

ISRAEL AND EGYPT

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David process, it is very encouraging." He said he did not know who would represent the U.S. when the talks resume.

Sadat said the normalization of relations between Israel and Egypt was proceeding well. He said that Begin had pointed out to him some shortcomings in the normalization process and that he immediately instructed his Foreign Minister to correct it. Sadat reassured Israel and said there need be no fear that Egypt would renege on its undertaking once it had regained Sinai in full next April. He stressed that Egypt regarded the peace treaty as part of its strategy not as a tactical object to be used for other purposes.

Sadat attempted to clarify his recent statements about the Palestine Liberation Organization in which he proposed Palestinian participation in the peace talks. He said he appeared to have been misunderstood. He said he did not mean the Palestinians should be brought into the talks immediately, but only after the autonomy talks had been concluded, and during the five-year period of temporary rule.

Sadat said he does not regard the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Reporters present at the press conference noted that Sadat refrained from mentioning the PLO by name referring only to 'Palestinians' apart from his statement that he still did not regard the PLO as the "sole representative of the Palestinian people."

Begin took advantage of the special forum offered him in Alexandria to speak at length of why Israel did not regard the PLO as a negotiating partner. He quoted resolutions of Arab forums and statements by leaders of the "international terrorist organization announcing their underlying enmity of Israel, which they wished to see destroyed, and their anti-Western policies which made them a tool of Moscow. He added however, that the Palestinian representatives from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip would be welcomed in the Egyptian delegation to any negotiations.

Before the press conference, Begin said the Israeli delegation visited the Great Syna-

gogue of Alexandria. Begin noted that this was his second visit there. He appealed to the small Jewish community, descendants of an ancient community "to keep the spark alive. We want all Jews to come to Israel, but of their own free will."

Begin, upon returning to Israel, said the summit he had with Sadat had been "very positive, with positive results." He said the September meetings on the autonomy talks would be held in Cairo, after his return from Washington. A subsequent round of talks would be held in Israel. He also said there would be speedy movement to normalization of cultural, tourism and agricultural ties between the two countries, with Israel's Tourism Minister going to Cairo shortly.

CENSORSHIP BEES

BY ROBERT E. SEGAL

When Bernard Malamud wrote "The Fixer," he threw a giant searchlight on the virulence of anti-Semitism encountered by Russian Jews when czars and cossacks exercised unlimited power. Now we come to a time when self-appointed censors in the U.S. are so confused in their zeal to ban books that they remove "The Fixer" from a high school library on the ground that it is anti-Semitic.

This amazing entry in the annals of current efforts to police the world of literature comes from the School Board of the Island Trees Union Free School District in New York State. It echoes actions in scores of other communities wherein guardians of New Right standards are campaigning for the power to restrict the reading habits of Americans.

Fortunately, five students in the Island Trees school have gone to court to uphold what they claim is their First Amendment right to be free of "the pall of orthodoxy." They are assisted by the New York Civil Liberties Union. As the case winds its way to higher court, 22 groups have filed amicus briefs supporting the students. Meanwhile, the lawyer for the school board, the president of which is

a police detective, has assured the book banners that the library's shelves will be rid for the present of "The Fixer" as well as such other fine works as Kurt Vonnegut's "Slaughterhouse Five," Desmond Morris's "The Naked Ape," and "The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers," edited by Langston Hughes.

Up to this point, we have no reports that the New Testament, embracing John's denouncement of Jews, has been driven from a school library. But we can't be too sure. In Baileyville, Maine, the school board has banned "365 Days," a Vietnam War book written by a doctor who worked in a burn ward treating wounded soldiers. Again in Maine, the Rev. James I. Evans, pastor of the Swanville Community Church, is leading a petition to pull from school libraries copies of "Our Bodies, Our Selves," a guide prepared by the Boston Women's Health Book Collective. And in Abingdon, Va., the Rev. Tom Williams, minister of the Emanuel Baptist Church, has fired up his congregation to help in clearing the shelves of the county library of books he finds obscene. Elsewhere, Solzhenitsyn, Huxley, Salinger and Orwell are the targets of busy book banners.

Were he alive today, Orwell would be not one mite surprised. But surely he would want to arouse millions who wish to be secure in the right to be their own judges of literature, but may still be oblivious to the new fires of Puritanism spreading over the nation.

Ever since Ulysses Grant signed the law which banned fiction considered obscene in the mind of Anthony Comstock, many outstanding literary works have had to battle to say on library shelves. A grocery store clerk, Comstock was made a special agent of the U.S. Postal Service and aimed his fire at so many great plays, books, and works of art that the courts were eventually called upon to offer more seasoned guidance.

Voltaire, Faulkner, Hemingway, D. H. Lawrence, and other giants in the field of literature were caught in the net of censorship. But, slowly, slowly, sanity won a new foothold. In 1956, the Supreme Court warned against "burning the house to roast the pig." The Postmaster General was put on notice to leave off with his habit of pre-censorship.

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