute-report-toward-peace-middle-east/>.
- <sup>9</sup> Kenneth Stein, Interview with Zbigniew Brzezinski, October 30, 1992, Washington, DC.
- <sup>10</sup> Remarks by Jimmy Carter, Memorandum of Conversation Between President Carter and President Assad, Geneva, May 9, 1977, Foreign Relations of the United States.
- <sup>11</sup> Interview with Ambassador Robert A. Strauss by Charles Stuart Kennedy, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, October 25, 2002, <https://adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Strauss,%20Robert%20S.toc.pdf>.
- <sup>12</sup> “Frank Moore Oral History,” UVA Miller Center, September 18/19, 1981, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-oral-histories/frank-moore-oral-history>.
- <sup>13</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, “Beyond Step-by-Step: Action Proposals,” *Foreign Policy*, 19, (Summer, 1975), pp. 3–17, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1147989>.
- <sup>14</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski Exit Interview, February 20, 1981, Sound recordings and other material from the Zbigniew Brzezinski papers, | Library of Congress (loc.gov)
- <sup>15</sup> “Zbigniew Brzezinski Oral History,” UVA Miller Center, February 18, 1982, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-oral-histories/zbigniew-brzezinski-oral-history>. For an overly critical assessment of Brzezinski’s control over information on Iran flowing to Carter, see Interview of Henry Precht by Charles Stuart Kennedy, The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, March 8, 2020, <https://adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Precht,%20Henry.toc.pdf>.
- <sup>16</sup> Betty Glad, *An Outsider in the White House: Jimmy Carter, His Advisors, and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, 2009), pp. 29–42.
- <sup>17</sup> “Zbigniew Brzezinski Oral History,” op. cit.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

- <sup>20</sup> Judith Goldstein, Interview with Stuart Eizenstat, May 11, 1977, The White House, Columbia University History Project, Columbia University.
- <sup>21</sup> Kenneth Stein, Interview with Stuart Eizenstat, September 14, 1993, Atlanta, Georgia.
- <sup>22</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977–1981* (New York, 1983), p. 97.
- <sup>23</sup> Kenneth Stein, Interview with Jimmy Carter, February 19, 1991, Atlanta, Georgia.
- <sup>24</sup> Kenneth Stein Interview with Mark Siegel, op. cit.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> Peter Evan Bass, “The Anti-Politics of Presidential Leadership: Jimmy Carter and American Jews,” *Princeton University Archives* (April 1985), 138–41.
- <sup>27</sup> “Address to the American Chamber of Commerce in Tokyo, Japan,” The American Presidency Project, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-the-american-chamber-commerce-tokyo-japan>.
- <sup>28</sup> Judith Goldstein, Interview with Rabbi Alex Schindler, Oral History Research Office, Columbia University, 1979.
- <sup>29</sup> Hamilton Jordan, Memorandum to President Jimmy Carter, “Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics: The Role of the American Jewish Community in the Middle East,” CIE, June 1977, <https://israeled.org/resources/documents/hamilton-jordan-memorandum-to-president-jimmy-carter-foreign-policy-and-domestic-politics-the-role-of-the-american-jewish-community-in-the-middle-east-june-1977/>. Jordan in a posthumously published memoir, *A Boy from Georgia*, noted that he had Jewish roots, but that point did not make it to the public domain while Carter was president.
- <sup>30</sup> Kenneth Stein, Interview with Mark Siegel, op. cit.
- <sup>31</sup> Judith Goldstein, Interview with Mark Siegel, June 12, 1978, Columbia University.
- <sup>32</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977–1981* (New York, 1983), p. 248.
- <sup>33</sup> Peter Bourne, *Jimmy Carter: A Comprehensive Biography from Plains to Post-Presidency* (New York, 1997), p. 131.
- <sup>34</sup> In fact, Carter made repeated demarches to Hamas. See, for example, his description of his talks with that organization in his address to the Israel Council on Foreign Relations on April 21, 2008: Jimmy Carter, “My Study Trip to the Middle East,” *The Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*, II:2 (2008).
- <sup>35</sup> The Carter Center Op-eds/Speeches Archive: 1985–1990, [https://www.cartercenter.org/news/editorials\\_speeches/archive-1987-1990.html](https://www.cartercenter.org/news/editorials_speeches/archive-1987-1990.html).
- <sup>36</sup> Kenneth Stein, “Jimmy Carter’s Hamas Decade of Embrace,” CIE October 29, 2023, <https://israeled.org/jimmy-carters-hamas-decade-of-embrace/>.
- <sup>37</sup> For examples, see Moshe Dayan, *Breakthrough: A Personal Account of the Egypt–Israel Peace Negotiations* (New York, 1981); Eitan Haber, Zeev Schiff, and Ehud Yaari, *The Year of the Dove* (New York, 1979); William Quandt, *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics* (Washington, DC, 1986); Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith* (New York, 1982); Naphtali Lau-Lavie, *Balaam’s Prophecy* (Jerusalem, 1998); and Kenneth Stein, Jacob Zack, and Eli Sperling, *Egyptian–Israeli Negotiations 1975–1979* (Atlanta, 2019), (the Camp David memoranda of conversations in this book are replete with examples of Carter

- pressuring Israel to accept the evolution of a Palestinian state as part of the autonomy negotiations).
- <sup>38</sup> Kenneth Stein Interviews with Hanan Bar-On, CIE, November 12, 1993, and July 9, 1993, Jerusalem, <https://israeled.org/ken-stein-interviews-with-hanan-bar-on-jerusalem-israel/>.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> Kenneth Stein Interview with Roy Atherton, CIE, July 16, 1992, <https://israeled.org/16-july-1992-ken-stein-interview-with-ambassador-roy-atherton-washington-dc/>.
- <sup>41</sup> Kenneth Stein Interviews with Dan Pattir, Media Advisor to Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Menachem Begin, CIE, January 5, 2022, <https://israeled.org/ken-stein-interviews-with-dan-pattir-media-advisor-to-prime-ministers-yitzhak-rabin-and-menachem-begin-jerusalem-and-tel-aviv-israelken-stein-interviews-with-dan-pattir-media-advisor-to-prime/>.
- <sup>42</sup> Herbert D. Rosenbarm and Alexej Ugrinsky (eds., *Jimmy Carter: Foreign Policy and Post Presidential Years* (Westport, 1993), pp. 236–38.
- <sup>43</sup> Remarks by Jimmy Carter and William Quandt, Camp David 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Forum, The Wilson Center, Washington, DC, September 17, 2023, <https://israeled.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Camp-David-25th-Anniversary-Wilson-Center-Carter-Center.pdf>.
- <sup>44</sup> Remarks by Aharon Barak, Camp David 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Forum, The Wilson Center, Washington, DC, September 17, 2023, <https://israeled.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Camp-David-25th-Anniversary-Wilson-Center-Carter-Center.pdf>.
- <sup>45</sup> Jimmy Carter, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid* (New York, 2006), pp. 207, 208, 215.
- <sup>46</sup> William B. Quandt, Review of Jimmy Carter's *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 36, no. 3, Spring 2007.
- <sup>47</sup> Interview with Ambassador Robert A. Strauss, Head of Carter's 1980 campaign, The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, October 25, 2002, <https://adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Strauss,%20Robert%20S.toc.pdf>.
- <sup>48</sup> Interview with Michael Armacost, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, May 19, 1999, <https://adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Armacost.Michael.H.pdf>.
- <sup>49</sup> Interview with Nicolas Platt, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project, March 7, 2005, <https://adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Platt-Nick.pdf>.
- <sup>50</sup> Remarks by Jimmy Carter, Tehran, CIE, December 31, 1977, <https://israeled.org/resources/documents/unbridled-praise-by-the-shah-of-iran-and-president-jimmy-carter-a-state-dinner-tehran-iran/>.
- <sup>51</sup> David Skidmore, *Reversing Course: Carter's Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and the Failure of Reform* (Nashville, 1996), pp. 135–48.
- <sup>52</sup> Kenneth Stein Interview with Rabbi Avi Weiss, CIE, September 17, 2008, <https://israeled.org/ken-stein-interview-with-rabbi-avi-weiss-riverdale-new-york/>.
- <sup>53</sup> Interview with Robert Hunter, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, August 10, 2004, <https://memory.loc.gov/service/mss/mfdip/2011/2011hun01/2011hun01.pdf>.

<sup>54</sup> “In Cairo, Mubarak Chastises Arab States for Not Accepting Negotiations with Israel,” CIE, April 30, 1992, <https://israeled.org/cairo-mubarak-chastises-arab-states-accepting-negotiations-israel/>.

<sup>55</sup> Seliktar, op. cit., pp. 120–30.