

Sadat gambled and lost his life

The saddest thing about the death of Egypt's Anwar Sadat is that it was such a waste.

It is impossible to know what mix of motives, religious, political or personal, inspired his assassins. But it may not be overstating the cause to say that what cost Sadat his life — and the things that will make the world miss him most — was his historic gamble for peace.

Sadat understood as well as anyone that the barrier to peace in the Middle East was always psychological: a melange of bitterness that the world seemed to care too little when the Nazi Holocaust claimed the lives of six million Jews and of guilt that too many Jews went too unresistingly to their deaths. The Israeli psychology is encapsulated in the phrase: "Never again."

william raspberry

Sadat understood as well that the Palestinians, who had no part in the Holocaust and who cared nothing about the psychological scars it left on the Jews, were equally bitter and guilt-ridden that they had been misplaced, also too unresistingly, by the establishment of the Jewish state.

This psychological standoff, Sadat knew, was incapable of military resolution. What was needed was a psychological breakthrough. Sadat provided the opportunity for just such a breakthrough with his unprecedented 1977 visit to Israel.

It was a masterful gesture which said, in effect: "Let us put our psychology behind us and agree to make peace." It seemed for a while that the gamble might work. But the Camp David peace talks engineered by then-President Jimmy Carter fell short of Sadat's dream. It was the Egyptian's notion that if he and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin could agree to make peace, it would mark the beginning of a generalized peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Ironically, until shortly after Sadat's statesman-like gesture, it was the Israelis who were insisting that the barriers to peace were psychological: that the problem was the refusal of the Arabs, specifically the Palestine Liberation Organization, to accept the legitimacy of Israel's existence. Sadat's move could have swept away this deadly psychology, if only there had been a complementary grand gesture from Begin. It never came.

Instead of accepting Sadat's statesmanship as an effort to cut the Gordian knot of bitter history, the Israeli leader treated it as the opening gambit in a round of ordinary negotiations: Negotiations which, for all the hoopla that surrounded each petty point of agreement, in fact got nowhere.

As a result, Sadat, instead of becoming a leader of his Arab brothers, became isolated from them as a man who had dared make peace with the mortal enemy. He was viewed by them as a traitor and a fool, and he was, almost from that moment, a dead man.

Israel, if it had seized the opportunity, could have saved him — or at least could have saved and institutionalized the peace process. As it was, the peace effort, from the Arab side, was embodied in the person of Sadat. And with his death, both sides are far worse off than before.

It was easy enough to understand why Israel was unwilling to enter into a gamble of the magnitude of Sadat's. The far-more-numerous Arabs could lose militarily again and again and still survive. For Israel, a series of military victories could only buy time; a single defeat would be fatal.

The other side of that somber fact, though, is that Israel could never save itself through military might but only through peace with its neighbors. Sadat tried, and failed to make that peace.

Sadat laid everything on the line: his personal and political prestige, his credibility and his life. If Israel had joined in the gamble — if even a few of the Arab chiefs of state could have seen that it was in their overwhelming self-interest to become party to the search for peace — Sadat's gamble could have changed the course of Middle East history for all time.

They didn't. Sadat has died a wasted death, and business in that strife-torn part of the world will go tragically on — as usual.

(c) The Washington Post Co.

daily nebraskan

Editorials do not necessarily express the opinions of the Daily Nebraskan's publishers, the NU Board of Regents, the University of Nebraska and its employees or the student body.

USPS 144-080

Editor: Tom Prentiss; Managing editor: Kathy Stokebrand; News editor: Steve Miller; Associate News editors: Dan Epp, Kim Hachiya, Alice Hrnicek; Night news editor: Martha Murdock; Assistant night news editor: Kate Kopischke; Entertainment editor: Pat Clark; Sports editor: Larry Sparks; Art director: Dave Luebke; Photography chief: Mark Billingsley.

Copy editors: Lienna Fredrickson, Patti Gallagher, Bob Glissmann, Bill Graf, Melanie Gray, Deb Horton, D. Eric Kircher, Betsy Miller, Janice Pigaga, Reid Warren, Tricia Waters.

Business manager: Anne Shank-Volk; Production manager: Kitty Policky; Advertising manager: Art K. Small; Assistant advertising manager: Jerry Scott.

Publications Board chairperson: Margy McCleery, 472-2454. Professional adviser: Don Walton, 473-7301.


The Daily Nebraskan is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters, except during vacation.

Address: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 14th and R streets, Lincoln, Neb., 68588. Telephone: 472-2588.

All material in the Daily Nebraskan is covered by copyright. Second class postage paid at Lincoln, Neb. 68510.

Annual subscription: \$20, semester subscription: \$11.

"POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 14th and R streets, Lincoln, Neb., 68588."

The PUZZLER CUBE 

The lowest price around at **THINGSVILLE**

Only **\$1.99**

Centrum Lincoln, NE 475-1655 Gateway Lincoln, NE 466-4488

HEM'S LIQUORS
at 17th & P

Kessler Whiskey



Reg. \$7.45
Now \$6.45

Call 474-6592
To Reserve Your Keg


ROFFLER
FAMILY HAIR CENTER

NOWHERE IN LINCOLN CAN YOU GET WHAT EL TORO OFFERS . . . EL TORO PEOPLE.

Trained stylists who have been at El Toro for years. In fact, our same stylist will probably follow you through the university, through graduate school, and if you stay in Lincoln, through your early professional career. El Toro lasts!

13th & P St. Lower Level Douglas III Building **El Toro** Phone For Appointment 477-9555 or 477-5221

My boss didn't understand that I was healthy again.
So I was let go.
A lot of people are like my boss. They think that everyone dies of cancer. I thought so, too. Until the American Cancer Society, through one of its service and rehabilitation programs helped me return to a normal life.
The ACS also has local Units that help Americans who've never had cancer understand it better.
Today, more and more, cancer is a curable disease. Ignorance about cancer is curable, too.



American Cancer Society

A Public Service of This Newspaper & The Advertising Council



Tonight!

UPC Presents

JOHN ANDERSON

1980 Presidential Candidate

"The 80's: The Future of American Politics"

Wednesday, October 14
7:30 p.m.

Nebraska Union Centennial Room

FREE with UNL Student I.D.'s
Non Student \$2.00

* All Students Must Bring I.D.'s

UPC
City