

**WASHINGTON DATELINE**

BY TRUDE B. FELDMAN

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WASHINGTON -- Egyptian President Anwar Sadat feels no sense of isolation from the rest of the Arab world as a result of the Camp David agreements he signed with Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Jimmy Carter last week.

Sadat will continue your peace initiative with Israel no matter what Jordan and Saudi Arabia may decide to do.

And he concedes that the freeze on new Israeli settlements on the West Bank is to last only three months, the length of time he hopes to complete a peace treaty with Israel -- not five years, as some U.S. officials are saying.

The settlements issue has caused controversy between the United States and Israel, dissipating some of the warm "spirit of Camp David."

But President Sadat made clear that the "freezing of the settlements we have agreed upon" would continue "through the next three months -- that is supposed to be the time when we shall be concluding the peace treaty."

In an unusual dialogue with a number of commentators to clarify the Camp David accords before returning to Cairo, the Egyptian leader also said he was "satisfied" with the American position, "disappointed" with Jordan's response to the Camp David agreements and willing to meet the "challenge" of establishing peace in the Middle East.

At the same time, however, Sadat insisted there was agreement that the settlements already in existence on the West Bank "should not be expanded" and that the "American position regarding these settlements is identical to mine -- the settlements are illegal."

Sadat appeared confident that the settlements

issue would be disposed of satisfactorily after agreement is reached in a peace treaty.

"I don't want to raise any difficulties in the face of the glorious decisions of Camp David," he said, adding: "I'd advise that we don't try to hammer on this problem now inasmuch as it will be put on the table for negotiations."

Sadat also expressed regrets at Jordan's initial "no" to the Camp David accords. But he indicated this would not deter him from continuing his peace initiative.

Asked whether he would negotiate for the Palestinians even if Jordan were not a party to the discussions, Sadat replied:

"I don't want to hurt King Hussein. I want to make it as easy as possible for him. But whenever Hussein wavers or is reluctant to assume his responsibilities, I will proceed with the West Bank exactly as I shall be proceeding in the Gaza Strip."

The Egyptian leader scoffed at the suggestion that he was isolated from his fellow Arabs as a result of his willingness to exchange ambassadors with Israel before Christmas.

"Egypt has a population of 40 million," he declared. "Egypt is the key to war or peace. If we add the Sudan, with 20 million people, and Morocco, with 20 million, and Somalia and Saudi Arabia, then really 90 per cent of the Arab world supports me."

President Sadat warmed to the discussion and went on: "If this was a real case of 'isolation' then I would not have survived my visit to Jerusalem last November, in which I defied old slogans and the old hatred and bitterness."

"I'm proud to tell you I have the support of my people."

Drawing on his ever-present pipe, the meticulously dressed Sadat added: "Don't write so it will hurt anyone, but these 40 million Egyptians are the cream of the Arab world."

He observed that while he was grateful to President Carter for dispatching Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to win support of the Camp

David agreements from King Hussein and Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia, the Egyptian President made clear the results of that trip would not affect his policy.

"I appreciate that President Carter immediately sent Secretary Vance to Jordan and Saudi Arabia, but that doesn't mean that without their consent I will go back on my word," he said. "I won't waver, not at all. I shall be proceeding."

Anwar Sadat also rejected statements by some Arabs that Prime Minister Begin was the big winner at Camp David. He pointed out that Israel had agreed to dismantle its military government in the West Bank and Gaza "immediately upon signature of the treaty with Egypt," that there would be "full autonomy for the Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza through elections and that Israel would 'withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza except from certain points that we shall agree upon in negotiations to answer Israel's security needs.'"

Sadat further claimed that "whatever will take place between Egypt and Jordan and Israel and the Palestinians after five years can be vetoed by the Palestinians."

Prime Minister Begin has said he did not accept -- but agreed only to consider -- a U.S. proposal to give local Palestinians the power of veto over future Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

Another claim put forward by Sadat that has not been reflected in other comments on the three-party talks at Camp David was his assertion that the autonomous Palestinian authority on the West Bank and Gaza would have the right to open the jails and free the prisoners, including -- presumably -- captured PLO terrorists.

"When the Palestinians have full autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, thousands of Palestinians who are now in prisons will take their liberty," he said.

The Egyptian President acknowledged that there would be "difficulties, many difficulties, and perhaps even confrontations" in the negotiations over the West Bank. "But, we shall sit around a table and discuss our differences in a civilized way," he said, "and I think we will reach agreement."

Premier Begin said that Israel will never permit any Palestinian state to be there.

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