

The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East (29)

[\(Japanese Version\)](#)

[\(Arabic Version\)](#)

Chapter 4: War and Peace in The Middle East

4-1(29) Short holidays : Peace between Israel and Egypt

The Yom Kippur (Ramadan) War ended on October 25, 1973. It was not the result as Sadat imagined. He expected favorable conditions of cease-fire for Arab side with victory during early stage of the war. In any case compromise was achieved between Egypt and Israel.

Egypt and Israel had fought four times during two and half decades since World War II. They were the First Arab-Israeli War (Israel Independence War) in 1948, Suez War in 1956, Six Day War in 1967 and Yom Kippur (Ramadan) War in 1973 respectively. Both countries were totally exhausted. The feeling for war weariness had prevailed among the people. It was not only the two parties but also Western countries that were tired with the wars in the Middle East.

As for the United States who was the closest ally of Israel, they were annoyed by international currency crisis in 1971, so called Nixon shock. On the political front, US could not escape from the muddy Vietnam War. US citizens were distressed deeply. In Europe, they had to burden the load of atonement for Jewish people after World War II. European people were bored the Israel's arrogant behavior and intimately thought that it was more than enough. The antipathy against Israel began prevailing. But it was also true that European people didn't support Arabs nor Muslims.

In Asia, most of countries had no interest at all and pretended as if Middle East conflict had nothing to do with them. But when the Arab oil-producing countries forced the oil embargo in Ramadan War in 1973, Asian countries, especially Japan, had to be waken up from peaceful dream. They tried to get favor of Arab oil-producing countries.

For realist Sadat, cease-fire was favorable. Some of other Arab leaders still kept crying out the reckless cheer saying "Let Israel down to the Mediterranean!". But the Arab ordinary citizens felt it was a nonsense pipe dream. President Anwar Sadat shared the same feeling with ordinary citizens. Wise army officers always look at the reality. A leader who made speech with ecstasy would be defeated by enemy soon or later. it was acceptable if he stepped down from the stage by himself. But it would be the tragedy if thousands of soldiers had to die to make one hero. Sadat was a wise man with common sense.



Anwar Sadat changed his policy towards the United States after the Ramadan War, while his predecessor Gamal Nasser had been a close friend with the USSR. Henry Kissinger, Advisor for National Security and later Secretary of State of the US , deployed Detente foreign policy under the presidency of Nixon and his successor Gerald Ford Jr. By Détente policy the reconciliation between the US and China was realized and the

Vietnam war was over. Momentum for the peace was born all over the world.

Sadat planned to improve relationship with Israel. In 1977 he suddenly visited Israel. In 1978 the Democratic's idealist James Carter took office as US President. By the change of US regime from the pro-Israel Republican Party to the liberal Democratic Party, peace between Egypt and Israel has been realized. President Carter invited two leaders of Egypt and Israel to Camp David in Washington in 1978. Both leaders signed a historical peace treaty. Accordingly, the Sinai Peninsula, where Israel occupied since the Six-Day War, was returned to Egypt.

In 1978, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin were honored to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts. Sadat was the first Arab recipient since the Nobel Peace Prize began in 1901.

Taking these facts into consideration, there might be no question that Sadat had to be considered as a peace maker of Egypt and the Arab world, even though he was not a hero in any meanings. But the history was quite reverse. Peace treaty between Egypt and Israel has been highly appreciated by all of the countries except the Arab world. Among the Arab countries, his diplomatic resolution was regarded as betrayal against fellow Palestinians. Sadat was isolated both at home and abroad. Military politicians like Sadat could become hero only by winning war. However, when the war was over with indefinite win or loss and cease-fire was brought by diplomatic negotiation, the ordinary citizens blamed Sadat as a traitor.

There was another mistake thereafter. In 1979, the Islamic Revolution took place in Iran. President Sadat accepted the exile of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi of Iran based on humanitarian consideration. However, Shah trampled down Sadat's favor and skipped from Cairo to the United States. Egyptian people fiercely rebelled against this incident. They directed their condemnation to Sadat nevertheless he had brought peace to the Middle East and got back the Sinai Peninsula. People were quite changeable.

In October 1981, when President Sadat has been on inspection tour of the military parade in commemoration of the Ramadan War, he was assassinated by squad of Egyptian army.

(To be continued ----)

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Home Page: [OCIN INITIATIVE](#)
([Table of contents](#))