

PRESS CONFERENCE

held by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

with pressmen accompanying Prime Minister Karamanlis

January 22, 1976

Question : President Sadat, you have had long talks with Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis, is it possible for us to know the outcome of those talks ?

President : Certainly, we have had long, brotherly talks with the friend and brother, Prime Minister Karamanlis, whom we highly esteem. I recognize him as a rescuer of Greece, for he was the one who re-established democracy in Greece, after years of endurance.

We talked about everything and agreed on everything. Moreover, we shall never forget what he did for us in 1956, when we nationalized the Suez Canal. Karamanlis was then presiding over the Greek Cabinet.

The Suez Canal foreign administration asked all the pilots present in the Suez Canal Authority to leave. They all did except for the Greeks, who stayed to help us keep the navigation going in the Canal, and it went out functioning very well for the benefit of the world.

Question : Would you, Mr. President, state your opinion regarding the future relations between the new Egypt and present Greece ?

President : It is no secret to say that I discussed everything with my friend Karamanlis. I can tell everybody that we have reached a thorough understanding on the topics and problems we discussed.

Question : We understand, Mr. President, that the problem of Lebanon was the leading problem discussed between you and Prime Minister Karamanlis ?

President : Yes indeed, it is a tragedy. The tragic events of Lebanon will have great effects upon the whole region. The Lebanon problem has two aspects : The first is that something is wrong with the regime chosen by the Lebanese for themselves in 1943. This mistake must be put right.

Second, a settlement should take place between the Lebanese and the Palestinians residing in Lebanon. We believe the two parties ought to sit together and discuss this matter.

Unfortunately, events have now reached their climax, and the continuity of the crisis in Lebanon is not in anybody's interest. We can never even imagine its outcome. It will be a real tragedy.

Question : Sir, do you expect the problem to develop, with this fighting going on, to a division of Lebanon ?

President : The division may take place ... It is possible, but we are definitely against it. It is against the interests of the Arab nation and against the interests of our own region.

Question : Egypt has agreed to a second disengagement of forces, so how, Mr. President, can a permanent peace be reached ?

President : The situation in America is now frozen, because the elections for the presidency are taking place this year. That is why if the Geneva Conference is convened, we can work on the proposed

framework for the final solution of the problem. When elections are over in America, then we can reach that solution. I always say that America holds the trumpcards in this game, since it provides Israel with everything, from the loaf of bread to the Phantom aircraft and the gun.

Question : The Greek people appreciate your attitude concerning the problem of Cyprus, however, the Greek Cypriots need a stronger support from you, Sir ?

President : Our policy, frankly and plainly speaking, is that we have unreserved support for President Makarios. Besides, we shall never forget the support of Greece, ever since 1956. This is my personal opinion, and it is also the position of Egypt. What happens in your country affects us greatly. I have, in fact, discussed this matter with Mr. Henry Kissinger, telling him that the second stage which the Turkish forces undertook was completely wrong, and that they should withdraw from this stage.

I would like to tell you that we have the greatest admiration for Premier Karamanlis as a statesman for his wisdom and flexibility. At the same time, we also greatly respect our friend, President Makarios.