

Home Page: [OCIN INITIATIVE](#)

([Japanese Version](#))

([Arabic Version](#))

([Table of contents](#))

"The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East"(27)

By Areha Kazuya

E-mail: areha_kazuya@jcom.home.ne.jp

Chapter 3: The grace of Allah – Oil boom

3-5(27) Yom Kippur War and Oil shock(1) Resourceful General Anwar Sadat



Gamal Abdel Nasser who was defeated by Israel in Six-Day War in 1967 passed away by heart attack as incumbent President in 1970. Anwar Sadat, the vice president was the successor. Sadat was an ally of Nasser as a member of the Association of Free Officers who had overthrown King Faruq I. However, compared to Nasser being honored as a charismatic leader from Egyptian citizens and hero of the Arab countries, Sadat was always behind Nasser. People looked down Sadat who was promoted to the President by chance. Sadat was presumed as a short relief until someone else was elected president. But it became clear shortly that he was an excellent military strategist with forethought and at the same time a realistic politician.

Arab countries who had lost common goals after the Six-Day War, they devoted in internal conflicts. Immediately after the war, communist regime was established in Southern Yemen supported by USSR in November 1967. The bloodless coup followed in Iraq in 1968. In Libya, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi grabbed the power falling down the dynasty in 1969. In September 1970, Jordanian government and the PLO fought fiercely and the PLO was deported to Beirut in Lebanon (Black September). In addition, coup d'etat occurred in Syria and Fafiz al-Assad was appointed as president in next January.

In such circumstance, President Sadat looked for the chance of counterattack against Israel carefully. At first he expelled the USSR military advisory group. The USSR, which penetrated deeply into Egyptian organizations during the Nasser era, aimed to export the socialist revolution to the Arab countries. It was realized by the independence of Marxist South Yemen. But the socialist ideology did not take root among Arab countries. Before having been penetrated by socialist ideology, the Arab world had already been caught up by the bond of "blood" like a tribe or ethnic group and the bond of "religion" of Islam. There was little room for "ideology" to be acquired by learning after berth. It seems that it was impossible for Arabs to implant socialist ideology.

There was another reason why Sadat tried to dilute the shadow of the USSR. He was eager to modernize the armament of the Egyptian army with American weapons. By using USSR weapons, they could not compete with Israel at all. Sadat tried to approach the United States by expelling the USSR military advisory group. For the military personnel it was the greatest mission to win the war. Therefore, their way of thinking was more rational than non-military personnel.

Sadat thought the plan to scarce Israel in a rational and precise manner. The plan was to counterplot the enemy and terminate war within a short period of time. Israel, being surrounded in every corner of borders by enemies, stayed on its guard in any time. It was clear that once the war began and continued long there was no chance for Arab to win.

Sadat first took feint attack campaign to cheat Israel. When Egypt showed a swing of attacks, Israel quickly mobilized all the citizens. This was merely a show and Israel was stepped on in vain. This operation was carried out twice. The war weariness mood was born in Israel. In addition, Israeli citizens who had been winning the battlefield in the former wars had a sense of self-conceit and carelessness.

In 1973, Sadat called Syria in secret and decided to do a surprise attack on October 6. There were two major religious meanings on that day. First, this day was "Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)" which was the most sacred day for Jewish. Second, it was also the sacred "Ramadan (Fasting)" for Muslims. Mossad, the most famous Israeli intelligence agency in the world, did not anticipated at all.

On October 6, 1973, the battle began at two frontiers of Egypt and Syria. This war was called the Yom Kippur War in Western countries, and in the Arab world it was called Ramadan War. It was a religious war between Islam and Judaism. There had been four wars between Israel and Arabs during 1948 and 1973. The first Arab Israeli War in 1948 was the "Israel Revolutionary War". The second war in 1956 was the "Suez War", and the third war in 1967 was "Six-Day War". The last war in 1973 was the first time to bring out the religious meaning. It was important both for the Arab and Israel side to remind the religious belief respectively. Especially the Israelis who faced the surprise attack on the day of Yom Kippur seemed to have been enough to inspire the citizens. It was similar to the surprise attack to Pearl Harbor on Hawaii Islands in USA by Japanese army. US President inspired citizens saying "Remember Pearl Harbor!".

The joint Egypt-Syrian army force of the surprise attack was irresistible success so far. But Sadat understood that predominance by Arab side would be over sooner or later. That's why he made another strategy. It was to involve the Arab oil producing countries and to use their oil as a weapon against the consuming countries in Europe, the United States and Asia. It was also the strategy to drive a wedge between Israel and the West.

(To be continued ----)