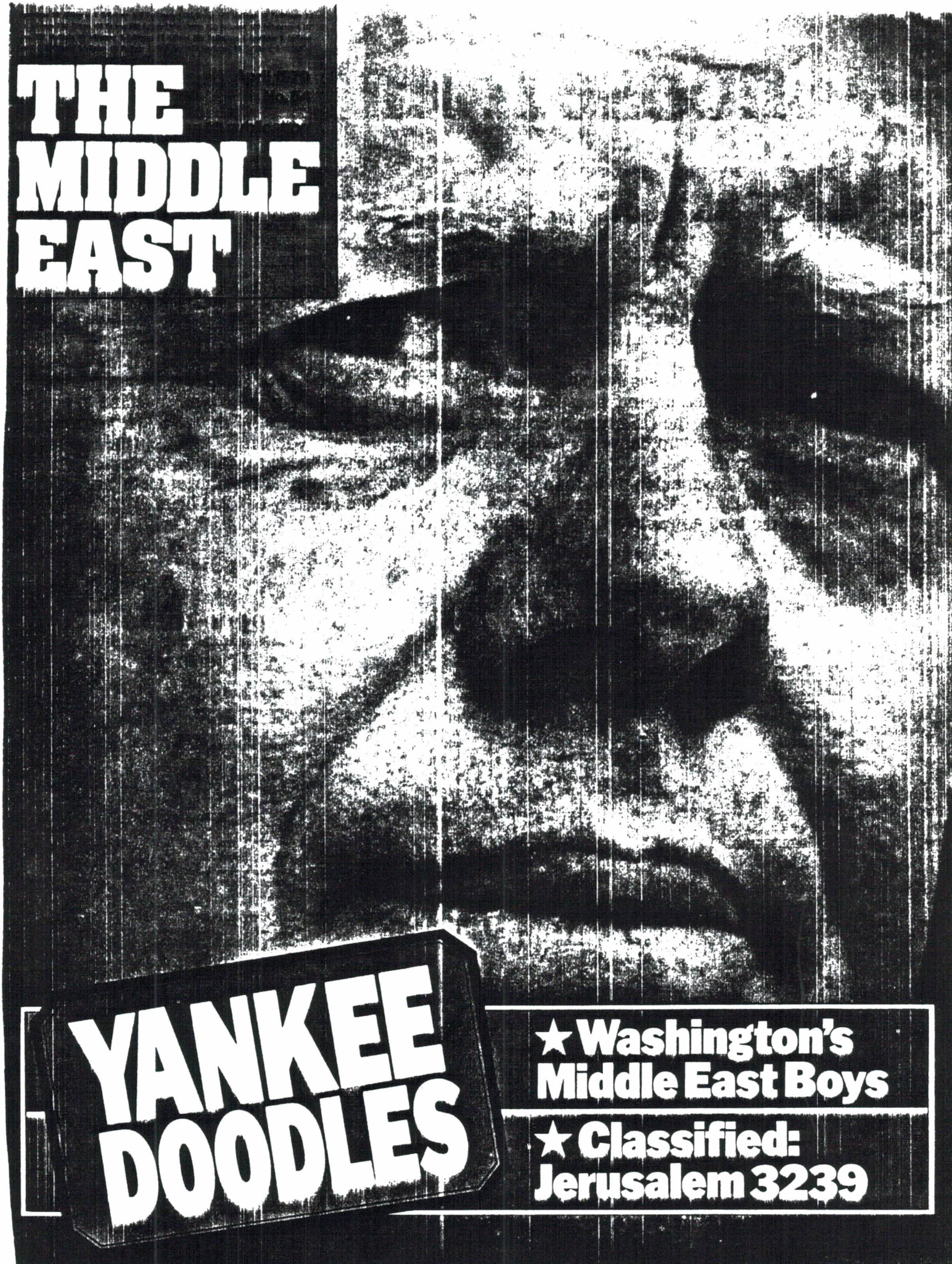

THE MIDDLE EAST
YANKEE DOODLES
★Washington's Middle East Boys
★Classified: Jerusalem 3239

Jimmy Carter trotted into Washington on the white horse of the Brookings report urging a truly comprehensive Arab-Israeli deal and declaring an end to Kissinger's step-by-step policy.

In this report from Washington *Mark Bruzonsky* looks closely at Carter's track record and finds much for the Arabs to be gloomy about.

He also uncovers Carter's Middle East team – a marginally competent but largely ineffectual group of State Department, National Security Council and Pentagon officials who comprise the shaky backbone of Washington's involvement in Arab-Israeli affairs (page 29).

YANKEE DOODLES

Whatever the outcome of President Carter's exhaustive efforts to couple Egypt and Israel in a fragile treaty, the US has undeniably acquiesced in a variant of Kissinger's "step-by-step" diplomacy. Carter mentioned the previous banished phrase in his address to Egypt's Peoples Assembly in early March.

It is "obviously a bilateral peace. It's useless to pretend it's comprehensive," admitted one frustrated top-level Eygptian diplomat during Carter's visit and before Sadat's agreement. Meanwhile, in Washington one of the top diplomats on Carter's Middle East Team confided, "Carter's risking everything in a wild gamble . . . even if he achieves the kind of Egyptian-Israeli deal that's being discussed . . . If much more isn't done and within a year, a real process of West Bank autonomy begun, then whatever the agreements say, whatever the wording, they will unravel and go into the dust-bin of history." The official acknowledged that "So far the Israelis have given nothing real on the Palestinian issue."

Regardless of American rhetoric in public, regardless of Carter's half-hearted insistence that "this treaty can be the beginning of a comprehensive peace in the region," the likelihood of determined efforts by Washington to truly resolve the Arab-Israeli impasse diminishes daily.

CARTER'S PRE-ELECTION PEACE

IT'S NOW OR NEVER

In the coming pre-election period, the Carter White House appears determined to ride the wave of public cheers brought on by Carter's *sui generis* diplomacy. One cynical observer here commented, "Jerry Ford had his Mayaquez and Jimmy Carter has his Egyptian-Israeli deal." He was referring to Ford's use of marines to recapture a US ship seized by the Cambodian regime in 1975 – an action which cost many lives but which won Ford considerable public applause.

Carter has been neatly boxed in by domestic politics and Israeli shrewdness, and consequently Washington seems to be going into one of its cyclical holding patterns, this time using the elaborate Sinai III deal for cover.

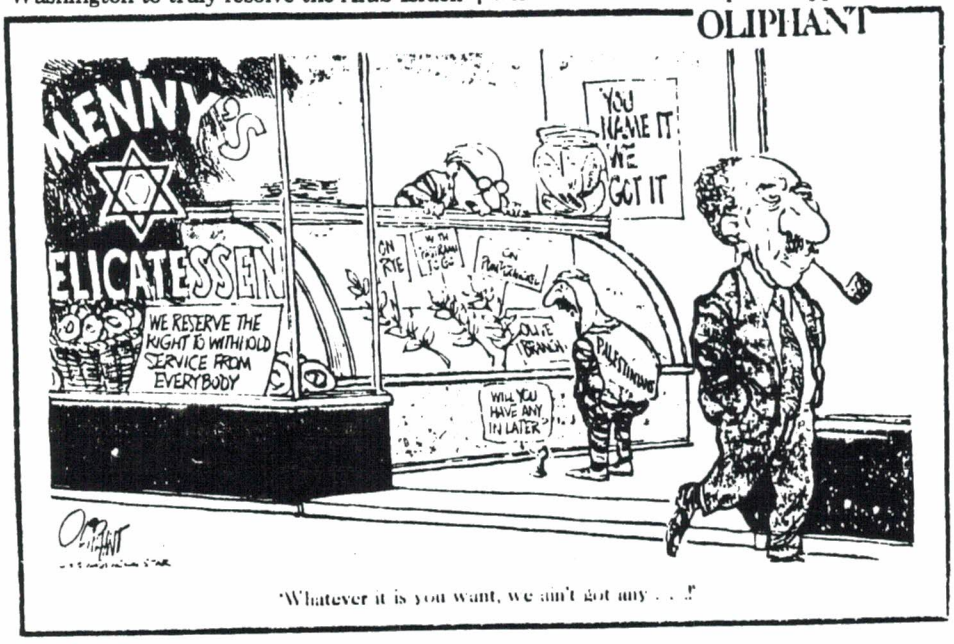
The trick will be to persuade America's Arab allies to wait until after the November 1980 Presidential election, when Carter might again risk pushing Israel forward on the seemingly intractable Palestinian issue.

Successive American governments have been promising pro-American Arabs a peace, trading the occupied territories for normalised relations, a peace based on the principles of UN Resolution 242 as it was understood before Menahem Begin's redefinition, a peace including a Palestinian homeland. But now these same Arabs will have to exercise patience and have faith while Carter lets Jerry Rafshoon capitalise on his dangerously unstable Middle East first-aid.

The Israelis, having defied Carter and forced him to abandon his vision of a stable Middle East settlement, have little reason now to make the significant concessions they have so far avoided – concessions which would increase political tension in Israel by threatening the longstanding Zionist attitude toward the Palestinians. The Israelis will not even consider doing so until they know the fate of this country-boy president who had the audacity to attempt to cajole them into the kind of arrangement they have manoeuvered against for more than a decade. For Zionism, this separate deal with Egypt is a dream come true, and Jerusalem will make the most of it by refusing to go any further.

In many ways this is a replay of what's happened so often before. Carter has committed the US to exorbitant effort to deal with peripheral issues. The real problem remains, with Israel and the Arab world (including most of Egypt's political elite) totally at odds and the Americans largely impotent.

But this time, the tension throughout the Arab world may make waiting "disastrous",



"Whatever it is you want, we ain't got any . . ."

In the preparation of this Cover Story, dozens of persons, in and out of government and with varying views on the Arab-Israeli conflict, were consulted. Few of the quotations are attributed, however, because nearly everyone insisted on keeping their anonymity in discussing Middle East affairs. The subject is controversial and politically dangerous, and we fully respect the need to protect our sources.

as Ambassador L. Dean Brown, President of Washington's prestigious Middle East Institute, predicted in last month's *Forum*.

Even with Carter's triumph there is considerable fear in Washington that Carter's people are losing their grasp of Middle East events. They are "blind and out-of-control", one highly respected political expert with an intimate knowledge of Saudi Arabia said.

Former Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, William Porter, is also critical of the Carter administration, "Mr Carter's advisers, especially those dealing with political and security affairs, lack the background and the intellectual brawn needed to cope with current problems. An extensive repair job is unquestionably needed to restore our friends' confidence in us, but that statement begs the question as to whether Mr Carter and his team are equal to the task."

If an American president fails to produce an Arab-Israeli accommodation during his first two years it's highly unlikely he will do so during his second two.

Carter's Middle East diplomacy was a new approach to a well-worn vision. He inherited the Ford-Kissinger "reassessment", and Brzezinski was to be the architect of the comprehensive peace which America badly needs to protect its multiple interests.

Like presidents Nixon and Ford before him, Jimmy Carter tried for the brass-ring of a multi-lateral, Soviet-accepted Arab-Israeli rapprochement. But in desperation he took whatever he could get past the Israelis. Like his predecessors, he appears to have been defanged by a more resourceful, determined and unyielding Government in Israel which defined how far he could go. And Anwar Sadat, desperate first to get things going and then to show some results, showed Carter how to claim victory in failure.

Now Carter is running hard for November 1980, and this will be the major factor influencing US Middle East policy until then.

It is not just the "Jewish vote" which Carter must court. He cannot afford to further alienate the "Jewish lobby" which in coalition with others can make life painful and costly for the White House on issues having little to do with Middle East policy like SALT, for instance.

Jimmy Carter's involvement in Arab-Israeli history may be ending. For there is widespread agreement among many Middle East analysts here that Carter lacks the power-base and the political ability to achieve anything more than the thinly camouflaged peace he has arranged between Egypt and Israel.

The Egyptian-Israeli treaty, if it lasts, could alter Israel's views of Carter. Carter has not drastically reduced his involvement in Arab-Israeli affairs, but he has reduced immensely his vision of what needs to be accomplished. Nevertheless, Israeli officialdom probably still hopes for Carter's early return to peanut-farming. After November 1980 they will prefer a president whom they have not savaged and whose attitude to the Palestinians is more stable.

Beyond Presidential politics, and largely overlooked in analysing American policy toward the Arab-Israeli dispute, is Washington's Middle East team – a conglomeration of personalities who fill State Department, National Security Council (NSC), Pentagon and White House slots *(see Cover Story Part Three)*.

US Presidential policy on the Middle East takes into account far more than just rational conceptions of "American national interest". Washington is a town of conflicting personal relationships and intense political pressures, trade-offs and compromises, image-destroying threats, false smiles and back-biting.

Any new President, especially one as uninitiated as Jimmy Carter, is at an instant disadvantage. "We have had one problem just learning the players, political information about people ... who they are for, who they are close to, who plays tennis with whom," Press Secretary Jody Powell recently admitted.

After speaking too freely in the pre-campaign period showing a pro-Palestinian bias the President-elect avoided the issue as much as possible during the campaign, and trotted into Washington on the white horse of the Brookings Report, proclaiming an end to Kissinger's step-by-step policy.

For those who may have forgotten, the Brookings Report suggested that the urgently required Arab-Israeli deal should include:

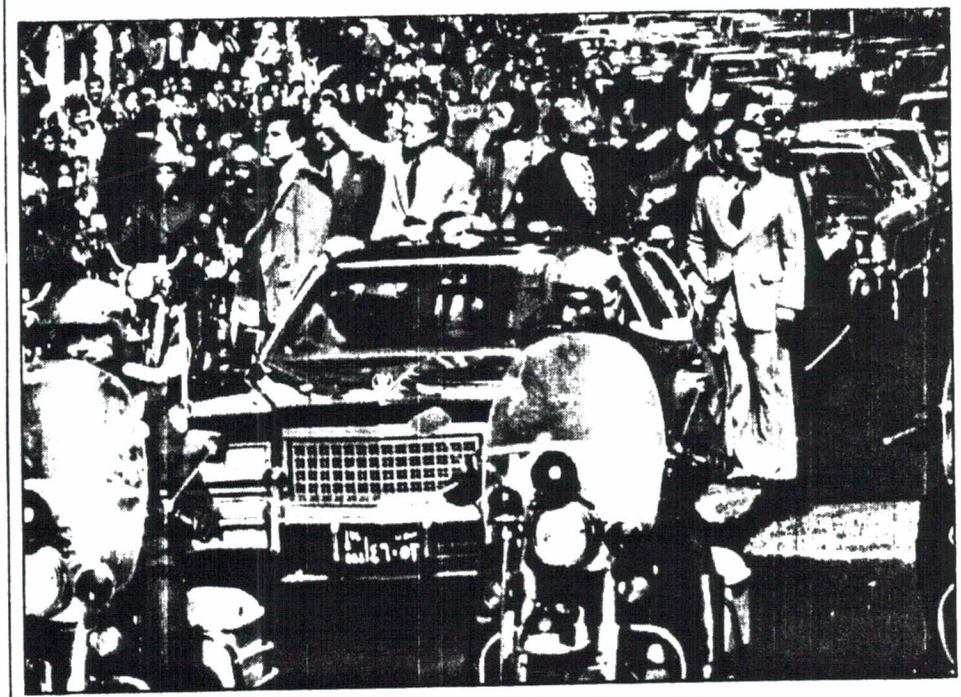
- Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 boundaries with minor, mutually agreed modifications;
- Recognition of "the principle of Palestinian self-determination";
- Resolution, probably at a resumed Geneva Conference, of all outstanding issues, including Jerusalem, leading to peace between all the parties,
- Implementation of the agreement in stages over a number of years;
- Arab recognition of Israel, the conclusion of peace treaties, and normalisation of relations;
- Some arrangement for multilateral and bilateral guarantees for Israel's security, with the US probably playing a unique role.

Beyond this widely supported public document – one result of Kissinger's "reassessment" of Middle East policy which infuriated the Israelis – a post-election paper on foreign policy from Brzezinski to Carter helped to persuade Carter to step into the Middle East quagmire personally. "The Arabs had put their home in order and the crisis looked ripe for movement," one White House official recalled.

But Carter was outmanoeuvered at nearly every turn; first by Israel which blocked his Geneva approach, then by Sadat who refused to wait for results from Carter's on-the-job training, then again by Israel which refused to think seriously beyond a separate deal with Egypt.

Carter was unaware of the effect US statements and actions could have on Middle East politics. The campaign to open a dialogue with the PLO in early 1977, for instance, was undermined partly by members of Carter's own Middle East team who did not appreciate the subtleties of Palestinian politics.

According to one State Department official, "When Carter called at Clinton for a 'Palestinian homeland' (on the last day of the March 1977 Palestinian National



Carter, Sadat in triumphal procession: "a bilateral peace"?

Council (PNC) meeting in Cairo) he had just found out what the PNC was." And as National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA) President Hisham Sharabi said in his *Forum* interview with *The Middle East* last August, "the US came under great Israeli pressure as (it) appeared to be moving towards a greater understanding with the PLO. Carter buckled under the pressure, as he did after so many other positions that he has taken which elicited strong Israeli opposition".

Carter's plan to reconvene the Geneva Conference was first subjected to a combination of Israeli intransigence and stalling and finally succumbed to Jewish militancy. Then, fearing an imposed settlement, Israel unleashed its supporters in explosive opposition to the October US-Soviet Joint Statement. This rocked the White House and mixed domestic politics with all further Middle East efforts. The Joint Statement was Carter's baptism of fire, and he learned, like his predecessors, that domestic and Middle East politics are inescapably linked, severely limiting any American President's freedom of action.

Sadat's Jerusalem visit threw Carter's people into a quandary from which they have yet to emerge. Carter was able to abandon the Geneva approach and settle back to watch the Egyptian-Israel discourse. Comprehensive peace conveniently receded into the distance, to be replaced by the easier target of an Egyptian-Israeli treaty.

The Americans further rationalised their failure by blaming Sadat for aborting not only Geneva but also the whole concept of an overall settlement. By September 1977 the Carter team had already begun to think "in the familiar small, conventional mould", one State Department official recalled.

After the Joint Statement fiasco even State Department experts began to defer both to domestic politics and to White House confusion by acquiescing in Carter's new approach. The real issues were "deferred". "Bye-bye PLO", Brzezinski said and he began speaking of "concentric circles" which would mystically come together in a piece-by-piece Middle East peace. But Carter had simply chosen the easy way out. Middle East policy became more a question of avoiding contradictory pressures than capitalising on the unique possibilities which still existed for achieving an Arab-Israeli settlement.

Carter was unprepared psychologically, conceptually and organisationally to face Congress, the American Jewish community or the press and to alter simplistic and outdated views. He never understood the need to build a supportive constituency that could be mobilised when the going got tough. His instincts about the Middle East were sound but his ideas on how to achieve a solution were inadequate.

"Carter specialises in doing good things badly," one career diplomat noted. "There's been no coherent Middle East programme anywhere in the US Government," an insider explained.

Asked in early 1977 how the Administration was preparing to deal with the American Jewish community, a high-ranking White House official said, "Well, we haven't made any special plans; should we?" And when it comes to dealing with the press, neither Jerry Schecter at the NSC nor George Sherman at the State Department can match Dan Patir, press adviser to the Israeli Prime Minister, or Avi Pazner at the Israeli Embassy.

It is not really surprising, therefore, that the Carter team has been outdone by a determined Israeli government. "Time and again Israeli manoeuvering, sometimes in dishonest ways, has frustrated US policy," a European diplomat responsible for assessing Carter's effectiveness concluded.

The Israeli Government has even attacked Brzezinski and Carter personally, describing Brzezinski as "an enemy of Israel". Before his departure, Israeli Ambassador Simha Dinitz made an unprecedented attack on the White House alleging that, "for the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel 30 years ago, President Carter has changed the policy of the US Government and made it pro-Arab". President Carter's vision of peace could only lead to a "peace of the graveyard", he added.

As Carter's Middle East effort lost credibility, demoralisation replaced anticipation. Not only were Arab-Americans shocked by Carter's inability to follow his plans through, but moderate Jewish leaders, who would have tried to encourage the White House and restrain their less-sophisticated flocks, also began to lose interest.

By the end of the first year, the press as well began to reflect the lack of self-confidence, indecisiveness, and powerlessness that had come to characterise Carter's efforts. And toward the end of his second year State Department officials could be heard remarking that "Just having Carter as President is a continual crisis", and "next time, I'd rather vote for Billy than for Jimmy."

By last summer, the unprecedented appointment to the White House of Edward Sanders, former President of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) which in theory is a domestic lobby of American Jews, but in practice amounts to a "subsidiary of the Israeli Embassy" (to quote a prominent Jewish intellectual) showed that Carter had capitulated.

Carter let his image-maker, Jerry Rafshoon, portray Camp David and the salvation of it as an unprecedented historic accomplishment, although it was little more than a desperate ploy to reverse his plummeting popularity ratings. Political imperatives in the Middle East had become

COMPETENT, INEFFECTUAL, UNDERSTAFFED

WASHINGTON'S MIDDLE EAST BOYS

YANKEE DOODLES

Each US President partly inherits and partly designates his "Middle East team". Carter's includes Vice-President Walter Mondale, a cheery partisan of Israel like his great mentor, Hubert Humphrey; Hamilton Jordan, constantly sniffing the domestic political winds after having had to bail out the fledgling Administration from the Jewish backlash caused by the joint US-USSR Statement; Zbigniew Brzezinski, who, according to one senior government official, "didn't know the difference between an Arab and an Israeli" when he took over the National Security Council, yet whose conceptual analysis provides some hope; and Cyrus Vance, the lawyer's lawyer who, though respected enough by Carter to warn him of the delusive aspects of Camp David, does not do so.

The only White House official involved in the every-day workings of the "Middle East team" with reasonable expertise in Middle East affairs is William Quandt. But he functions more as a State Department insider than as an in-house White House confidant. His expertise is not effectively channelled to the President, partly because his style limits his operational effectiveness, partly because of the variety of competing perspectives at the White House, and partly because he "isn't a wheeler-dealer who asserts himself", according to a close observer.

But the day-to-day Middle East analysts – those little-known personalities submerged in the bureaucracies, mainly in the Department of State at "Foggy Bottom" – are the backbone of the "Middle East team", the support staff from which come the think-tank appraisals for the White House.

"If I were Vance, I would have fired all of them. They've got too much baggage from the past. They accept marginal progress as the goal. Those guys work 12-14 hours a day, have lousy family lives and have nothing to show for it." This diplomatic heresy was uttered by a retired senior American diplomat in frustration at Carter's Middle East policy and the State Department's lack of fortitude.

Carter's greatest error in the herculean task of engineering an Arab-Israeli peace was his failure to put together a viable, tightly-knit Middle East team capable of co-ordinating US planning.

Instead, Carter thought he could get by with a competent but largely ineffectual and seriously understaffed State Department whose Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (NEA) is still running scared after years of being pejoratively labelled "Arabists", although this term has not really applied since the 1950s.

Yet these expressions of despair camouflage the fact that the NEA is one of the best in the Department of State – one of the most professional, the most competent, and with the most experienced personnel.

"Hal" Saunders: the sounding-board

Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary of State, head of NEA

The State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (NEA) is now headed by Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders. "Hal" replaced Alfred ("Roy") Atherton in April 1978 when Atherton became Ambassador at Large with special responsibility for Middle East peace negotiations.

Saunders headed the Bureau of Intelligence and Research for over two years before his appointment as Assistant Secretary. The previous year he had served as Deputy Assistant Secretary in NEA, and from 1961 to 1975 he worked at the National Security Council (NSC). From 1967 he held the job Bill Quandt now has at NSC, with Quandt as his deputy for some of those years. He had earlier worked with both the CIA and the US Air Force, after studying for his BA at Princeton and his PhD in American Studies at Yale.

That a careerist like Saunders heads the NEA is a sign that it is a professional bureau, unlike those for African Affairs and for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, both headed by political appointees – Richard Moose and Richard Holbrooke respectively.

When he took over, he had as much experience as anyone in the way a US President operates when it comes to Middle East affairs. "He felt very conscious of the problem of having bosses sitting around," one of his colleagues confided. Saunders clearly saw the need for "a big data base and lots of staff work on the shelf" for use when necessary.

In short, as another insider recalled, "Hal knew there was a great need to educate the new President and his people about the Middle East." Much staff work began in 1976 and 1977 with Saunders using the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), which he then headed, as his support group. Bill Kirby, also in INR, was responsible for putting together much of the data, especially on the West Bank. "Hal wanted to have his travelling library so he could constantly bring up things with the Secretary."

But about this time Saunders was badly burned by being too far in front, and he became in a sense a scapegoat for what became known as "The Saunders Statement". It was this document, delivered at the end of 1975 to a subcommittee of Congress, in which a high official of the US Government first recognised that, "The Palestinian dimension of the Arab-Israeli conflict is the heart of the conflict."

"Hal's always thinking about what ends up on paper," another member of the Middle East team noted. But the "big problem has always been how to translate on paper things on which there is agreement and then how to implement what ends up on the paper."

As planning went on for the transition to a Carter presidency, "Hal believed there was no return to step-by-step. It was step-by-step to nothing. They thought in bigger terms then," an insider said. "But by September 1978 they ended up thinking in a small conventional mould" again and NEA's acquiescence to the Camp David approach became inevitable.

After Camp David and Carter's unwillingness to stand up to Begin on the settlements moratorium controversy, Saunders was sent to King Hussain and the West Bank Palestinians in an attempt to reassure them of American intentions. But when the Israelis walked over him neither the Secretary of State nor the President backed him up. And today, the Israelis gloatingly call the increasing number of settlements on the West Bank "Saunders Houses," mocking his attempts at reassurance.

Saunders and Quandt are the two main architects of American Middle East policy at the practical level. Atherton and Vance are the primary implementors. Saunders had given the Department a shot in the arm since the days of Joe Sisco, but NEA is still politically impotent in the face of domestic interest groups and the Israeli Government.

almost totally sub-ordinated to American politics.

The extent of Carter's incompetence in dealing with the Middle East was finally revealed when Begin challenged the viability of Camp David as well as Carter's remaining credibility by rejecting any moratorium on Israeli settlements beyond three months. The entire American effort was nakedly exposed as a bluff, for the promised letter detailing Israel's commitment to halt settlements for at least five years did not appear. Moreover, the moratorium itself, the only aspect of the framework agreements which suggested a serious Israeli commitment to Palestinian autonomy, disappeared.

"Any self-respecting President should have slugged it out with the Israelis on the settlements issue after Camp David," reflected one top government official involved in Arab-Israeli affairs. "That's where everything began to unravel."

"Those damn new settlements," said another American official involved in the negotiations, "could do more damage than bombs, and if Begin goes ahead with them, it will be politically difficult for a more reasonable successor to put them out."

This was much worse than the "Rogers Plan" debacle and the "reassessment's" collapse, for Carter was the first American President to have a significant group of Arab leaders prepared to make historic concessions to Israel. He also had significant domestic support for the comprehensive settlement approach.

"To let this opportunity pass could mean disaster not only for the Middle East, but perhaps for the international political and economic order as well," Carter said in May 1977, adding, "I would not hesitate if I saw clearly a fair and equitable solution to use the full strength of our own country and its persuasive powers to bring those nations to agreement."

But by December 1978 he had become involved, in the words of one of the members of his own Middle East team, in a "disgustingly childish contest with Begin" over the December 17th deadline for an Egyptian-Israeli agreement.

"Carter's efforts in February and March were fumbling and, in the eyes of many, degrading. Aware that the entire Camp David process was about to crumble and that the Egyptians viewed April as a deadline, Carter attempted "to keep up the momentum" with the Camp David II summit.

But when he invited Sadat to Washington in the wake of King Hussain's brush-off and Crown Prince Fahd's cancellation, Egypt's monarch saw little point in accepting. Carter then tried to bring Begin together with Egypt's Prime Minister Mustafa Khalil. But Begin refused.

So Carter made the invitation to Begin personal and spent a few gruelling days haggling in Washington before announcing his own "sacred mission" to Cairo and Jerusalem. One State Department official said a few days later, "The way this trip was put together convinces me for the first time that Carter might not know what he's doing or what he's risking." Like Sadat's foreign ministry, Carter's Foggy Bottom professionals view Carter's separate peace crusade with much scepticism and some disillusionment.

Asked why the conclusions of the 1975 "reassessment" (similar to those in the Brookings Report) weren't pursued, Henry Kissinger once said, "We did the attainable given our prevailing domestic situation." The "reassessment" according to journalist Edward Sheehan in his study *The Arabs, Israelis and Kissinger*, gave the following preferred solution:

"The United States should announce its conception of a final settlement in the Middle East, based on the 1967 frontiers of Israel with minor modifications, and containing strong guarantees for Israel's security. The Geneva Conference should be reconvened; the Soviet Union should b encouraged to co-operate in the quest to resolve all outstanding questions (including the status of Jerusalem)."

But Kissinger decided that domestic politics precluded this option and continued his step-by-step policy hoping that "at some future date, when the President wa stronger, he might go to the people with a plan for peace based upon his first option".

As to why Carter did not pursue this course, the general conclusion in Washington is that he lacked the political sophistication to pull it off.

Carter's people had to learn through experience that, "The way Israel has the U Government penetrated is a joke – a goddamn scandal," in the words of a former member of the Middle East team with experience in the White House, Pentagon and State Department. Israeli intelligence about developments in Washington is infinitely superior to American intelligence abo Israel.

"If we tried to spy on them, we are s penetrated they'd find out here and cause a great scandal," one insider confided. Said another, "The Israelis know that we have Swiss cheese for a Government, and they g through every hole ... The Israelis ha been smart enough not to abide by th agreement between Mossad and CIA tha they should not spy on each other. An we've been dumb enough to live up to it."

A veteran observer of Washington's Middle East game concluded "Israel has tremendous ability to undo US Middle Ea policy. So the Arabs naturally have healthy mistrust about the American actually doing what they say they want t do."

As Carter has done little since Cam David to alter this truth, "the Arabs may b compelled to injure us so much economica ly and politically as to compel us to what we've said all along we want to do," Foggy Bottom desk officer admitted.

"Mr Carter," a *Jerusalem Post* politic analyst noted, "is currently viewed as th worst American president Israel has ev 'vouchsafed' in her 30 years ... If there any hope in regard to Mr Carter, it lies the possibility of the Arab-Israeli dispu assuming (marginal) proportions on h agenda of foreign and domestic issues and the possibility that he will, after all, be one-term president. November 1980, th date of the next American presidenti election, looms as large in Israeli (wish thinking as does the issue of a target date f election in the West Bank/Gaza autonomy

Unfortunately, the White House is al becoming preoccupied with November 198 so it will be a long wait until 1981 for t Arabs.

Post-Camp David cartoons criticised Carter and image-maker Rafshoon

"YOU WANT A SUIT, I GOT A SUIT — SO, WHENEVER DID I SAY YOU'D LIKE THE FIT?"

Yet Saunders has put together a competent operation at Foggy Bottom, with Michael Sterner and Morrie Draper as deputies. Kirby in Policy Planning along with Cluverius and Howell operate as a small in-house brain trust. And Quandt provides direct liaison with NSC and through Brzezinski to the White House.

"Hal's really a technician. He will try to carry out what the bosses want. He won't ever talk back to the President and make him face unpalatable issues," according to a colleague who admires Saunders but believes he has not risen to the challenge of his new position.

"These are all people brought up on the Kissinger school of realism," which could well limit their creativity, someone close to NEA noted. "Under Kissinger there really was very little input for NEA except at the very top," which is why today NEA is so reluctant to assert itself.

A former member of the Middle East team, reflecting on Saunders, concluded, "Hal's probably the most outspoken of them all internally about pushing for a comprehensive settlement. Hal's willing to ask the honest questions and to realise how short-sighted and nit picking the Israelis can be. He knows that in the past, as recalcitrant as the Israelis were, the Arabs were worse. But he also know this isn't true any more."

John Richardson of NAAA described Saunders as "quite straight and intellectually up to the job". "He has blossomed as a personality, whereas I used to think of him as hopeless, a big sponge with no output. Now he's much more aggressive as a salesman openly talking about phase two after Camp David with references to the PLO and a possible Palestinian state."

In effect, Saunders is something of a sounding-board for the US Government with the Arab moderates, someone the Arabs will listen to. But, of course, this gets him in trouble with the Israelis. He may have been so intimidated last time he went to talk to King Hussain and the West Bankers that he will try to keep a lower profile in future. There is even speculation in Washington that the Israelis took him on purposely, hoping to lessen his usefulness to the US.

Sherman: even-handed surprise

George Sherman, Public Affairs Adviser, NEA

"The F-15 deal showed that when we decide we want to do something we do it!" George Sherman emphasised. He is quick to cover up Administration bumbling, but occasionally loses credibility with journalists with assessments like, "There's always been continuity between Kissinger and this Administration in dealing with the Arab-Israeli problem. We've never stopped believing in step-by-step progress in the Middle East." And other statements, such as, "We don't think in terms of how is the Jewish community going to react," and "Camp David was a remarkable achievement and I don't think anything that has followed it has contradicted it," do not add sophistication to George Sherman's style.

Sherman does not see his job in terms of developing trusted and confidential relationships with journalists, but as providing advice for his superiors on how to deal with the press and as preparing statements that are finely tuned to what his superiors want to say and no more. Many observers believe that he is quite good at this. A former member of the Middle East team indicated that "one of the reasons Sherman's job hasn't been upgraded is because Hal (Saunders) and Roy (Atherton) didn't want to."

Sherman was recommended to Kissinger by Simha Dinitz, Israel's former Ambassador in Washington. From 1961 to 1974 Sherman was Latin American, European, Diplomatic and finally Pentagon correspondent for *The Washington Star*. He joined the Department in May, 1974, in a category called "Foreign Service Reserve," which means little job security.

"He was a blatant pro-Israeli (expletive deleted) when he worked for the *Star*," commented an admirer, who now sees "George as very even-handed, a surprise to his colleagues." He is so even-handed that *The New York Times* right-wing columnist William Safire recently lambasted him as someone "despised" by the Israelis.

Sherman's was one of the very few political appointments in NEA, a bureau where old-school ties and the old-boy network are still important.

One colleague from his days at the *Star* has become disenchanted with Sherman's attitude. "He puts me off because he thinks he's hot (expletive deleted) and should be hard to reach. There's layers of people now between the phone call and even reaching George." But others find him accessible, even if not very helpful.

In fairness, Sherman's job is time-consuming and difficult. There is plenty of work in just dealing with major public presentation problems in NEA and maybe Sherman cannot also be expected to foster personal relations with key journalists.

Many of the Middle East team respect Sherman's intelligence and energy, and his ability to phrase things just right for press releases and public statements is widely admired.

Sterner, Draper: the "technicians"

Michael Sterner, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, NEA

"He gives me the impression he thinks the Middle East is hopeless, that he really doesn't give a (expletive deleted) but it's his job," one Washington lobbyist said.

Others described Sterner as a thoughtful man with considerable experience in the Arab world. "He's candid and critical about what's going on," one insider noted. "He's one of the brighter people involved".

Both Sterner and Draper "are technicians", one correspondent summed up. "They don't make policy, they follow policy and they change when policy changes".

Sterner is Deputy to Hal Saunders, responsible for the peace negotiations. He is very much a technician, but he's also known to share the opinion of many in NEA that what's lacking in US Middle East policy is "determination at the top to pursue a concerted course". Like everyone at Foggy Bottom, Sterner realises that such determination is not really to be expected in view of the political process by which policy is made.

Sterner received his BA in Government from Harvard in 1951, and for the next two years was Government Relations Representative for Aramco in Dhahran. He then worked as an intelligence analyst in the US Army.

After entering the foreign service in late 1956, Sterner was assigned to Aden and Yemen. In the late 1950s he had Arabic language training in Beirut before going to Cairo as a political officer.

In 1964 he returned to Washington to serve as desk officer for the United Arab Republic until 1966 when he was assigned to the Arab-Israeli desk. From 1969 until 1970 he attended the National War College and subsequently became Director of Egyptian Affairs. In December 1973 he was a member of the US delegation to the Geneva peace conference and for the next three years was the first resident US Ambassador to the UAE.

Morris ("Morrie") Draper, like Michael Sterner, is a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State under Harold Saunders. While Sterner concerns himself with the Middle East peace

negotiations, Draper is responsible for day-to-day affairs especially with Northern Africa.

"Draper's strength is information," an admirer noted. "He has an encyclopaedic knowledge of Lebanon, for instance. He's so well informed that he's very useful to have around."

Draper received his BA in political science from the University of California in 1952. He did post-graduate work and Arabic language training at the American University of Beirut between 1959 and 1961, after joining the foreign service in 1952.

Draper has held diplomatic posts in Singapore, Baghdad, Jedda, Amman and Ankara. From 1976 until taking his new assignment in August, 1978, he was Country Director for Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon.

Korn: one line man

David Korn, Director, Israel and Arab-Israeli Affairs, NEA

At a State Department meeting after the Blair House talks which followed the Camp David summit someone expressed the frustrated opinion that "the Israelis were such (expletive deleted) about the settlements issue!"

"But we've got to be careful not to get the Israelis upset," David Korn said in the dead silence. Finally someone yelled, "It's them getting us upset!"

One member of the Middle East team said of Korn: "His personal views so highly colour his view of how our policy should be formulated and implemented that he's almost always discounted."

But he is better appreciated by others on the Middle East team including those at the top and often accompanies Assistant Secretary Saunders and Ambassador Atherton in their periodic shuttles to the Middle East.

Korn's education was at the University of Missouri, the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington. He joined the foreign service in September 1957, serving in Paris, Beirut, Nouakchott, Tel Aviv and New Delhi. At Foggy Bottom he was Director of the Office for Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Iraq (1972-1975), Policy Planning Staff member for the Near East, and now is Director at the Office of Israel and Arab-Israeli affairs.

He is "the only guy in that outfit who stands out from the others in terms of his thinking," a European diplomat noted. He is a kind of black sheep, with his rather dogmatic insistence that the Israeli point of view should usually be accepted. "He keeps the other side's view out front," one colleague said.

And even an admirer commented, "David insists on expressing his view before any decision is made. He's often abrasive because he insists on being heard. And it's the other guy's problem if he doesn't like it."

His influence was most recently felt in his insistent moderation of the State Department's yearly human rights report. Various reports of torture and abuse of Palestinians in the occupied territories, including a number of highly controversial cables from the US Consulate in Jerusalem by visa officer Alexandra Johnson, were almost totally discounted by Korn's office in preparing the section on Israel (see page 36).

Because of his "limitations", one of his assistants, **Jacque Covey,** a young, sharp Israeli affairs expert, is often consulted directly by senior staff.

Covey's relations with Sterner, Kirby and others seem to be better than with Korn, which might explain why he was included in the official delegation to the Blair House talks which omitted Korn. Covey himself modestly insists that his involvement was mainly because of the mapping issues considered at the talks. But insiders know better.

Cluverius: sees both sides

Wat Cluverius IV, Director of the Office of Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Iraq, NEA

Wat Cluverius is a close confidant and friend of Assistant Secretary Hal Saunders, one of the Brains Trust Saunders established at NEA.

Cluverius was Ambassador in Bahrain for two years, and between 1973 and 1976 he was Deputy Director of the Office of Israel and Arab-Israeli affairs. Before that he spent four years in Israel, first as Economic Officer and then as Political Officer, after which he took an academic break to study and write on Middle East affairs.

"Wat's got a very sharp mind and a good sense of tactics. He's reasonably outspoken in inner councils . . . with a strong sensitivity to Israel's point of view. He knows what they're saying and why . . . but he doesn't want people to be pro-Israel just to be pro-Israel, he wants people to understand the Israeli view," a former Middle East team member said. "Wat can see both sides," according to another.

Interestingly, his sensitivity to Israeli views doesn't make him pro-Israeli like Korn. One of his most perceptive colleagues, often considered quite pro-Arab, sees Cluverius as "one of the most pro-Arab" guys in NEA as well as "one of the brightest and most articulate". Says another, "I trust him and don't think he'll (expletive deleted) around whereas Sterner and Draper would," another colleague said.

Nat Howell one of Cluverius' assistants who handles Syrian affairs, is also an important player on the Middle East team. "He's one of the most knowledgeable people on West Bank issues and a long-time agitator pushing people to deal with the West Bank and Palestinian problems."

Marthinsen: careful "Arabist"

Charles Marthinsen, Director of Egyptian Office, NEA

Forty-eight year-old Charles Marthinsen may be closer to the stereotyped image of the State Department "Arabist" than any other on the Middle East team. And maybe that accounts for his limited role.

Marthinsen joined the foreign service in 1956 and has served in five Arab capitals – Beirut, Riyadh, Damascus, Cairo and Tripoli as well as in Dacca. He took over the Egyptian desk at NEA in May 1978.

Marthinsen is well-aware that the Department has been burned over the years by charges that it is full of "Arabists". Furthermore, he is very much a company man. "We are here to carry out Presidential foreign policy", he carefully informs journalists, "Once a decision is made, we implement it."

Hansell: legal language man

A. Herbert J. Hansell, State Department Legal Adviser

The State Department's top legal expert, Herbert J. Hansell, has been a very active behind-the-scenes member of the Middle East team ever since the Camp David "framework agreements" were concluded.

Hansell practised law in Cleveland, Ohio, from 1953 until early 1977 when he came to Foggy Bottom as "Legal Adviser". He graduated from Yale Law School in 1949.

"Ed" Sanders: laying ground for 1980?

Edward Sanders, Senior Adviser to the President and to the Secretary of State

"He's a man of experience who knows American politics very well and who has a terribly difficult job where there's almost no way to please his many critics," one thoughtful top Jewish professional said of Edward Sanders. "He's sitting on a hot seat having to run interference between the Jewish community and the President in one of the most difficult periods in US-Israel relations," he added. "Ed's the only person who could handle this difficult situation because he has the confidence of the Jewish community and the President. He's a rare combination."

"Ed's background doesn't make him an expert on Middle East History," a Jewish leader, and friend of Sanders said, "but his background does make him an expert whose thinking is important in putting the total picture together. In order to be a foreign policy adviser, certain talents are required. To be an adviser on the Middle East and Foreign affairs as they affect the Jewish community, there are certain other talents needed which are not to be found necessarily in one person." However one views Sanders, never before has the former head of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) found his way into the White House as "Senior Adviser to the President".

And never before has the White House's Jewish liaison person also been pushed on the Department of State.

For some, Carter's appointment of Edward Sanders to mollify the American Jewish community signalled the shift from a comprehensive to a separate peace. "Surely", one Middle East analyst reflected, "Carter wouldn't have given Ed Sanders a platform to resign from (as did former Special Assistant Mark Siegel) if he were planning to continue his get-tough policies toward Israel or if he were really planning to insist on an across-the-board settlement."

Ed Sanders vehemently denies that he just liaises between the White House and the American Jewish community. He believes he is far more senior than Mark Siegel. "I consider myself an adviser to both the President and the Secretary of State on Middle East affairs and sometimes on other foreign policy questions," he insisted.

His statement that he would not have accepted a job as just a replacement for Mark Siegel may explain why he was given offices in the West Wing of the White House and next to Secretary of State Vance at Foggy Bottom and why he took the elevated title of "Senior Adviser". Carter wanted him badly and disregarded all precedents by putting such an obviously partisan figure into the White House to deal with a single portfolio and also by thrusting him into the non-partisan Department of State.

After calling for an end to the special treatment which the Jewish community has enjoyed in the past, the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA) reacted forcefully to Sanders' appointment. It "raises serious questions about the commitment of your Administration to an even-handed Middle East policy", Executive Director Jean Abinader told Carter last June. Since then NAAA has raised with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) the issue of whether it is proper for such a partisan figure to be assigned space and staff at the Department of State.

In announcing the Sanders appointment *The New York Times* noted that he was being brought in "to help sell Administration policy to the nation's Jews . . ., an attempt to shore up Mr Carter's faltering relationship with American Jewry, which strongly opposed the Middle East arms sales and has become disenchanted with both the President and the Democratic Party".

More cynical political analysts in Washington, however, believe Carter's real reason for bringing in Sanders was to improve his standing with the Jewish community in good time for the 1980 campaign, but early enough to be able to discount such motives.

As Sanders tells the story, "I had worked with the White House and we had a mutual confidence in each other and I had standing with the (Jewish) community. On the other hand, at 56, I had a well-established law practice and I could quietly retire. Yet, there was a stirring within me, I was committed as both an American and a Jew. I doubted that I had the ability to change history but I did feel I could make a tiny difference." Asked why Sanders was chosen by Carter, an important Jewish community leader said, "It was a natural thing for a Georgian President who didn't know too many people in New York to select a fellow close to him and in whom he had confidence."

"Helping the President keep peace in the Middle East" is how Sanders described his role soon after coming to Washington. But subsequently he has been more discreet, preferring to avoid publicity and saying next to nothing when this is not possible.

One State Department official summed up the Department's approach to Ed Sanders as "to put him in a corner and forget him". And a White House insider commented, "I don't think Ed Sanders has had any influence on the substance of our Middle East policy since he's come here."

Norman Anderson, a foreign service officer, assists Sanders at the State Department. But **Marvin C. Feuerwerger,** another AIPAC Graduate who worked for the Jewish lobby as a legislative assistant in 1975 and 1976, is his main aide. "Ed took AIPAC's advice in hiring Feuerwerger," one Jewish source concluded. "He's a typical Congressional type . . . rather closed on Middle East issues. (He) made up his mind where the political hay is on the Middle East and stuck to it."

"Roy" Atherton: "they also serve . . ."

Alfred Leroy Atherton, US Ambassador at Large, with Special Responsibility for Middle East Negotiations

"He is my paradigm of the selfless, uncelebrated public servant, superior in his technical capacities, consumed by a need to prove anew each day that he is worthy of his master's confidence," so Edward R. F. Sheehan described Alfred Leroy Atherton in his book *The Arabs, Israelis, and Kissinger.*

"He made his measure of mistakes," Sheehan added, "not the least of them his share in the myopia of American policy before the October War; since then, if he perceived the inadequacies of Kissinger's strategy, he remained silent or was ineffectual in his dissent. As with so many career diplomats, one seldom knew what Atherton thought or where he stood."

Unlike Saunders who has his own strong views and sense of timing, Roy Atherton survives by completely subordinating his views to those he serves. Unlike Joe Sisco, who was Kissinger's "trouble-shooter", Atherton does not seem to have a bias towards Israel. Sheehan recalled visiting Atherton's office in the course of writing his book:

"Atherton was a servant of the sleepless night – a not uncommon necessity whenever he flew to the Middle East with Dr Kissinger. He was in bondage to the button on his telephone that connected him to the Secretary's office . . . another telegram to be drafted for Cairo or Damascus, another memorandum to be negotiated with the Israelis, another pronouncement to be prepared for some Congressional committee.

Kissinger reprimanded Atherton when Sheehan's book caused a commotion. The Department of State was seen to be guilty of leaking material to the pro-Administration author

at a time when the White House was criticising Congress about leaks. Atherton took this public blame, without comment or any sign of concern. Like Saunders, he instinctively knows that one of his functions is to protect those who rely on electoral politics for their power.

Atherton studied at Harvard for his BA and MA and entered the foreign service after duty in the army during World War II. He served in Germany and Syria during his first 11 years, returning to Washington in 1958 to work on Jordanian, Iraqi and Cypriot affairs. He then studied advanced economics at the University of California and was sent to India for his most recent overseas assignment.

In 1965 Atherton joined NEA as Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs. From 1966 to 67 he was Country Director for Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, and from 1967 to 70 Country Director for Israel and Arab-Israeli Affairs. He was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State from 1970 to 74 and then Assistant Secretary of State.

By making Atherton Ambassador at Large with Special Responsibility for the Middle East Peace Negotiations, the Carter Administration provided Vance with the back-up he needed and made way for Saunders to become Assistant Secretary.

"Atherton probably believes in a Palestinian state," a former colleague commented, "but he would shoot for something less simply to get the Israelis to support it. He believes the Palestinians would be controlled by their Arab neighbours."

"Bill" Quandt: primary staff link

William B. Quandt, National Security Council staff

When the question is asked who is the most knowledgeable specialist on Carter's Middle East team, Bill Quandt's name is usually mentioned first.

"Quandt's a careful, well-informed academic with a long record of Middle East studies alternating with Government service," one colleague said. "He's a cool, well-informed, frank guy who probably speaks his mind in policy councils. He has an image of being informed and tilted toward the Arab and Palestinian side," this insider continued, "but I suspect he has subtle contacts with Jews around the country more than is realised."

Quite a few specialists, however, criticise the depth of Quandt's Middle East perspective. "His Arabic is inadequate," one Arab noted. "He has a very clear idea of how the pieces are moving – he's a monitor," another said, "but he has no real deep respect for the historical and cultural forces in the Middle East."

"I've never had the feeling in talking to him that he really understands Middle East history or culture," a well-known Washington journalist specialising in Middle East affairs added, "And this is important in dealing with perceptions of what's going on. He's too cold-blooded, too aloof. Anyone who tries to quantify everything as their main way of dealing with facts – and Bill's primarily a quantitative political scientist – runs the danger of coming up with things that don't necessarily comment on reality. He shifts with the wind without a consistent analysis. His evaluation from month to month ought to be consistent, but isn't."

A European diplomat sees Quandt "as basically an academic".

Another well-known analyst sees Quandt as "very bright, very self-assured, a guy who takes himself very seriously. He's got a bit of Washington fever" this source confided, believing that Quandt was terribly eager to return to Washington in the Carter Administration after what he expected to be a comprehensive Middle East settlement based on the Brookings Report.

Bill Quandt is 37 and on leave from the University of Pennsylvania where he is Associate Professor of Political Science. From 1972 to 1974 he was Deputy to Harold Saunders, who then held the job which Quandt now has in the NSC. Before that he spent four years with the RAND Corporation in California where he co-authored the important book *The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism*.

Quandt's academic study was at Stanford University (BA in International Relations, 1963) and MIT (PhD in Political Science, 1968). His main area of expertise is Algeria, and in 1969 he published his thesis work titled *Revolution and Political Leadership: Algeria 1954-1968*.

Quandt's most recent book, which has attracted considerable attention, is *Decade of Decisions: American Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict 1967-1976*.

Quandt has managed to keep his name out of the press by careful selection of journalistic contacts and insistence on "background only" sessions. Early in the Carter Administration he was pointed out by Senator Richard Stone, Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on the Near East, as an "Anti-Israeli Arabist" who should not be involved in making policy.

He weathered that storm and has kept a low profile ever since – partly by nature and partly by necessity. The comment is often heard in Washington that Quandt is continually worried and scared that he might be signalled out for scape-goating or for Jewish protests should the US begin dealing with the PLO, something Quandt favoured early in the Carter Administration.

Quandt and Brzezinski got to know each other well during the preparation of the Brookings Report in 1975. Brzezinski needed someone who really understood the Arab-Israeli conflict and Quandt was a natural choice. He has also established good relations with Hal Saunders and others at Foggy Bottom. Quandt has in effect become the primary link at the staff level between the State Department and the NSC.

Flaten, Atwood: State-Capitol relations men

Robert Flaten, Legislative Management Officer, Office of Congressional Relations

"I am not a lobbyist," he insisted, but Robert (Bob) Flaten is the State Department's pointman on Capitol Hill selling Administration Middle East policy and reporting back on Congressional sentiments.

"He's almost an empire unto himself . . . a store-house of insights into Congressional attitudes," one admirer concluded.

Flaten is one of a dozen "legislative management officers" linking the State Department and America's elected representatives in Congress. "I have one thing I can give them that they really need," Flaten said, "and that's reliable information. Also, I can do something for them – and for the country. I can explain their point of view to the people back at State."

Flaten's overseas assignments have been in Afghanistan, Israel, Pakistan and France. He has held his present job over four years, a sign of how difficult he will be to replace.

Flaten's boss is Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Affairs, Brian Atwood, a "very politically savvy guy who's really got his finger on the Congressional scene," according to NAAA's Congressional man John Richardson. Atwood is only 38 and Flaten 44.

Atwood was a foreign service officer from 1966 to 1971 serving in the Ivory Coast and Spain. Before that he spent three years with the National Security Agency.

From 1971 to 1977 Atwood was on Capitol Hill as Senator Eagleton's legislative assistant for foreign policy and defence matters.

Today, "He's the most

professional and intelligent of the people dealing with Congressional relations," a Capitol Hill source noted, and the same source said of Flaten, "He's very effective and highly skilled . . . and well-respected for his energy and sensitivity to problems on both sides . . . He did a great job on the F-15 deal."

"I see it this way," Flaten concluded in describing his job, "Until the Vietnam war, Congress made no real impact on foreign policy. It let us alone here at State; it relied on the President to act. But all that is changed now – Congress is asserting its prerogatives as never before. There are some people in the Department who resent this. They ask me: 'Why do those yo-yos on the Hill think they can tell us professionals how we ought to do our jobs?' Well, I don't agree with that proposition.

"Look, it's basic. If you believe in representative democracy, then you must believe that the elected representatives have a role to play. That's where I come in. Congress tells the Department what's on the minds of the people, and we at State communicate to the congressmen something about the international environment in which we're living. In that process, it's my function to assist the communicating process."

"I think it's fair to say," he adds, "that we people in congressional relations spend as much time explaining Congress to our colleagues here as we do explaining the Department's outlook to Congress. We get more involved these days in debating issues within the Bureau at State, and in policy formulation.

"We'll say in these discussions: 'Is it saleable on the Hill?' And very often the answer is 'no', so we advise: 'Well, then, forget it.' This might be a harsh judgement to make at times, but we have to be realistic."

Needless to say Flaten and Atwood often have the unenviable task of arguing with their colleagues in NEA that the policies the Department wants to pursue in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict just won't make it on Capitol Hill.

Kirby: low-key trouble-shooter

William Kirby, Policy Planning staff

William Kirby is another member of the Hal Saunders "brain-trust". Like Wat Cluverius, Kirby knows both sides of the Arab-Israeli divide. He has been especially concerned with the Palestinian issue, drawing up various options and thinking through various possibilities. A lot of the staff work in the Saunders "travelling library" can be traced to Kirby.

Kirby did his BA at Lafayette College in Indiana and received his MA in Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard in 1963. He taught in Iran from 1959-1961, between degrees.

Kirby served in the US Army from 1964 to 1967 as a Middle East analyst, and before that he wrote a study for the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) on arms control possibilities in the Middle East.

In 1967 he entered the foreign service, spending the next two years detailed back to ACDA, and in 1970 went to Beirut for Arabic language training. He was Consular Officer in Dhahran in 1971, Economic-Commercial Officer in Bahrain from 1971 to 1973, and served in Israel from 1973 to 1976. He then returned to Foggy Bottom where he joined the Bureau of Intelligence and Research as Egyptian analyst when Hal Saunders was heading INR. Last year Kirby took over from David Korn (now Director of Israeli and Arab-Israeli Affairs) on the policy planning staff, where he has continued to work closely with Saunders.

Kirby is not the "in-house iconoclast . . . the guy who steps back from the process and tries to punch holes in the strategy". But he is a competent, thoughtful analyst. He is very much a low-key man, slogging away at the problems and knowing all the road-blocks and pitfalls.

Eilts: the diplomat's diplomat

Herman Frederick Eilts, US Ambassador to Egypt

Herman Frederick Eilts, German-born and Arabic-speaking, is a career minister. He has served in Tehran, Jedda, Aden, Baghdad, London and Tripoli since entering the Foreign service in 1947, and is one of NEA's most experienced Arabists. From 1965 to 1970 he was Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, and after a few years at the Army War College, he was sent to Cairo, soon after the October War. He became Ambassador in March 1974 with the resumption of US-Egyptian relations.

Eilts elicits few negative comments. He's a diplomat's diplomat, as Vance is a lawyer's lawyer. Not only is Eilts widely respected by all the American Middle East team, but the Egyptian leadership has also come to admire and trust this American Ambassador with the crew-cut.

Egyptian President Sadat, especially, is known to have developed a close relationship with him, often using him as a direct channel for information and ideas, and as a partner for talking philosophy. Eilts's "Cherokee cables", which go directly to the Secretary of State, contain "brilliant analysis" of the Egyptian scene. "Eilts is really plugged-in," one insider noted.

Yet according to Washington rumour he has had something of a personal dilemma since Camp David. His close relationship with Sadat has been used by the Administration to boost Sadat's trust in Carter, and in American plans for an Egyptian-Israeli deal. But he is known to be uneasy in the role, for he has private doubts about what the Camp David "process" is really leading to, and about whether Carter's people will still be around to make good their many promises to Sadat.

Lewis: astute politics

Samuel W. Lewis, US Ambassador to Israel

Like Ambassador Eilts in Egypt, Ambassador Samuel W. Lewis has played a vital part in Carter Administration diplomacy. He is likeable and easy to get along with, and has earned the respect of both the Israelis and the Egyptians.

"Sam's a very bright diplomat," one associate indicated.

Lewis received his BA in International Relations and History from Yale in 1952 and his MA from Johns Hopkins University two years later. He immediately entered the foreign service, and spent his first seven years dealing with Italian Affairs, both in Italy and at Foggy Bottom.

In the early 1960s he served under Chester Bowles who was Under Secretary of State and then the President's Special representative for Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Lewis was a visiting Fellow at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School for a year and then moved on to Brazilian Affairs from 1966 to 1968. In 1968 he joined the NSC as Senior Staff Member for Latin America. But with the Nixon takeover he became Special Assistant for Policy Planning in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs at the State Department.

Lewis then became Special Assistant to the Director-General of the Foreign Service and subsequently spent three years in Kabul. He returned to Washington in 1974 as Deputy Director of the Policy Planning Staff and in 1975 became Assistant Secretary of State. □

A MIDDLE EAST EXCLUSIVE

CLASSIFIED: JERUSALEM 3239

TEXT OF US CABLES ON "SYSTEMATIC ISRAELI TORTURE"

The Middle East has obtained classified US Government cables sent by the US Consulate-General in Jerusalem to the Department of State in Washington alleging "systematic torture" of Palestinian security suspects in the occupied territories.

On 7 February, *The Washington Post* broke this story, beginning what Charles S. Seib five days later described as "the biggest wave of protest I had experienced in over four years as *Post* ombudsman". The article quoted from the cables but extensive excerpts from one of the documents are being published for the first time in *The Middle East*.

The first cable "Jerusalem 1500", sent in May 1978, was classified "confidential" and described the cases of 15 Arabs who had applied for US visas after having been arrested in Israel for "security offences". This cable concluded: "Israeli torture of Arab prisoners in the occupied territories may be a widespread and even common practice."

The second cable "Jerusalem 3239," sent six months later was classified "secret" and addressed the question of whether there was any credible evidence that "systematic torture" was practised by Israeli authorities. By this time 29 "security offences" cases had been investigated. The introduction of this cable, by Deputy Principal Officer Donald Kruse, confirmed that "the weight of evidence points to the validity of (the) general conclusion that physical mistreatment is systematically used on many Arab security suspects interrogated in the West Bank".

Credible reports about torture in Israel have surfaced before, most notably in a detailed investigative report in *The Sunday Times* of London in June 1977 and last year in a lengthy report by the National Lawyer's Guild of the US. But this is the first time official US Government documents have come to public attention.

Both cables were researched and written by a junior foreign service officer, Alexandra U. Johnson although they were sent under Consul-General William Newlin's name, as is the usual practice.

Allegations of bias, partly resulting from Johnson's brief engagement to one of the Palestinians mentioned in the report, have led to charges that her objectivity may have been compromised and she has been subjected to considerable assault in the US media.

The Israeli Government forcefully repudiated the charges of systematic torture but admitted that "instances of abuse may have occurred."

In Washington the controversy has extended to the State Department's annual human rights report. Patt Derian, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, is said to have strongly argued that the cables should be taken seriously. Yet the result was only a bland phrase in the 1979 report – "The accumulation of reports, some from credible sources, makes it appear that instances of mistreatment have occurred." Perhaps the most graphic commentary may have come from *The Washington Star's* brilliant cartoonist, Pat Oliphant, which is reproduced here. Excerpts from the classified document "Jerusalem 3239" follow:

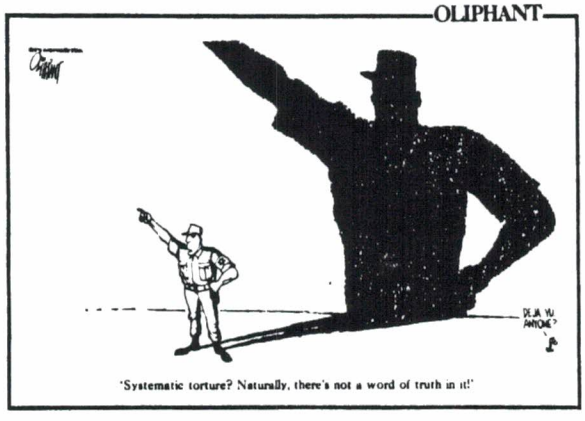
- Although the Post (the US Consulate in Jerusalem) does not necessarily agree with all of the deductions and conclusions contained in this report the weight of evidence points to the validity of her (Alexandra Johnson's) general conclusion that physical mistreatment is systematically used on many Arab security suspects interrogated in the West Bank.

This mistreatment is used to obtain a confession of security offences and to obtain information on other Palestinians who may also be involved in security offences. The number of cases and the content of the individual stories reveal a certain consistency.

- The Post fully understands Israel's legitimate concern over security on the West Bank and accepts the premise that a military occupation regime may necessarily supersede the basic civil and human rights which are expected in a free democratic state living in a state of peace. It seems clear that, by any US or Western standard of police practice and interrogation, Israeli practices on the West Bank go beyond acceptable civilian norms.
- Relative to treatment of security suspects in neighbouring countries, we are of course, not able to judge but suspect that Israeli actions are no worse than what might be applied to, for example, an Israel security suspect in Jordan, Syria or even Egypt.
- Material in the section of the report by Ms. Johnson regarding use of coerced confessions as the sole means of conviction on security offences is corroborated by Jerusalem A-19. In Jerusalem A-19, two other consular officers at the Post observed that disregard by an Israeli military judge of a request for investigation of charges that the confessions were obtained under coercion.
- The Post believes that the contents of this cable along with references should be taken into account in preparing for the Congress the required annual human rights section on Israel.

Donald Kruse
Deputy Principal Officer

OLIPHANT



'Systematic torture? Naturally, there's not a word of truth in it!'

Pictures (left, 38, 40) show Israeli occupation forces prison in Nablus; a prisoner revealed administration-interrogator cooperation in use of electric torture equipment

SUMMARY. During the period between March 1977 and November 1978, the Post (the US Consulate in Jerusalem) has assembled a body of first-hand testimony indicating that Israeli torture of Arab prisoners may be a systematic practice. In contrast to GOI (Government of Israel) avowals that any incidents of brutality are rare, aberrant, and untypical, these reports depict a graded system of physical pressures applied in conformity with certain fundamental criteria – a system requiring far-reaching administrative co-ordination.

Furthermore, the information casts considerable doubt on GOI's contention that claims of brutality are carefully investigated, instead portraying the military administration as suppressing such claims and acting to prevent their investigation.

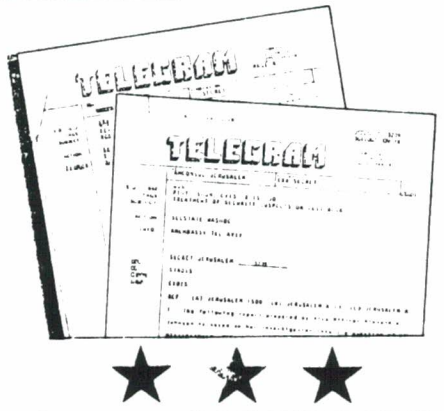
This material substantially goes beyond the findings of last year's human rights report on Israeli practices in the occupied territories, and is submitted as part of the Post's effort to keep the Department and Embassy in Tel Aviv informed of human rights practices in the West Bank.

Interrogation as a System: All 29 applicants claimed that they had been beaten or otherwise tortured during the interrogation sessions which followed their arrest. Although their statements are vivid and individual in character, there are certain basic uniformities and patterns which characterise these descriptions of interrogations. It is possible to discern a graded system of pressures applied in conformity with certain fundamental criteria.

- *Level One:* beating with fists, beating with sticks on the head and torso;
- *Level Two:* immersion in cold water, beating with whips, beating the genitals with hands and sticks; interrogation while nude, shackled in awkward positions;
- *Level Three:* refrigeration, use of electricity, hanging by the hands or feet, extreme forms of sexual sadism; interrogation accompanied by starvation, enforced sleeplessness.

Interrogation and charges: While the variations described by the applicants cannot be fully explained by a single factor, there does appear to exist a broad correlation between the severity and intensity of the interrogation and the gravity of the charges which the interrogators are investigating.

One applicant admitted to the Consular Officer that his interrogation had resulted in permanent physical damage, while another admitted that his interrogation had lasted not for eight days, as he had originally stated, but for 37 days.



Both said that in their initial Consular Officer interviews they had deliberately minimised their suffering, lest the Consular Officer conclude, on the basis of the severity and intensity of the interrogations, that they were guilty of serious crimes.

Of the five Level One cases, four apparently concerned people who, while not themselves organisation members, failed to inform on their politically compromised acquaintances. It is noteworthy that of the four individuals who failed to inform, two were tried for organisation membership. Local attorneys explain – and this is borne out by court records – that this is often the case, because the military courts tend to reason that failure to inform is support and that support equals membership.

Of the seven Level Two cases, six concerned passive organisation membership. The seventh applicant, having refused an offer by the Israeli security organs to work as a double agent, found himself faced with charges of organisation membership and military training, within the framework of contacting an "enemy organisation" abroad.

Five of the cases revolved about seditious and politically indiscreet conversations alleged to have included verbal consent to join the organisation.

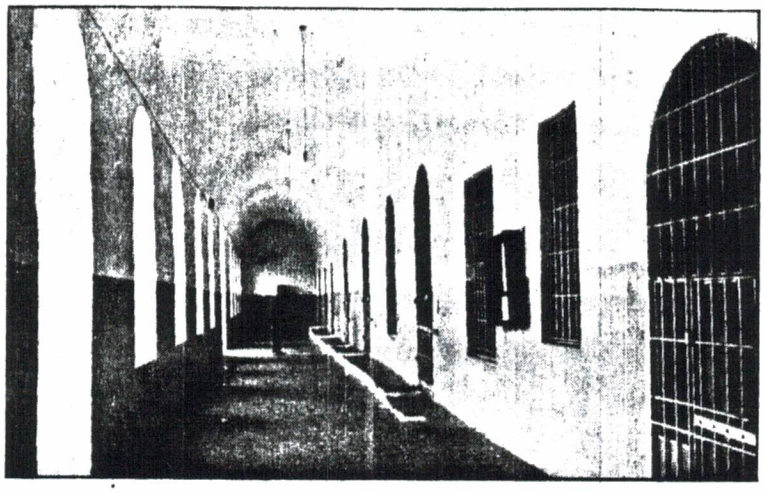
Of the four Level Three cases, two involved armed operations. One of these applicants was arrested after throwing a dud grenade at an Israeli patrol. In other cases, the connection with armed operations seems to have been more tenuous.

For example, one applicant, who was interrogated about his alleged knowledge of a planned terrorist operation, seems to have been arrested because the father of his fiancée, who had a daughter requiring corrective surgery for a birth defect, spoke enthusiastically – within earshot of a police informer – of his arrangements for her coming operation. (Unluckily, the same word is used in Arabic for both terrorist and surgical operations.)

In addition, there is another major type of case, (which) involves overt political activity – such as writing anti-Israeli slogans on walls, marching in demonstrations, writing and distributing political circulars, and the like – undertaken within the framework of organisation membership.

The extent to which the operation of systematic rules for interrogation can be discerned is significant, suggesting both the training of interrogators in the use of force and the attention of administrators to the allocation of interrogator time.

The idea of interrogation as a system is strengthened by a consideration of



another factor, the importance of denunciations, which explains virtually all of the few cases in which the severity and intensity of the interrogation do not seem to correlate with the nature of the charges.

Interrogation and Denunciation: A vicious circle can be discerned (which) begins with Israeli security organs arresting an individual on the basis of a denunciation obtained from his friend under interrogation; then, during the new arrestee's interrogation, the interrogators demand that he co-operate with them and denounce his associates; and further arrests result.

Seventeen applicants were apparently arrested on the basis of denunciations, five almost certainly were not denounced, and in seven cases there is insufficient information to make a judgement on this point.

It is noteworthy that of the five applicants who were not denounced three were released without trial at the conclusion of their interrogation, while on the other hand, all seventeen of the applicants who were denounced were tried, convicted, and imprisoned.

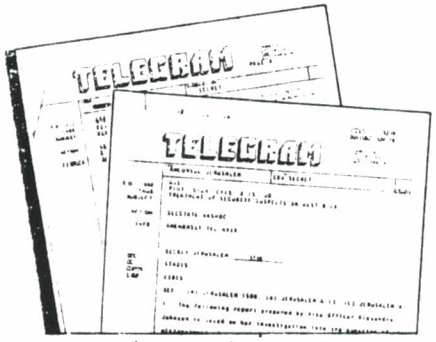
Apparently, the securing of denunciations is a key point to be gained in interrogation. It appears that an individual's willingness or unwillingness to denounce associates may be a crucial factor in determining the severity and intensity of the interrogation.

Administrative Considerations: Personnel: Ten applicants specifically mentioned that more than one interrogator participated in their interrogation sessions.

Most often, these applicants said that two or three interrogators participated. However, an individual interrogated in Ramallah said that one supervising interrogator directed a team of five soldiers who were beating him, while another security officer took notes.

The practices described by the 10 applicants run strongly counter to any explanation of physical abuse during interrogation as merely the aberrant behaviour of an occasional "rogue cop". If several interrogators are to question and beat an arrestee simultaneously, it would surely be necessary for these interrogators to meet briefly before the session to co-ordinate their tactics.

If several interrogators are to question and beat an arrestee sequentially, so that the interrogation sessions increase in severity, each interrogator would surely have to make a report to the interrogator following him. And what of the administrators assigning interrogators to individual cases? Are we simply to assume that all of this conferring and co-ordinating and reporting among sub-



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ordinates could go on without the knowledge of their direct superiors?

Administrative considerations: Installations and Equipment: While most of the beating and torture described apparently involved fists or makeshift instruments, there are also indications of the presence of elaborate installations in the interrogation centres, apparently designed for abusing the arrestees.

An applicant interrogated in Nablus Central Prison, for instance, said that there is a row of several small "refrigerator" cells in the prison complex, which are very cold even in the heat of summer.

Another applicant, who was interrogated in Hebron, said that a special room had high-frequency and loud irritating sounds piped into it, and he described his stay in this room as the most difficult stage of the interrogation.

Bureaucratically, the construction of such refrigerator cells and sound rooms would be a formidable enterprise. Administrative operations involved would certainly have included the making of proposals for discussions and approval, followed by the allocation of funds, the signing of requisitions for materials, and so forth. Both of these installations would also require maintenance.

The experiences of another applicant, who was interrogated and imprisoned in Nablus Central Prison, and who had worked as an electrician before his arrest, suggest one solution to the problem of maintenance.

A few months after his own trial and sentencing an Israeli security officer came to the common prison room and asked him his profession. Later, the prison administration offered him a job as an electrician – maintaining, among other things, the electrical installations used in interrogations.

He did this work for over four years under the direct supervision of an Israeli security officer with the rank of captain, who worked on the electrical devices with him. This applicant's statement explicitly portrays the prison administration as actively co-operating with the interrogators in maintenance of electrical torture installations. And one wonders who assigned the Israeli captain to this task.

The bureaucratic considerations discussed above apply to a lesser extent to smaller and simpler instruments of torture. Two applicants who were interrogated at Hebron, for instance, described being hung from permanently installed hooks – one by his hands, one by both hands and feet.

It may well be asked what justification (other than the true one) could con-

celvably have been offered to superiors or to the administrative section for the installation of hooks sunk strongly enough into the ceilings of interrogation areas to bear the weight of a man.

To cite another example, most applicants (whether interrogated at Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron, or the Russian Compound of Jerusalem) stated that they had been beaten with sticks, and many described these instruments.

They spoke of a short wooden rod about the length of a ruler, used for beating the head and genitals, and a somewhat thicker stave, about the length of a yardstick, used for beating the limbs and torso. The uniformity of applicants' descriptions of these instruments and of their use suggests standard-issue equipment.

Complaints and challenges: Many applicants interrogated at Ramallah and Hebron stated that they signed two confessions: the first before their actual interrogators, members of the security organs, and the second (a duplicate of the first) before an ordinary policeman.

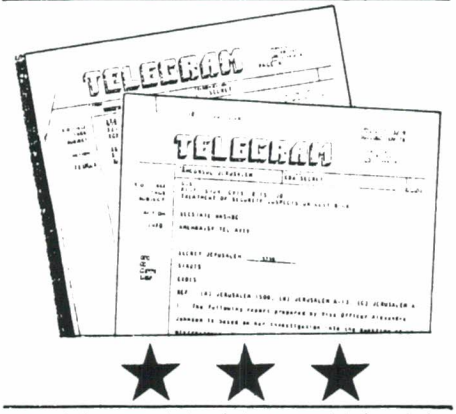
When the Consular Officer asked several applicants who had omitted to mention the second confession whether they had signed only one, they replied that of course they had signed a second document – but thought that this was not worth mentioning because it was a standard procedure.

According to the applicants, the procedure begins with their interrogation under torture by members of the security organs, who either do not identify themselves to the arrestee or who use Arabic (or sometimes American) pseudonyms, at an interrogation centre used for dealing with political cases. When the arrestee breaks down, the interrogator dictates a confession or writes it for him.

Following the signature of this first confession, the arrestee is told that he will be taken to the local police station, where he must confess again, reproducing the content of the first confession – and that if he refuses, he will be returned to interrogation under torture. At the police station, ordinary policemen question him without the use of force, and he signs the second confession.

Such a procedure, which would be impossible without far-reaching cooperation between the police and the security organs could only have been advised to quash any potential challenges to the validity of the confessions.

One applicant, who was tried in April, 1976 stated in response to the judge's query as to whether he affirmed his confession, that he repudiated it because it



was false and had been obtained by torutre. This applicant said that the judge told him to be silent, then hurriedly sentenced him to six years imprisonment. The confession was the only evidence presented.

The remaining 22 applicants who were brought to trial apparently did not attempt to contest the validity of their confessions. On the contrary, most of these individuals seem to have affirmed their confessions at their trials at the advice of their attorneys. Wasfi al-Masri of Nablus, the local attorney most successful in obtaining invalidations of confessions in the military courts on the grounds that (they) have been obtained by torture, said that he contested the validity of the confession only in cases where the accused might be sentenced to imprisonment for life or a very long term of years.

Furthermore, in those cases where he challenged the validity of a confession successfully Masri said that he always took care to make clear to the judge that, if his client were given a reduced sentence, there would be no publicity and no insistence that the actual reason for the non-acceptance of the confession even be entered in the court record.

Two applicants recounted how a group of Nablus prisoners conveyed to ICRC visitors their complaints about beatings and other grievances. Shortly after the ICRC departed, the Deputy Mil Gov entered the room, told the prisoners that such complaints should not be made in the future and ordered guards to fall on the prisoners and beat them with sticks. Both applicants commented that, as a result of the beating the prisoners assured subsequent ICRC visitors that everything was fine.

Conclusion: The picture presented by the statements of the 29 applicants forms a serious challenge to GOI claims that instances of brutality are isolated, aberrant, and carefully investigated when reported. Patterns recurring in these statements of 29 individuals interrogated in four different administrative jurisdictions at various times over a period of 10 years cannot be dismissed as coincidence or the product of actions of a few isolated low-level personnel.

On the contrary, one is faced with the possibility that the use of brutality in the interrogation of Arab political prisoners is a systematic practice, involving the use of trained personnel, backed by far-reaching administrative support, and protected by standard methods of suppressing complaints and blocking their investigation. Indeed, one may well question the motive behind GOI claim. □