Sadat's death arouses anxiety

The fate of Egypt and peace in the Middle East is uncertain following the Oct. 6 assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. The shooting occurred while Sadat was reviewing a military parade in commemoration of Egypt's partial victory in the 1973 war with Israel.

According to reports, the assailants jumped from a truck loaded with ammunition, began lobbing hand grenades, ran toward the reviewing stand where Sadat and other top officials were standing and opened fire with automatic weapons. Vice President Hosni Mubarak and other top Egyptian officials were beside Sadat but were not seriously injured. Three Americans on the reviewing stand were injured slightly.

The Egyptian government at first refused to either confirm or deny any death reports. Early reports said that Sadat's injuries were not life-threatening. However, after much speculation and confusion, a member of the Egyptian government announced that Sadat had died from gun wounds. Officials in Moscow accused the United States of exerting "gross pressure" on Egypt by placing American forces on alert after reports of Sadat's shooting and subsequent death were confirmed.

Early the next day, the Independent Organization for the Liberation of Egypt claimed responsibility for the shooting. The PLO and other Middle East sources doubted this claim because they were not familiar with the group. The assassination is believed, however, to be the work of an extremist religious group that has been strongly opposed to secularism and Western influence in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said, "We must find out who did this and what it represents." He went on to say that the United States must act "calmly and purposely" in its future foreign policy dealings with the Middle East.

The assassination of Anwar Sadat comes in the midst of a multitude of Egyptian problems. In the few weeks before his death, Sadat had jailed or banished several political and religious dissidents. He censured many of the Egyptian Muslim fundamentalists, but his most drastic move was the banishment of the Coptic Pope to a monastery. Mubarak is expected to continue this crackdown on political dissidents.

Sadat, 63, was the son of a government clerk and a Sudanese woman. He joined the Egyptian army in 1938 as a second lieutenant after graduating from a military school. While in the army, he formed a secret organization to overthrow former Egyptian King Farouk. He was jailed during World War II for his activities. He joined the army in 1948 and participated in the 1952 coup which ended Farouk's rule. He became vice-president during the rule of General Gamal Abdel Nasser and became president in 1970 after Nasser's death. He gained the respect of many world leaders and acquired the role of peacemaker by his visit to Israel during the Carter administration. He was instrumental in the initiation of the Camp David Treaty.

In a White House statement President Reagan spoke of Egypt's fallen leader as "a courageous man whose vision and wisdom brought nations and people together." He described him as "a man of hope, in a world trapped with the animosities of the past. He was a man filled with foresight; a man who sought to improve a world tormented by malice and pettiness."

Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island called Sadat "our one stable friend." Israeli leaders have pointed out that the assassination makes Israel even more important as an American ally in the Middle East. Egyptian Vice-President Mubarak has pledged continued ties with the United States and Israel as he prepared for the elections in which he is the only presidential candidate.

Former presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter were part of the American delegation to the funeral. Presidential security personnel deemed it unwise for President Reagan or Vice-President Bush to attend the state funeral.

Anwar Sadat, described by Dr. Milton Reid, publisher of *Journal and Guide*, as "a great black leader, one of the greatest in Africa and the Middle East" was buried beneath the pyramid-shaped Egyptian Tomb of the Unknown Soldier as a score of world leaders looked on. (Bonita McClain)

Baldwin's triumph

In 1959, Norman Mailer, displaying typical pomposity toward his literary competitors, wrote that "James Baldwin is too charming a writer to be major."

Mailer was wrong then because Baldwin had already distinguished himself and enriched contemporary literature with the novels "Go Tell It On the Mountain" and "Giovanni's Room" and brilliant books of essays like "Nobody Knows My Name."

Now, Mailer's catty appraisal looks even more ludicrous, for Baldwin is one of the most durable and versatile of American men and women of letters. Charm is only a flicker; character is a lasting fire. In a career that, surprisingly enough, spans nearly 30 years, Baldwin has written powerfully in four genres—the novel, short story, essay and play—an achievement which few other authors can claim.

In addition, he kept his integrity during the sixities when the mass media attempted to reduce his identity as an artist to the role of a spokesman on racial issues and when Eldridge Cleaver, whose latest persona is that of a born-again Christian, slandered Baldwin's good name and importance. Now, while Cleaver mouths the fundamentalist party line on t.v. shows like "The PTL Club," Baldwin is busy writing significant novels. In 1979, his "Just Above My Head" was nominated for the American Booksellers' Prize, the honor that has replaced The National Book Award.

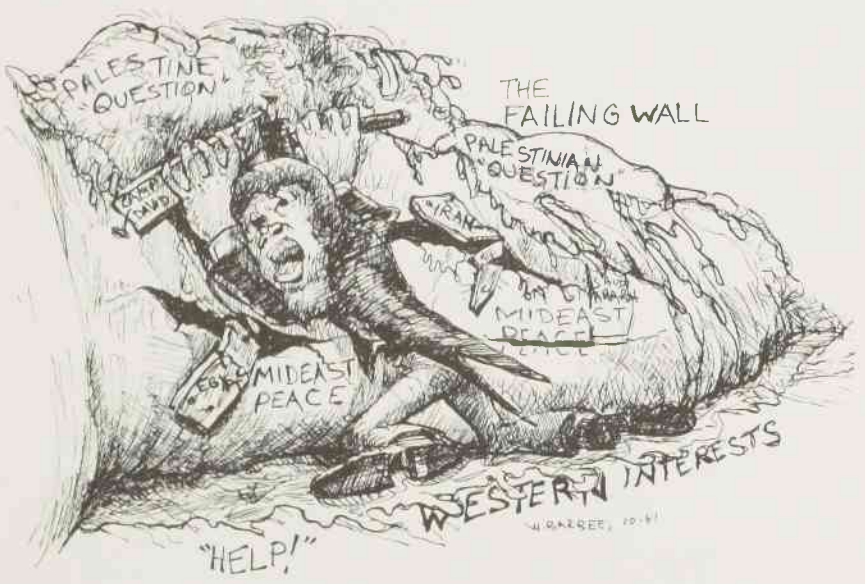
What accounts for Baldwin's artistic success and his enduring popularity? In the first place, he has always been a challenging, not a "charming," thinker. Reading Baldwin has been fascinating but never easy, for unlike many of his colleagues, he doesn't tell his audience what it wants to hear. Baldwin is an intellectual in the deepest sense of that often misused word: he recognizes the complexity of every human relationship. Confronted by his books, the reader respects the multiplicity of Baldwin's vision as well as his refusal to tell us that life is simple.

Also, Baldwin is a provocateur. He investigates the mysteries of love and lust, the imagination and inherited codes of conduct, the instinct for survival and the impulse toward self-destruction. James Baldwin is not a safe writer. His wide readership appreciates this compulsion to explore. Baldwin has always visited places where other writers fear to go or where his rivals make quick, profitable junkets like predatory connoisseurs purchasing specimens of folk art.

Baldwin's investigations signify a liberation for us all. Like all truly important artists, he is a pioneer facing the phantoms that sooner or later we must encounter and engage.

The narrator of "Sonny's Blues," a short story masterpiece by Baldwin, describes the triumph of his brother, a jazz pianist, in this way: "Freedom lurked around us and I understood, at last, that he could help us to be free if we would listen, that we would never be free until we did."

These observations perfectly describe the long struggle of James Baldwin.



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Associate editor ..... Wanda Edwards
Adviser ..... Michael Gaspeny
Circulation manager ..... Tina Johnson
Business manager ..... Wanda Dick
Cartoonists ..... Norman Barbee, Venus McDowell
Photographers ..... Shelly Coston, Lisa Harris

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Letters to the editor:

Security guards praised

To the Editor:

In response to the letter that was published in the last issue of "The Bennett Banner" concerning the security on campus not being efficient, I would like to state my point of view.

I am proud of our security because I feel it is doing a satisfactory job at keeping our campus safe. On one occasion I even had the opportunity to witness the guards at work.

One evening while I was entertaining guests outside of my dorm, a group of young men passed by and took it upon themselves to voice their opinion about the subject of our conversation. We were greatly offended; just a few seconds later two security guards came rushing past us, with their batons in their hands, headed in the same direction the young men took.

They soon passed by us again, escorting the young men off the campus. One of the young men decided that he wanted to join in on a conversation which two young ladies standing on the walkway were having, but one security guard quickly put a stop to it by stating, "Now you don't have time for that" and continued to escort him off the grounds.

It is not easy for a small security staff to keep an eye on every girl at Bennett; enrollment is over 500. While we lay asleep in the cold early hours of the morning, security is out patrolling the grounds.

When our academic and recreational time is usually over at 12:00 p.m. on weekdays and 2:00 a.m. on weekends, the guards are constantly on 24-hour watch.

Our security might not be the best of its kind, but it is improving along with the help of an intern from Duke University, Thessie L. Mitchell, who has taken a temporary job as supervisor of campus police and who will also help revamp the techniques of security on Bennett's campus.

Tywanna D. Watkins

To the Editor:

I wish to congratulate "The Bennett Banner" for two commendable articles on myself, which I really enjoyed. Miss Lowery has shown in this article her gift and journalism.

In order to help her in this gift, I wish to share some corrections which need to be made so that the article can be factually correct.

I left my motherland South Africa lawfully even though it was speedily after I was raided and interrogated by the South African government police. I have not yet been barred from my motherland.

Secondly, Johannesburg, South Africa is not rural, using buggies and without electricity and television sets. This description was meant for the Amish Community who are God-trusting and with whom I happily lived in the Lancaster County of Lancaster, Pa.

Johannesburg is very modern with its railway station being twice the size of New York's Grand Central Station while the whole of South Africa rates as being the most modern and industrialized part in the expansive continent of Africa. It's obvious therefore that they do use electricity and do have television sets even though they practice the most heartless, racist and genocidal laws of the 20th Century.

So, Ms. Lowery, keep on writing, for I really enjoy what comes from your pen.

Sincerely,
Ms. M. Chabaku

To The Editor:

Returning to school this fall, I really became skeptical about my desire to continue my college education. In 1980, I completed the second semester—one-half of my freshman year—and was quite proud. There were about 10 other Bennett Belle homemakers here that year that I knew about. This year it seems that they have either transferred or withdrawn from college.

Initially, a feeling of anxiety overcame me when I decided to return. A feeling of bewilderment developed when I saw all the new faces. Nevertheless, I made up my mind that just because I was a few years older than most students, a mother, a displaced homemaker and a member of the unemployed, there was no reason to give up.

A college education is valuable today, but its value is not the only reason that I returned. I felt I needed the association with other women who were all working toward the common goal—a degree. I decided it would be beneficial to take up more subjects in the liberal arts, thus increasing my basic knowledge. In addition, I will be able to branch my God-given talents into areas of personal interest.

The campus of Bennett College is small, quiet and inviting. It is located in a "not-too-busy" section

(Continued on Page 3)