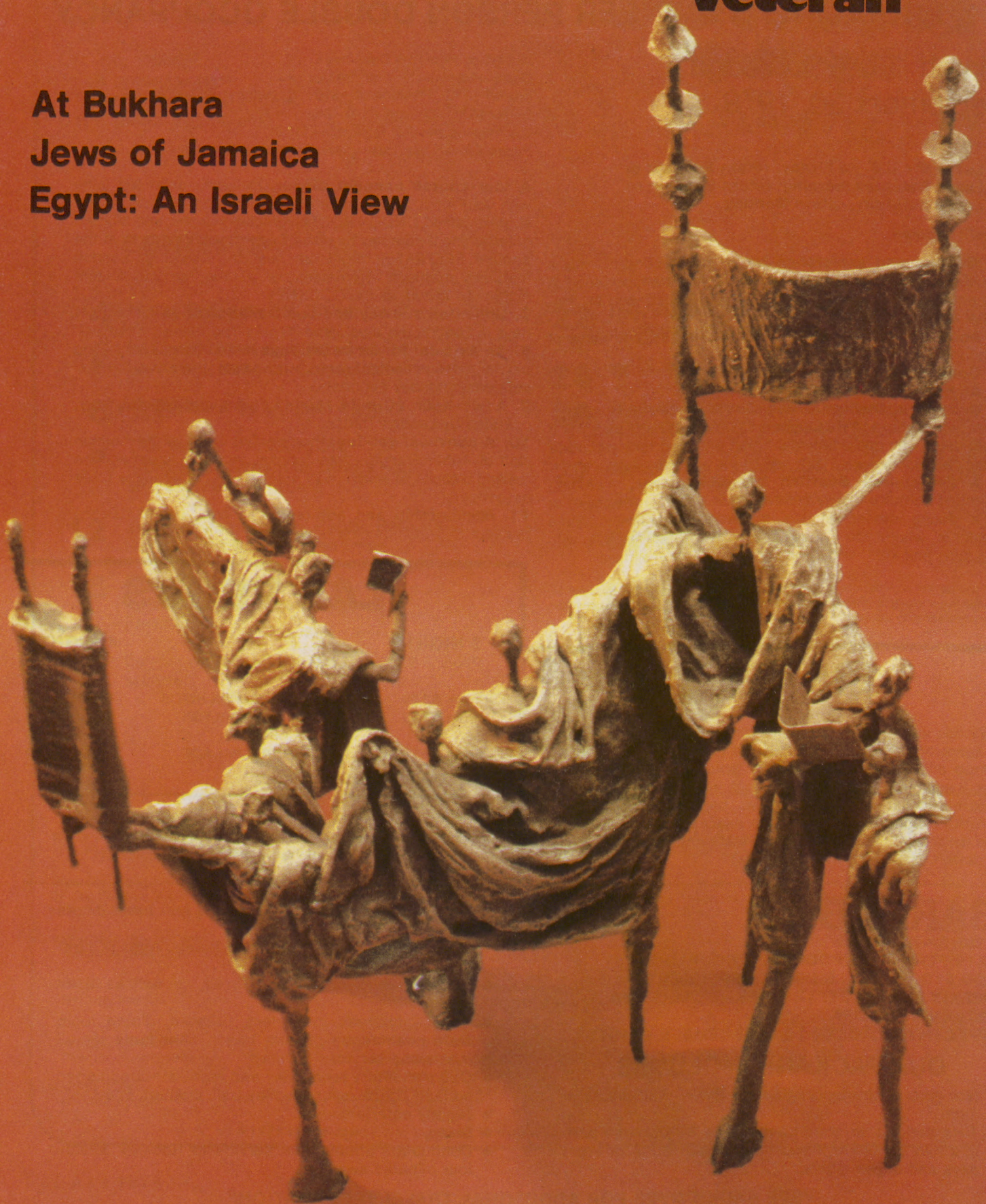


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# The ★ Jewish Veteran

**At Bukhara**  
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# The ★ Jewish Veteran

ON THE COVER:  
Torah processional;  
a tapestry by Phillip Ratner.  
Cover photo by j.r. black.

Vol. 33. No. 5 May-June 1979  
(ISSN 0047-2018)

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The Jewish Veteran  
"The Patriotic Voice of American Jewry"

Organized 1896  
Official Bulletin of The Jewish War Veterans  
of the United States of America

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Advertising information and rates  
available from the Editorial Office.

Advertising Representatives:  
Florida and Caribbean

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6200 Falls Circle South  
Lauderhill, Fla. 33319  
(305) 484-8748

The Jewish Veteran is published six times a year: January-February, March-April, May-June, July-August, September-October, November-December by the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America at Washington, D.C. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C. and other post offices. Subscription price in the United States is \$2.00 per year, payable in advance. Single copies: \$1.00.

Postmaster: send form 3579 for undeliverable copies to Editorial Offices at 1712 New Hampshire Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009.

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# Israel Today

by  
Ido Dissentshik

*In this issue, our Israeli columnist, who traveled with President Carter to the Mideast, filed the cable he sent to Ma'ariv in Tel Aviv—on a very historic day—March 13, 1979, when President Carter announced an agreement.*

It was as unpredictable as almost everything else in this convoluted peace process. On a dusty runway of Cairo International Airport, against the background of sandy craters created by Israeli bombing missions during many years of war and enmity—peace was suddenly born.

A stunned group of tired, red-eyed reporters, a small entourage of top Egyptian officials, an even smaller party of American officials and an army of security agents were the only witnesses. They listened attentively to one of the most inarticulate statements of all times. It took only three minutes to read. But when Jimmy Carter, the President of the United States of America, finished reading it, an Israeli listening to those words felt they were as sweet and as inspiring as divine music. The statement was composed of 169 words; six of those were proposals and four were acceptances. The names of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin were each heard several times. The rest were simple, short words. Nothing was unusual about them. No word was too complicated or too long. They were all everyday words that one would use in any conversation. There was no word that sounded as if it was chosen for a special occasion. But when they were all put together, they finally spelled the simple longing sought with blood, tears and weapons for more than thirty years. They spelled Peace, Shalom, Saalam.

As he finished his statement, Jim-

*Ido Dissentshik is the Washington correspondent for Ma'ariv. He is a graduate of Hebrew University and Columbia University.*

my Carter carefully folded the paper it was written on, put it in the inside pocket of his jacket and turned to walk to review the guard of honor. Our eyes turned with him into the orange ball of the setting sun. The day was about to end and turn into night, but in truth it was dawn: A new era was about to begin in the Mideast. The region took another step from the blackness of hostility to the brightness of friendship. It may just be that from now on the orange of the setting sun would be the only fire over the vast, eternal sands of the Sinai desert behind us.

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**"The cameras clicked as two of the five Israelis in Egypt hugged and kissed each other."**

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It was Carter's moment. Sadat, probably realizing that, stood a few steps behind him. He even declined to say one word when the American offered with a gesture that he should do so. Sadat's face was inscrutable, expressionless. He could have been solemn; he could have been deeply reflective. He could have been—like many of the onlookers—dwarfed by the enormity of the occasion. It is for him to tell us what transpired in his mind and why he looked so empty. But he was there, an undeniably dominant presence. He could have been just watching the others, ordinary human beings, stunned again almost as they were on that cool November evening—479 days ago—when he came to Israel and started everything in motion.

Sadat's silence and reserve was in absolute contrast to Carter's barely contained excitement, probably elation. Carter's face betrayed emotions.

The cameras clicked as two of the only five Israelis in Egypt at that moment hugged and kissed each other. A third embraced President Sadat's chief of security. The band played the national anthems of Egypt and the United States and then the two Presidents reviewed the honor guard.

Sadat accompanied Carter to the foot of the staircase leading up to the cabin of Air Force One. As Jimmy Carter entered the plane a single shot of cannon—in farewell—roared gunfire Egyptians and Israelis would hear—cannons welcoming and saluting one nation's leader visiting and departing the other's territory.

We wished we had an Israeli flag. An Israeli presence was thoroughly missing from this scene. Israel was not a full partner to this moment. We were there—five Israelis—observing the birth of peace we yearned for so much, but we were not officially represented in the final act of the drama.

When the first moment of total surprise wore off, the thoughts came one after the other. A little confused but the focus was the same. This is it. Peace, Shalom, Saalam.

Five Israelis were, by a stroke of luck, in Cairo airport witnessing for their entire nation the greatest moment—a moment none of them thought would come in their lifetimes. It is now up to us to tell them back home how it was that Tuesday afternoon, the 13th of March, 1979, the 14th Adar 5739, the 13th of Rabi Tani 1399.

Even the old Nile who must have seen everything did not witness this particular spectacle. Five Israeli reporters getting off a press-bus in front of the Nile-Hilton, surrounded by Egyptian police, but still dancing on the pavement of a Cairo street, and singing—Peace, Shalom, Saalam.

Will this be a lasting peace? Will it be possible for Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon to eventually make their peace with Israel? These are questions that only the future can answer. There is no doubt that Sadat is sufficiently strong and the Egyptian people sufficiently eager for the peace process to ripen into the sweetness of maturity. It is our hope that once the other Arab countries see the advantages to be obtained from the peace process, they will be irresistibly drawn into what now seems to be an impossible dream.