

As I considered topics for this year's NHD, I chose to research the Camp David Accords since it had major impacts in both the domestic and international spheres. Since the foundation of Israel as a state in 1948, the Middle East had been rife with conflict pitting Israel against her Arab neighbors. The Camp David Accords brokered by US President Jimmy Carter was the first semblance of diplomatic peace in the region.

As part of my initial research, I visited the Cleveland Public Library in early December where I was able to study original governmental documents, review events from microfilm, and examined photographs of the events. I poured through primary sources to place myself in the shoes of Carter, Begin, and Sadat, and I perused academic books that provide analysis of the larger role of the Camp David Accords.

During my research process, I believe one of my highlights was an exclusive interview with Vice President Walter Mondale; he briefed me on his first hand view of the negotiations and discussed what he foresaw as the lasting legacy of the work at Camp David. Interviewing a head of State was easily the most exciting part of my research. In addition, I also discussed the nuances of the topic and how the Camp David Accords were a turning point in history with Dr. Aaron David Miller, a foreign policy analyst who has been a top level advisor to six Secretaries of State. Given my discussions, I posit that the Camp David Accords were successful because of a concurrence of three factors: a need for peace, political will on the part of Begin and Sadat, and direct US involvement.

I then began construction of my website, using my skills in Adobe Flash, Adobe Premiere Pro, Javascript, HTML, and CSS to construct a customized theme within Weebly to effectively explain my thesis and my views on the Accords.

I contend that the Camp David Accords fits the theme a "Turning Point in History"

because it showed a turning point in U.S. foreign policy. The Accords marked a dramatic shift in US foreign policy; the Carter administration brought US involvement into diplomatic affairs to an entirely new level. While Kissinger under the Nixon administration notably did use “shuttle diplomacy,” most US efforts prior to Carter were to mediate existing wars as opposed to attempting a proactive peace. Furthermore, the Camp David Accords were a precursor to the Oslo Accords in 1993 which was one of the first attempts at resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict and the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty. The Camp David Accords were, thus, a beacon of how a change in U.S. foreign policy to ensure peace served as a basis for future successful negotiations.