ADDRESS
by
PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT
before the People's Assembly
Cairo, March 14, 1976

Brothers and sisters,

I have been eagerly awaiting this meeting here, in this place from which we have been in the habit of acquainting people with everything, big and small, in this stage of the struggle our people are passing through at present.

I had imagined that this meeting, in particular, should have taken place last year, 1975, upon the basis that our constitutional term, yours and mine, would be terminated in 1976 and that we will be through with the establishing of the bases of democracy and the State of Institutions in 1975. We will have then to go through the experience together in 1976 until the elections, at which point we would have handed over the responsibility with honour, as is our wont to our people, clearly defined. But the complicated circumstances of the international situation, and the events which have taken place, and which are taking place daily in our region and in the world surrounding us, made it impossible for us to meet before this very day.

I thank the Lord for having granted me the possibility of this meeting with you, a meeting through which I feel we shall
be able to establish the bases of a turning point, not only in the history of our people, but in the history of the entire region.

Now that we have worked together throughout the whole five years of your mandate, and now that we have overcome together the centres of power and all the obstacles; now that your army, in your name and in the name of the people, has forged the eternal victory of 1973, after all that, it was our duty to hand the responsibility to our people.

You realise that my faith in you is boundless, and our cooperation had been the cooperation of honest men. It is for all these reasons put together that we had, before closing this your last session, to put the final touches to the beginning of a proper democratic life, protected by all the guarantees of the soil of this homeland.

For the first time in more than 40 years, that is scores of years before the Revolution, we are establishing a living example of a true democratic society in this country, so that our people may enjoy their day, their morrow and the future of the coming generations. So that our people would become an example for the Arab nation and for all the people of the Third World aspiring to the kind of system we are about to establish.

Let the whole world find out that our people are the same as they have ever been, the same people who have given the world its first civilization. Yes, it is our people who have forged the first civilization, and they are now giving the first right to the proper practice of democracy, and to the kind of life in which every individual can enjoy hope and security, the kind of life in which the dignity of man is protected above and beyond everything else.

There is so much I want to put before you, the main responsibilities, that I do not know where to start. Should I submit to you the possibility of some documents and analyses that have taken me years to prepare.
you a report of the past six years I spent in this, my responsible post, and which are about to come to an end? You are entitled to such a report. Or should I inform you of the problems of today, and through these problems relate to you the story of the six years?

Whatever the circumstances, my intention is to put before you, and to the people through you, a true picture of what has taken place over the past six years which are about to come to an end this year.

But before I begin, I would like to tell you of the prayer of a learned Souffi man, one that comforted me in the agitation of responsibilities, problems, pains and emotions which our people have suffered: The prayer says: "I have turned several pages of my life, and today I open a new page, O Lord, make it a page of good, free from evil, adorned with truth, innocent of falsehood. Make its beginning and its end loyalty to You and effort for Thy sake."

Dear brothers and sisters,

This time I want to speak to you after we had accomplished yet another democratic step, on our gradual path towards more political freedom, after the committee has finished discussing the future of political action in Egypt, and after it has established its report on the matter, the report you have already examined. But before I begin my talk on this particular matter, I would like to stop for one moment at the word 'democracy', for democracy is not just a word, nor is it a simple matter.

To combine democracy and the necessary degree of stability in any society is indeed one of the problems facing the entire world today. You can see around you examples of stable democ-
racy in today's world, just as you can see many unsettled situations in the world as well; to state but one example we have what is taking place in Portugal and what is taking place in India. That is why I have always been of the opinion that the starting point in practising democracy is equality. Democracy should be brought to maturity and it should be rationalised with time. This is the best way in which democracy can be brought to safe harbours. This is the proper way to consolidate our steps, and to lead us to a democracy in practice and action, not words and slogans. Despite the fact that the idea of establishing multiple fora within the framework of the Socialist Union has been approved by popular referendum, I decided to form a committee to study the matter in detail. The committee has been formed on as vast a level as possible, comprising all kinds of trends and opinions.

This committee went even further, expanding the circle of participants, inviting anyone with an opinion to express and enlarging the circle of its research so that it is now no longer confined to the topic of fora, but is dealing with all possible forms of political activity. The discussions of the committee are public, they are recorded and published in the papers so that the public conscience of the nation can be said to have participated in crystallizing the opinions reached by the committee.

This method will get all into the habit of openly discussing our political problems. Any discussion must, eventually, come to an end, come to a decision, and no decision whatsoever can be satisfactory to everybody. It is only natural that one opinion should overrule another and it is indeed one of the bases of democracy that we should accept the opinion of the majority until the situation changes with the change in circumstances, and the change itself must take place in a democratic manner. This is exactly what happened in the case we are about to discuss.
No one can claim that the Socialist Union, or that any other institution in the State, was above criticism, or even violent attack. Yet democracy, as I said, is a free discussion which results in an opinion approved by the majority, and we have to accept that opinion, because the democracy we seek is totally different from obstinacy and fanatic biases.

Those who have followed the discussions of the Committee on the Future of Political Action in Egypt, and the larger discussions concerning it, which have been published in the papers and which have involved many sectors, and those who have examined the reports of the committee on these discussions, will note that there are principles, or rather basic points which have rallied the trend of the majority. In my opinion, these basic trends can be summed up in four basic points:

The first point is the need to maintain the formula of the alliance of the working forces of the people; and the need to maintain 50% of the seats on all the active, productive boards for the workers and the farmers.

This wise opinion is, according to me, proof of the fact that the masses of our people, those who have a real interest in the future, have fully absorbed the principles of the glorious Revolution of July 23 as well as its achievements.

We hear and read a lot of talk about the July 28 Revolution, the Egyptian nationalist experience, from the moment of its inception. Some of this talk can be considered as criticism, evaluation and the desire to reform and correct. But there is also talk which can be considered as unjust and slander.

Dear brothers and sisters,

This is an excellent opportunity to state before you that this revolution was mainly undertaken in the interest of the broad
masses of the people, those who were foiled for years and those who were deprived of all the social and political rights.

There are also those who take advantage of the new generation’s ignorance of the situation prevailing in our country before the 23rd of July. The British Embassy ruled Egypt, and the wealth of the country was in the hands of 1/2% of the people. Class struggle was increasing in a rapid and frightening manner. The years before the Revolution were marked by secret societies, assassinations and mutual terrorism between the authorities and the people. These years were also marked by farmers’ attacks against the palaces of feudalists. It all culminated in the burning of Cairo which was a mixture of repressed anger and despair of seeing any reforms undertaken, as well as deliberate plotting against the spirit of resistance of our people.

The Revolution assumed the responsibility after the plots of the Palace had been unmasked, and after the bankruptcy of the parties had reached an extent where the post of Prime Minister has become a commodity to be bought and sold.

Prisons, detention camps and torture chambers were teeming with hundreds of people. Assassinations were being undertaken by the legal authorities themselves in order to get rid of the opposition.

Following that, the Revolution had to face internal and external plots and wars imposed on it to make it submit; it also faced the necessity of carrying out «social surgery» and profound changes in the most peaceful manner known by revolution.

The Revolution had to begin ambitious development plans both in the field of major projects such as the High Dam, the industries of iron and steel, aluminium, and petrochemicals as well as the fields of production of commodities that we had never done before. The introduction of planning as a system had so far been unknown to the country. The Revolution was unprepared to transform the national function into an economic system.

The Revolution assumed the responsibility of getting the base of the Revolution, expressing the will of the masses and parties that were against the British Embassy. All the ancient authorities that oppressed them were sent to the «escapade» in which they were made victims of the «revolution».

Nevertheless, there were some incidents that the Revolution did not overlook. We saw the trend towards fundamentalism.

The Revolution, with the support of the Communist party, continued to be a political force.
to the Third World. The alliance of the people's working forces was undoubtedly effective in the peaceful manner in which this transformation was carried out — this was and remains its basic function.

The 50% rate for farmers and workers pushed forward the base of the social pyramid and created an outlet for direct self-expression rather than through middlemen represented in political parties whose major preoccupation was the fight for power. When the British and the Palace were the sources of influence and authority, the parties found no other alternative except to submit to them in varying degrees. There was no alternative to the fact that the Revolution should have victims and that some of these victims were unjustly victimized.

Nevertheless, the May 15 Revolution preceded any other voice in correcting this situation and in lifting injustice out of its belief that the core of transformation has been achieved and that a return to constitutional legitimacy after revolutionary legitimacy was imminent and that the time had come to heal wounds and eliminate differences and hurts. In addition, this was a demand essential for national unity of any country for it completes the logic of the formula for the alliance of the working forces of the people so that it can overcome the dangerous stages that await us.

We hear a great deal about the injustices that have befallen some individuals, but however loud these voices may be, they cannot overshadow the benefits enjoyed by millions. This is the fundamental criteria when we come to assess the Revolution.

The second point which has emerged from the discussions of the Committee on the Future of Political Action in Egypt is the trend which has refused the immediate freedom of establishing political parties. Everybody knows that the old parties have fallen
far back in the process, and that the new parties have not yet attained the proper circumstances for them to take a serious form guaranteeing stability.

One of the simplest reasons of this state of affairs is the fact that free public political discussion has long been absent from our country, from our masses and from our intellectuals. It has only come back to life very recently following the rectification revolution, the new freedoms and the uprooting of all reasons for fear. Any fair-minded persons will note that, so far, the discussion has concentrated on what we do not want and not on what we want.

Voices have been raised and have merged in similar opinions, while many have gone off the wide common path chosen by our nation. Not one single trend has come up with a programme of action to face our common, basic problems.

In the light of all those factors, our people were right in refusing a direct and immediate return to the freedom of establishing political parties. They were also right in their refusal to return to darkness at this stage which is one of the most critical and delicate stages our country has ever gone through. Moreover, political parties are not built of practice itself defines the reality of the historical stage our people are going through, and of the variables that have come upon social relations. All this, taken together, defines the proper cause of political organisation.

The third point in the report of the Committee on the Future of Political Action is the general or public trend; want to take a defined step forward, a step crystallising various trends representing different opinions in an effective and organised manner, and not in a scattered, dispersed or individual form as is happening now. Only in this way can we clear the atmosphere, and thus all those who have certain opinions or trends will find themselves responsible for a series of efforts and take a serious form of guaranteeing stability.

There is base opinion, while it is actually happening, while it have come in our country, our masses and from our intellectuals. It has only come back to life very recently following the rectification revolution, the new freedoms and the uprooting of all reasons for fear. Any fair-minded persons will note that, so far, the discussion has concentrated on what we do not want and not on what we want.

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for a serious and profound study of matters presenting their own efforts and initiatives towards a solution. In that way can we outgrow the simplified attitude of negative criticism to one where we search for disease and remedy at the same time.

There is a great difference between guaranteeing freedom of opinion, within the alliance, in its individual form which is what is happening now and between moving forward to a stage where opinions may gather around a forum expressive of them; thus the opinion could have more weight and greater effect and influence. From these fora shall emerge more than one nucleus which would become a point polarizing popular gathering around a particular trend or opinion.

The fourth point reached by the Committee on the Future of Political Action is that there is a clear trend against extravagance in the number of fora. Perhaps it was rightly influenced with what actually happened when 40 fora emerged within a few days. I shall permit myself to say that this was unfitting a very serious situation and is there anything more serious, or dangerous, or delicate than setting the first foundation stone for the completion of the democratic structure and political future of the country?

Every citizen of good faith has the right to seek a role for himself and his opinion in the public life of his country but our anxiety about the experiment urges us to frankly express our opinion with regard to any attempts to gain notoriety or free propaganda. Those who think that it is a matter of drafting a few lines copied from here or there to constitute a programme or to have their photographs in the newspapers shows a despicable selfish spirit whereas democracy itself is one step closer to the capacity of people to congregate for public service and for preference of the objective over oneself. That is why the Committee considered reasonable and acceptable that the experiment begins with three
fora: one representing the right generally speaking; the second representing the middle of the road trend which is always the fundamental current in our country; and the third forum representing the various leftist currents, all grouped together within the framework of the alliance for national action. In this way can a forum become the nucleus for a true popular future grouping and all this would be one more step for us in democratic practice; a serious responsible democracy that would not bury itself with unstudied upsurges and anarchy terminating in an anti-reaction.

Brothers and sisters,

I have always said that the supreme target of the Rectification Revolution following the total liberation of the national soil is the organisation of a difficult operation, namely ending the stage of revolutionary legitimacy and laying the foundation of constitutional legitimacy. That is why we eliminated the centres of power which governed without responsibility and set down the foundation of the sovereignty of law. For the first time in 40 years, we abolished all detention camps and the principle of detention itself. Every citizen is secure — for himself and his property — provided he acts within the fully recognised law. In addition, institutions were given their full rights; the executive power represented in the Cabinet for the first time exercises its full constitutional authority and carries its full responsibilities. The legislative power has proved itself through your august Assembly as has never happened before. The judiciary has had its independence restored to it and its impregnable fortress. With this profound change that we are embarking upon in organising the political organisation can we provide popular authority with rights, freedom of movement and a capacity for participation it has never before enjoyed.

I still have to talk of two institutions of our state, each of which have a meaning. We must respect the men, and the people. Under the list of men the greatest is the Armed Forces.

After all, the people is confined, is to say the population.

From 1962 to 1974, the largest army existed in the umsha'arm forces, that they should become a part of the country.

As are sacred institutions, are sacred documents. The Constitution is the cornerstone i.e. the text expression, i.e. the constitution of the forces is a great responsibility.
which has a very important role to play. Our Armed Forces ... we must not forget that our Armed Forces, officers and enlisted men, arc one of the factors of the alliance of the forces of the people. Undoubtedly, the Armed Forces have a special position on the list of honour. They bear upon their shoulders the burden of the greatest of all taxes and the trust of all sacrifices for the homeland. In the light of this particularity, what is the role of the Armed Forces in the alliance of the people?

After defending the homeland, the role of the Armed Forces is confined to one very valuable and important matter, and that is to safeguard the Constitution and constitutional legitimacy.

From the moment of the first declaration of the Revolution to the Charter of National Action in 1952, to the October Paper in 1974, the way has been long and arduous. Yet today, and under the umbrella of constitutional legitimacy, all these charters have become references and explanatory memoranda to consult, but they should not bind us nor should we come to a stand-still within the confines of a given text.

As for the Constitution, the Permanent Constitution, its texts are sacred and stable. They contain what we have recorded in our documents along with what we have acquired from our experience. The Constitution is the father of all laws, and the main cornerstone in the State of institutions. In any country, the Constitution is sacred until amended. Each and every Constitution contains a text explaining the constitutional ways of introducing amendments, i.e. the amendment of the Constitution is explained in the Constitution itself. That is why when I say that the role of the Armed Forces in the alliance is to protect the Constitution, I am imparting a great national responsibility to them, a noble and lofty responsibility. Those who have tried to involve the Armed Forces in matters which do not concern them have discovered the consequences
of such an action. We, who have returned the Armed Forces to the true and proper role, have also come to realise that they have taken over the responsibility of the battle, that they have brought us victory and have turned over a glorious new page not only in the history of modern Egypt but also in the history of our Arab nation and of the entire world.

I say this to remind you that this is the role with which the armed forces started in 1952, with the inception of the Revolution, at a time when the Armed Forces were the \textit{avant-garde} of the people. You have also heard me say that in 1939-1940, when I started the Free Officers Organisation, I contacted a certain other organisation, the Moslem Brotherhood. I categorically refused the late Sheikh Hassan El Banna’s proposal to have our organisation join that of the Moslem Brotherhood. I refused because I wanted to keep a tradition we have continued to respect, and that is that the Armed Forces are for the people, all the people, and not for one organisation, nor for one party, class or group.

I would also want to record the fact that when Gamal Abdel Nasser took over the organisation in December 1942 following my arrest in July 1942, and though we had not discussed this particular matter, Gamal Abdel Nasser respected and kept to this tradition while I was a prisoner in one jail after another. The Moslem Brotherhood, and others declared, at the time, that the Armed Forces did not belong to any group, party or class. Indeed the Armed Forces are for the entire people, within the framework of constitutional legitimacy. They have now gone back to their main role which is to protect constitutional legitimacy and not to interfere in any other matter.

A few more words to say about the post of the President of the Republic in this modern age, the age of frequent and rapid action and movement, an age necessitating vigilance, quick action and reaction. It is the role of a Head of State and it is why the head of the State, the Head of State, is the conduit of State strategic decisions, the Head of State. That is why the post of Head of State is a duty to those who hold that position.

We have already heard the U.S.A. and the U.S. Government for us. We have heard their head of the State give up that duty to harmful tendencies.

I am saying more, I am saying more, I am saying that the post of Head of State is a duty to those who hold that position and a fact that organic to our society and our noble traditions.

The power of the state and no greater than the Head of State. May the entire family of the institutions and the state. When I say mean to change the
aud reaction, quick decisions, an age in which the responsibility of a Head of State has greatly increased in various regimes. That is why the ideal position is that which conforms to our values, to our circumstances and to our customs, and that is that the Head of State should be free to steer the policy of the State in all its strategic horizons. He should concentrate on the difficult and grave decisions, and we should be capable of taking these decisions, with the State institutions, at the proper time and in the proper place. That is why my advice is that there should be no struggle for the post of Head of State in the sense favoured by some, or rather by those who have asked me to allow electoral fights.

We have our own traditions, and what is right and fitting for the U.S.A., or for any other place, is not necessarily right fitting for us. We have been brought up to respect family ties and the head of the family. If we give up these traditions, we would be giving up our values, and this might lead us to nefarious consequences. Some may try to take advantage of freedom in a manner harmful to the basic values we have been brought up to respect.

I am not saying this because I crave to occupy this post once more, I am simply stating a fact of our daily life and experience, and a fact of the values of our society. As I said to you before, our society can only be straightened if it abides to its ancient and noble traditions.

The post of Head of State should not be subject to fighting, and no group should be able to use it as a shield or an excuse. The Head of State should only have at heart the supreme interests of the people and of the country, then he has his role as head of the entire family. He is the true arbiter between the authorities and the institutions. He is the symbol of national unity and its guardian. When I say that there should be no struggle or contention, I do not mean to choose one person in particular. Certainly not. Yet some
have asked for an amendment of the Constitution on the subject of the elections of the President of the Republic, requesting public elections similar to those of the U.S.A.

That is exactly what I consider unfitting for us. The election of the Head of State should, in conformity with our Constitution, be by having one third of the Assembly nominate him, and if he gets two-thirds of the Assembly vote, then the nomination is to be submitted to a referendum. Thus, more than one person can be nominated, the matter can be discussed within the Assembly, then the candidate having obtained two-thirds of the vote can be submitted to a referendum by the people. This is in no way undemocratic. In many countries the Assembly elects the President of the Republic without a public referendum.

This reminds me of a story, derived from our society, and which illustrates what I am trying to say. Twenty-one years ago, in 1955, I was a Minister of State. I was also Secretary-General of the Islamic Congress, and as such, I travelled to many Islamic countries in Asia and up to Indonesia.

On my way back, I visited India where Pandit Nehru was then Prime Minister and leader of all India following the independence. Pandit Nehru gave a reception in my honour, and as we stood receiving and greeting the guests, a man and his wife arrived. They were both members of the Indian People's Assembly. They have two houses in the People's Assembly in India, House of Commons and a Senate. The couple I am speaking of were members of the House of Commons and I had already met them when they had passed through Cairo. They were members of the Communist Party, and they had started a violent attack against Nehru in Parliament. When they came in, he introduced them as Mr. and Mrs. so and so, and I said that they were old friends of mine. They both embraced Nehru while he turned to me saying «Beware of those two... don't let them turn you...»

I have no intention of including a great deal of the story here, but I wish to mention that the man introduced as father for whom they had started the revolution, remained throughout the story the absolute master of the House of Commons and of the Senate of India.

Because the unity of the Indian people is cohesive and solid.

I have already stated that the Revolution of 1930, which had suggested to me the idea of appointing to the National Assembly and near the heart of the Union, revolutionaries and atheists, was only based on how we should be free from all religious, social, and political obstacles.

Beware of those two...

Brothers...

As you can see, I have arrived at this stage in order to say...
turn you Bolshevik and a Communist... they have caused me a great
deal of trouble and are members of the Opposition.» Indeed they
were causing Nehru worry and troubles, but before me, the stranger,
the man and his wife kissed Nehru on both cheeks in his capacity
as father of India head of the family, regardless of the opposition
to him in political work.

When I returned to Cairo in 1955, I found the struggle had
reached its peak, in the Revolution Command Council — which
remained until 1956 — I handed in my resignation and wrote in it
this story.

I said that in India that had more than 10 languages, 20
religions, and 20 races and nationalities, with a population of 400
million, at the time, despite the differences in religion, faith, race
and origin, they all agreed on the point that Nehru was the Father
of India and the head of the family.

Because of that, India with its population of 400 million, was a
cohesive state, as it adopted the family system.

I handed in my resignation in 1956 and the members of the
Revolution Command Council discussed the matter with me. I
suggested that we follow the same system (as India) as the struggles
pointed to the fact that being young men, of nearly the same age
and nearly the same position, since we were all members of the
Revolution Command Council, there was bound to be struggle
between us. I was against the struggle and was of the mind that
we should have a head of the family. Apart from that, we were
all free to express our opinions, as in India they did with Nehru.

Brothers and sisters,

As you see we are embarking on a highly important new
stage in our application of democratic action, after completing all
of the State institutions. We are armed by the Constitution that legalised the accomplishments of the Revolution, on the one hand, and recorded the basis of constitutional legitimacy, on the other. You may have noticed how I always insist, and stress at every occasion on the word ‘application’ or practice. This is because I believe that the most important factor for establishing a system or principle is the practice thereof.

It is easy to draft the text, but difficult to apply it. We and others have drafted many texts that have remained ink on paper or were spoiled by wrong application that diverted them from their purposes. Many experiments were spoiled by extravagance, in other words, misinterpretation of the text and wrong application of the provisions.

This is an error we wish to avoid, at this stage, while we are still nursing a sapling in its first year, the tree of democracy. We wish to protect it against storms and hurricanes until such time when it becomes a deep-rooted tree, in full bloom.

What I am trying to say is that texts are not enough, and that a twisted practice can be harmful. We had the Charter and the March 30 Declaration, and yet before our very eyes the Charter was given a Marxist interpretation. Yet the Charter stipulates the basic differences between our theories and Marxism.

We also had the March 30 Declaration which was never implemented and which never saw the light. Then came the Rectification Revolution in 1971 and transcended the Declaration. For example, it had stipulated that no permanent constitution could be established until we had eliminated all vestiges of aggression, yet we did establish the Permanent Constitution in 1971. It had stipulated the right to arrest, but with a sub-committee from the Central Committee to supervise the security forces.
We have overcome all this. We set up the Permanent Constitution and completely abolished detention and detention camps. My aim has always been to link words with deeds, texts with practice. I never put an attractive text on paper that is dead in practice. Perhaps many of the problems we faced and criticisms directed against us are due to my insistence on serious practice and the price that we pay for it. The practice of democracy creates with time unwritten rules and bases that are perhaps more important than any written text. I find it is my duty from the position of responsibility that I have explained before to tell you of what I really think of some practices in the past period. Before I do this, I want to put before you with regard to the first report of the Committee on the Future of Political Action in Egypt, which is tabled for your discussion and implementation following your decision, I would like to put a brief picture of a permanent organisational form.

The President of the Republic shall be the arbiter so to say among the various powers and is unbiased. He shall work for the basic, fate-deciding and strategic decisions with the State institutions. In the final analysis, he is the head of the family who shall arbitrate and the safety valve for everyone. Then come the Institutions — the executive authority, namely the Cabinet in its full power and the legislative power, namely the People’s Assembly with its full powers. Your sessions were a dynamic and magnificent example of constitutional achievement. Then comes the fourth authority, namely the Press, which I shall speak of in detail. Other than that we have the Socialist Union which represents the people’s alliance and which is the crucible that contains the three fixed fora, the right, the centre and the left. The President of the Republic is the head of the Socialist Union but his work does not mean that he has power over the fora. The fora should practise political action and present themselves to the
next elections with their programmes and their candidates. It is the task of the Socialist Union to protect three points: first, national unity; second, the inevitability of the socialist solution, namely the gains of workers and farmers, free education, equality of opportunity, in other words, the criterion is capacity and efficiency. Third, social peace, in other words, no class or group of the alliance groups should impose its opinion on the other group or classes. The Socialist Union has no power in this, if a forum errs with regard to one of these principles, this shall be discussed publicly before the people. This requires that the Central Committee be organised as well as the Higher Executive Committee in order to have the three fora represented in them. The Socialist Union then would be the framework and the crucible, while the fora would be the actual political organisations freely practising their political activities and programmes and proposing their candidates. Once they reach this hall, they shall practise their full constitutional rights.

Let me return to another point. How can this practice always emanate from the experience? I do not want us to have recourse to books or theories but let us be helped by our experiment, our practice and our experience in the past stage. The Constitution has given the People's Assembly sovereignty over itself and provided all the guarantees and immunities known by the most sophisticated constitution in the world.

I remember that when I was Speaker of this Assembly I changed its rules of procedures in 1966, freeing them from many ties which limited the freedom of action of its members. But this must be accompanied by a great sense of responsibility in all people. Because a member of the Assembly is a responsible person, immune from questioning and provided with all the necessary means of investigation. Nevertheless, the climate in the Assembly has of late been weakened and an element of criticism about the mistakes of others has crept in.

We were told in the first National Assembly, one pound about two hundred million pounds, but here two hundred million pounds, but here also has crept in and you can imagine the grave dangers.

But to be precise, how can spoils be realised in Egypt. I think you can draw your own conclusions of the preceding. Following something to this line, I shall give the government the truth, if it is yours this has been haphazard.
has often been upset by many statements and by many generalised and ambiguous accusations to which there was no proof, even in the minds of those who made them. For instance, the statement about the 500 millionaires. How, where, whom and in what way? We want to know, our people want to know, and I personally am the first to want to know. Two thousand million pounds of commission. It is only logical to assume that two thousand million pounds of commission should be the result of deals amounting to hundred thousand million pounds. When did we make such deals for two hundred thousand million pounds, i.e. two hundred billion pounds? When did we make such deals to justify two thousand million pounds of commission? Such things can be said outside, but here, in this hall which has its sanctity, and before you who also have your sanctity amidst the people because one word from you can have a tremendous negative or positive effect, figures must be very accurate because the language of figures is very grave and implies accuracy.

But for figures to be mentioned haphazardly, without any precision and without any logic, this is indeed something which can spoil the democratic practice. Any responsible member should realise the effect of his words on the people in Egypt and outside Egypt. After my recent tour of the Arab countries. I want to draw your attention to this particular point. I want to tell you, the representatives of the people, that what we have suffered following what has been published about Gamal Abdel-Nasser, is something that I cannot begin to describe but I will come back to this later. Each and every member knows that the regulations give the entire Assembly the right to question and investigate the truth. If you have any other ideas concerning the regulations, it is yours and you have every right to change them. When all this has been said and done, there is no excuse whatsoever for haphazard talk and rumours under the dome of this parliament.
Dear brothers and sisters,

The serious discussions which take place in the People’s Assembly concerning matters of control or legislation submitted to you, are a healthy phenomenon aiming first and foremost at the interest of the public, and designed to elicit a positive participation by the Cabinet. I have personally followed all these debates, and I believe that they have enriched practice. And though the Assembly’s supervision on the work of the government is an authentic constitutional right, yet this supervision should be based on established facts, and not on mere rumours and hearsay.

That is how confidence can be established between the people and their government. What we are truly in need of at this decisive stage of our history, is total and full confidence between the people and the government, and to have the aspirations of the people come true, so that the people may see all the constitutional institutions totally committed to accomplish that work in purity and constitutional legality.

But there is a great difference between responsible supervision and between creating suspicion and believing rumours channelled by ill-intentioned people. You will not disagree with me when responsible persons are subjected to such unjust campaigns, they might be pushed into a shell of isolation and fear of responsibility. This is certainly what we do not want at this stage, when our country needs the efforts of every worker, the courage for decision-making and the capacity to assume responsibility in the interests of our people, and in realisation of their aspirations.

From amongst the debates which have taken place in this Assembly, my attention was drawn to the investigation concerning the gross negligence which prevailed in the contract signed as between the Ministry of Housing and the Spanish «Estomica» Com-
pany for a large quantity of iron, at a price above the going world prices. As a result of this deal, a few millions of the people's money were lost, and the measures which accompanied this deal bear several indications liable to shake the confidence which the people should have in the work of the Ministry.

This was the text of the inquiry. The strange thing about this subject is that when it was sent to the concerned Committee in your Assembly, its report which your Assembly approved was the following — that the deal did not take place as the papers stated and therefore its results were not achieved. Second: Had the deal been concluded, it would have achieved the following monetary and economic advantages: First, suitability as regards price. Second, non-payment — immediately — of free currency and saving that value for use in other areas according to needs and priorities since the deal was to be paid for from a non-transferable account. Third, non-payment of interests. Fourth, guaranteed Egyptian exports to Spain at a value of 28,226,000 dollars.

Do you know the reason for what is happening in the country today? It is the result of a planned campaign and I will give you the details. Lack of confidence in the government and in the authorities; you remember the same thing happened in 1972, when I sent out in July the Soviet experts and then later I relieved the Minister of Foreign Affairs of his duties. The propaganda machine started to say that these two decisions meant that we had cut off cooperation with the Soviets, that Sadat had no intention of entering the battle, that Sadat was preparing for liquidation and submission, all these things that you heard. A few months later, in October, I relieved the Minister of War of his duties. The Minister of War was a rightist, the other was a leftist. They said: decisions are issued without study and where is the country going? A campaign of doubts; everything must be doubted. All this came
to an end with the 1973 battle. Everything stopped, even the campaign of doubt for which instructions were sent and I know all about them. What shall they doubt of now? The integrity of the government, stretching from the government to me personally. But I will tell you something; all I care about is you, as the representatives of the people. We have worked together for five years and our terms of office end simultaneously in good, God willing. I would like to put before you all the facts because I never hide the truth from you or from the people.

The last letter presented by a member of this Assembly in which he asked for an investigation, and the Prime Minister responded immediately and sent the letter to the Public Prosecutor, this letter was directed to me and to my children. When the Parquet investigated the results were those that you read in the newspapers. I gave up democracy but I did not really so for democracy belongs to the people and no man can take it away from them. A man in a position of responsibility must have the feeling of honour of this responsibility. The person who presented this letter turned round the subject but, in fact, he meant me. I stand before you and I am ready for the account. When the problem of Abdel-Nasser comes here — the one Galal El Hamamsy raised — I shall put myself at the disposal of the Assembly for I am committed and I said so in the October Paper before the election. I am responsible for every action by Abdel Nasser and I am not shirking the responsibility. The only authority that can deal with me is this Assembly and I am at its disposal.

We now have meetings and campaigns of doubt which begin with the government and the Cabinet. Perhaps you heard me one day in a radio speech and I showed my annoyance because I wanted to give the students, the pupils, a glass of milk every day at the expense of the State. Our children’s health is not of the best, and
I need pilots, because the battle showed that without pilots and a strong reserve I cannot have the upper hand. I talked with the company responsible for providing this milk and I waited for one year, but the man responsible refused to sign because he was afraid of your Assembly. At that time, we had the Mercedes investigation. I had contacted the Shah of Iran and told him that we had a problem in the country. I asked him if they produced Mercedes buses, and when he said ‘yes’, I asked him to send a thousand buses, and I ordered the Government to take the necessary measures. All hell broke loose ... also for doubts and slander. In recent months, we witnessed an organized action to throw doubt on everything, even the Rectification Revolution which was carried out in 1971. At that time I told you there shall be no retreat from democracy and I am proud of the work and the democratic practice carried out by this Assembly. But you will notice that I believe in the principle which says that the society wherein the humanity of any individual is infringed upon, is an unjust society, not fit for survival. We must never infringe upon the dignity of man or abuse our right to speak. Then by the time the results of investigations appear and a man is proved innocent, that person who had been accused would be scolded by the country and by his people. This is what happened in the Mercedes deal and I am giving it as an example of the practice, this democratic practice that I am following up in every Institution so that we may come out with a sound process. The same observation applies to the fourth authority, namely the Press, which I consider one of the State’s institutions. At the beginning, let me say that I do not believe in individual ownership of the press. Why? The position of the Press is changing throughout the world. The modern world has become aware of the enormous influence that the press has over public opinion and believes that its task is too important to leave it to individual ownership, or to monopolies, or that its financial resources may be unknown. The
cost of putting out a newspaper is estimated in the millions and only certain groups can afford it. This is against our philosophy and our trends. Even in England and Sweden, they are now thinking of a way for the State to financially assist newspapers without dominating them. In this way, big fish cannot eat small fish, and newspapers would not have to resort to sources of finance that might divert them from the national service expected of them. England and Sweden have a long tradition of democracy and freedom of the press. The Press is for the people, and should always be in the position that can enable it to serve their interests and express their aspirations. The Socialist Union could, for instance, have 51% while the workers would have 49%. The press has a message and a task of a particular nature that cannot be left to individual ownership. I am determined that censorship — which we lifted off — shall not be returned to the Press. However, the newspapers must be reorganised in consultation with the Supreme Press Council to define their responsibilities. There were accusations and exaggerations within the press which poisoned the atmosphere internally, while injuring our reputation abroad, for notoriety or revenge or to pay back old accounts and old hatreds. I am not asking the press to give a false picture of our situation or to hide any truth that the people must know of. However, in view of the great and broad influence that it has, the journalists must be committed very highly to the honour of responsibility and the integrity of their words. The press is the machinery of popular supervision and, therefore, it should uncover any deviation. Is the press unaware of the fact that perhaps for the first time, the official machinery of control and supervision in the State is moving quickly and precisely? ... The Attorney General, the administrative control, the socialist prosecutor and his machinery, the committees of the People's Assembly, the committee on the sources of income, all these are searching and investigating and calling
to account. They have the right to send everything they suspect to the Courts, the judiciary which has regained its authority, its independence and its immunity. All these organs are acting and the people know of it. It would have been more fitting for the press to adhere precisely to the facts and to be more careful about directing accusations particularly the type that destroys our moralities, our reputation and our self-confidence. Such things can only emanate from deep personal bitterness and I am obliged to give you a clear example that must have pained you all as it did to me.

The integrity of Gamal Abdel Nasser — I am placing with the Bureau of your August Assembly the results of the investigation carried out by the Socialist Prosecutor. It is a very painful and bitter thing and I would not have wanted to stand in a position where I would have to defend the integrity of Abdel Nasser, for two reasons. First, Gamal Abdel Nasser has been my friend since we were 19 years old and I adhere to the loyalty and faith of friendship. Second, Gamal Abdel Nasser is one of the men of Egypt and the entire Arab nation who has written in history glorious pages, pages in the history of this country and the Arab nation, magnificent pages. Then we find a paper like «Akhbar El Yom» simply printing an entire page quoting from a book that Gamal Abdel Nasser has 15 million dollars owed to the State. I immediately contacted the Premier and it became clear that this sum was paid into the State treasury. Some of the steps taken by the responsible authorities may not be the correct ones but no part of this sum reached Gamal Abdel Nasser. The whole sum was put in the treasury. I tell you frankly for you are my partners that Gamal Abdel-Nasser who, as you know, is my brother and my friend, left me a heavy heritage. A disintegrated external situation with the whole world, with the Arab Nation, with America, with West Europe and with many other countries, and it is enough to
just say with the Arab nation for this is our family. As far as the military situation is concerned, Israel was on the bank of the Canal and the Russians about whom I shall speak later had given him a bad time. It is true that he had none but the Russians left, for all his links with the rest of the world were torn. Not only that, as far as the military situation was concerned, there was defeat, the spirit of defeat, bitterness and agony. Some people claim that he left his heritage to them. To me he left the heritage of everyone who claims to own the heritage of Abdel Nasser and who still believe so until today. As regards the economic situation, you know that in our life, we had never reached so difficult a position as the one we are in. But the worst thing he left from which I have suffered and continue to suffer, is the hatred and enmity that prevailed in the country among everybody. I cannot work in hatred, ever. In this Assembly, we had the centres of power who sat here and I was sitting here and I told them «we must know that there is something called shame». However, throughout those past six years, this element of hatred has taken so much of my time and effort. You have shared the responsibility with me and you know the results of our military battle. In the political field, our relations with the rest of the world are the best that Egypt has seen. With regard to our economic relations, I have just visited six Arab states. There they are messing about in Syria and saying that Egypt is isolated and one of those so-called inheritors of Abdel Nasser also says that Egypt is isolated. Where? The Arabs are creating the fund to make the Egyptian economy stand on its feet after receiving one of the most difficult blows that a people's economy can be subjected to. Now with this family spirit that I have created here in Egypt first, and then extended to the Arab family which entered the war with us on the military and on the oil levels, and now this family is coming to help. I have succeeded in all this but unfortunately this question of hatred is very difficult for me to overcome or to even try. There is nothing I respect more than Gamal Abdel Nasser. I respect him more than me in personal trial as I respect his man of the people the country. After Mubarak and Abdel Nasser, I respect the army of the country, the spirit of the army of the men of the army. Abdel Nasser does not forgive me for being so besotted by hating and envying, and this subject is a matter of my account and I ask one question:

Why? Why not the heritage of those who believe in Abdel Nasser from all sides, even when no currency unfurtherto? The editor-in-chief of the newspaper Abdel Nasser directed me to indicate that I have all my
corse or to contain. In this matter of Gamal Abdel Nasser, there is nothing but hatred and I deeply regret it for it was done by Gamal El Hamamssy, who is a man and a friend that I care for. I respect and fully appreciate friendship but I was stunned because I could not believe that this man who spent a year and a half with me in prison and whom I saw after this for I called him at my trial as a witness to save my neck from the gallows. I could not believe that this man was capable of such a thing for he was a man of principles but now there is only hatred, hatred and envy. After May 15, I said and wrote that I was responsible for what Abdel Nasser did, and we had the elections after that. Today, before the People's Assembly and the legislative authority in this country, I repeat it once again, I am responsible for what Abdel Nasser did and anyone can apply this responsibility to me, and I am not saying this in pride or in search of acclaim. No, I am saying so because Abdel Nasser was my friend and I know the meaning and value of friendship and manhood. Let me put an end to this subject by asking you officially to apply my responsibility and my accountability on everything Abdel Nasser did, and you can ask one for anything that you wish.

Why do I say that no individual can own the Press? Among the heritage that Gamal Abdel Nasser left to me, there are those who believe that they have a right to rule this country. Gamal Abdel Nasser built up «Al Ahram» newspaper and liberated it from all financial restrictions imposed in the State at that time, when no one could transfer a penny, the laws were strict and hard currency was very limited. But «Al Ahram» was free of all this and unfortunately within it we had a centre of power built around the editor-in-chief who believed that he was first a partner and after Abdel Nasser's death an inheritor. I shall tell you of an incident to indicate why I do not accept ownership of the press. You must have all read Dayan's memoirs of the last war how the Knesset
blamed him and asked him why did he not mobilise the forces
when he saw Sadat carrying out his manoeuvres in September.
He answered that Sadat had done this twice before and every
time he, Dayan, spent 10 million pounds for nothing. It was not
his fault that this time the manoeuvres were serious. What hap-
pened was that in April 1973, I met with the commanders of the
Armed Forces who indicated to me the times suitable for the bat-
tle. Among these was May because these things are connected with
many sciences, the ebb and the tide, a long story. So we had May,
then August, then September and October. So very simply and
in order to carry out my strategic plot, I used everyone of these
time-spans, because the Israelis, who are militarists, also know
these sciences and that an attack can be carried out in these peri-
ods. They knew and we knew and every time I ordered the press
to put some small thing in to arouse enthusiasm and strong feel-
ings, such as Qoranic verses. I also ordered unusual movements
on the front; so in May and then again in August, I did this and
Dayan mobilised and spent 10 million dollars every time, which
is something the Israelis hated to do for it got them no results.
When I did the same thing in October, they said, no, this was
not serious; it was the story of the sheep, the shepherd and the
bear, but this time it was serious, part of the strategic tricks that
I used. When I gave these orders to the newspapers, I knew that
the Israelis were watching my newspapers just as I did theirs.
All the newspapers complied except «Al Ahram». Why ? Because
he was not convinced. However, I could not explain what I was
doing or why; it was strategy. I had not intended to recount the
story but Dayan talked of it last year. I am giving this example
today and I say that I cannot permit this. He was only Editor-
in-chief — what would have happened if he had been the owner?
Since that the day, I wanted to relieve him of his duties, but I
remained silent because he writes everything that is told to him,
he would have uncovered my strategy. That is why I remained silent so far. We cannot have an editor-in-chief who is in such a position of power without a board of administrators. All this has come to an end. In order to earn some money from a book, he slanders the reputation of Abdel Nasser and pictures him as an agnostic and you know that our country does not like this.

Brothers and sisters,

Let us return to these accusatory slanderous campaigns. You must agree with me that they have exceeded every limit and boundary. You must know that we cannot walk forward while maintaining our heads backward. We must recognise the mistakes in order not to repeat them and to benefit from them.

The Rectification Revolution was a singular and practical model of how to confront mistakes, uproot their causes, and set up new bases for future progress within changing circumstances. Self-criticism is a word often repeated, rarely applied; but the Rectification Revolution and succeeding changes were an act of self-criticism in deed not in words. However, the constant and destructive attacks against the July 23 Revolution and against the Egyptian struggle throughout a quarter of a century, this black picture they like to paint of everything, this denial of the Revolution’s major achievements, has never found an echo in the consciences of our working peoples. Though it might satisfy the bitterness of a few who look no further than what they lost or suffered, it is rejected if they realise, that in spite of its mistakes and measures, the Revolution was for them, and even by those wise people who realise that in spite of its mistakes and measures, the Revolution saved the country from a worse fate, had the social conflict — evident even prior to the Revolution — taken its full course and ended in a terrible, bloody explosion.

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Those who spotlight prison, torture and a very minimal part of the general framework of the Revolution, are concentrating on one black spot in a shining, bright experiment. History cannot be written in that way; it is not the cause of Abdel Nasser or of Anwar El Sadat, it is the cause of Egypt and the people of Egypt.

When I look at the picture of Egypt and its people, as spelled out by our newspapers, I can hardly recognise the Egypt that I know and the Egyptians that I live with. Egypt is not this disintegrating country they describe. In Kuwait, the Egyptians came to me and they sent me one of our well-known editors-in-chief to ask me what is happening in the country, what are these crises the newspapers refer to, where is Egypt going to? Some of them told the Editor-in-chief that they had been in Egypt the previous week, seen their people and friends but what is this picture the newspapers are giving? The newspaper campaigns had been understood as criticism without construction, without target. However, I shall not retreat from the freedom of the press or impose any restrictions on it, but the Boards of Directors of newspapers must be re-organised immediately and from a new generation. As you see we have a great deal to do.

Brothers and sisters,

Let me put before you the true economic situation: Egypt had been subjected to great economic pressures since the fifties which have brought it to this position. Let us only remember the four wars that Egypt has entered in defence of the Arab right and that of the Palestinian people. As a result there was a great increase in general military expenditure, and of necessity, a lack with regard to expenditure on basic utilities and their consolidation in line with the population growth. In addition we have to get many loans from abroad to meet the burdens of national defence and re-armament. The situation deteriorated since 1973 due to the great increase in the interest charges and the monetary crisis that has obliged us to re-orient our foreign policy and to seek alternative sources for aid. I do not want to speak at this place of the details of that.
increase in the prices of our imports such as wheat, production requirements such as fertilisers and other goods, without similarly increasing the prices of these commodities internally, in order to protect the standard of living and real incomes of lower-income people such as farmers, workers, small government and public sector employees. As a result, we witnessed an escalation in private and public consumption, and the deterioration of the level of savings which led to diminished resources for internal finance. As a result of this situation, we have a serious lack in our balance of payments which we could not continue to cover through short or long-term external loans. The situation became very acute in 1975 requiring remedy through economic reform extending over a period of years, taking into consideration short, medium and long-term expectations within the coordinated plan that would group the factors of internal development — the first basis of any reform — and external resources, Arab or otherwise needed for the next five years. By that time, the expected increase from the revenues of the Suez Canal and petroleum, would have put the Egyptian economy in a better situation with regard to development, and the acquisition of the necessary economic and technological aid. I'd like to tell you frankly that for the first time this year and after the appointment of Mamduh Salem as Premier, did I get to see the full economic picture with all its details and the crisis that nearly befell us. I don't know whether previous Premiers tried to save me this problem or whether it was lack of data. We are in a very difficult economic situation and when the Premier and the concerned ministers of planning, economy and the treasury brought me the full picture, I was astonished at how bad it was. I brought in experts from abroad because I wanted to be sure before stepping in to remedy the situation. It was really bad. Very simply and since 1962, we have been postponing our problems and drawing up ambitious plans that are not implemented. In 1967, we suffered
the defeat and had to live on our own resources, on the very blood in our veins, until 1973. We received no aid, neither from the U.S., nor from the USSR or anywhere else. At that time Israel was receiving annual aid and weapons. We were also paying the installments on our arms and developing. I remind those here who attended the National Security Council meeting on Ramadan 4 in 1973, six days before the battle, of how I asked them to express their opinions and they did so for four or five hours. They all remember that I told them the truth, namely that in October 1973, the Egyptian economy had dropped below zero. I said I cannot ask any Arab country for one single dollar. I never ask, particularly when the question in the air was, «Are we going to fight or not?». There was an atmosphere of despair and pessimism and they used to say, enough that we give you the fund for the canal revenue. I didn’t ask and our economy was below zero and as I said in America it was like a full man standing up but all the blood had left his veins, a man who needed a blood transfusion but had not yet reached total paralysis or death. I am glad that the group who worked in this operation, the Premier and the Ministers of economy, planning and the treasury gave me the same opinion.

The experts from abroad also said the same thing, that our economy was not destroyed, it was passing a very difficult crisis. It would need a plan for the next five years, and then things would improve. The plan shall be set up in cooperation with world experts during the next two months. I would like to seize this opportunity and on your behalf and on behalf of the Egyptian people, to express my gratitude and appreciation to our brothers the Arabs in the six countries that I recently visited. Not only did they agree to contribute billions to a fund that would save the Egyptian economy over long years, but they added immediate aid which I had not asked for because I wanted long-term loans or joint projects. I don’t want anyone to think that this Arab aid will provide us with manna from heaven but will be a task we have to perform, a new, constructive effort to save our economy, to pay the aggregate debts, to pay the retirement of the Minister of Finance, and put all the energy and talent of our people to work so that we can succeed. I shall have much more to say with regard to the economic and agricultural problems that I shall discuss in an upcoming speech.

With regard to the peace plan in the Kampfplan, I wish to express the hope that we may come together in a way from among the nations.

After the Six-day War there was a genuine place and a genuine need for peace, such as Security Council Resolution 242, which had been passed in the past 15 years. I believe the nation remains committed to the October 1973 Peace Agreement, out of the genuine conviction that it is for us, for the Arab peoples, and for the peace of all peoples. I say to all who read this, that I will not rest until I see the achievement of a just peace between the Arab and Jewish peoples.
manna from the heavens. We asked for exactly what we need, which will be added to our own efforts, our own sacrifices and what we have to provide. I have given my instructions to the Premier for a new, completely new austerity operation so that we can pass this crisis; five years in the life of a people is no problem. We must save our economy that has been deteriorating since 1962 and until the aggression. I shall leave with the Speaker the necessary information concerning the balance of payments and the Prime Minister is ready to come and discuss everything with you and put all the information at your disposal.

I shall now move to the point before last, namely our position with regard to the Arab world, with regard to America and with regard to the Soviet Union. The last point includes two requests that I shall present to you.

With regard to the Arab position, I told you what I had said in the Kuwait conference that we, Arabs, are cursed, in the sense that we never complete a task that we begin. Elements must rise from among us to distort all our accomplishment.

After October 6, the world said that the Arabs had become the Sixth Power in the world, for two reasons: the fighting that took place and the use of the oil weapon. As we see now, certain quarters such as Syria, have started the axes policy, in the Arab world which had just got rid of it, this policy that had dispersed us in the past 18 years. How were we dispersed and how was the Arab nation rended to pieces? It would not have been possible to wage the October War except after years of work on my part to reassemble the Arab nation into one family. Some persons, at present, out of envy and narrow party interests, by means of manoeuvres and outbiddings, are trying to undermine my efforts. But I say to all these people the Arab nation has already taken its
place as the Sixth Power in the world. All who make these attempts will drop below. The rest of us will keep our position as the Sixth Power. They will only harm themselves.

I have a word to say about Egypt. If we view the Arab position at present and confine our appraisal to the bare facts, dropping the weak structures based on fake slogans, devoid of context, we will discover that Egypt is actually taking charge of the national action in the various fields of life, and faces the exigencies of its historic part without hesitation, having the qualifications for the two essential conditions, which are the example and the capacity. The rabid and biased campaigns cannot possibly undermine this reality, as at the end, the decisive factor is the broad masses of the Arab nation, masses with an ancient, historic awareness, and a great capacity for discernment between right and wrong, and between reality and imagination.

If civilisation is one of the basic components for the formation of the exemplary society, Egypt's share will qualify it, uncontestably, to play that part. Its civilisational background has prevented Egypt from indulging in vain glory, as a civilised society will never fall prey to such defects as they only appear in an upstart and weak society.

The first characteristic of an exemplary society is tolerance and refraining from fanaticism in its various forms, be it racial, religious or ideological. This particularly is manifested in all its greatness in the Egyptian society where races, cultures and various ideologies have coexisted side by side. The Egyptian people who bear that national responsibility should have a deep-rooted faith in Arab unity. And the Arab unity I mean is not merely raising empty slogans or voicing senseless words totally devoid of context. It is full conviction and a true feeling in the existence of unity compo-
ments between the peoples of the Arab nation with their multiple states and diverse political entities.

The unity we speak of is not unity of constitutional forms. Many a unity of this form was established and collapsed, in no time, as it was an artificial one, in response to temporary manoeuvres and then turned to mere ink on paper. Had it been a true expression of an objective reality, it would have overcome obstacles, problems and challenges. Accomplishment of such a unity requires a rapprochement between the various political and economic systems, and the existing social and cultural patterns, between two peoples or more. This should be slow and persistent work so that unity comes as the crowning of a national trend and not the artificial outcome of a position, contradictory to reality and truth.

In the Arab field we see movements ostensibly in favour of unity whilst in reality they are separatist and regional. The proof of this is the fact that their advocates are diehard separatists and the remnants of the separatist movements that appeared in the Arab world, under the sponsorship of imperialism, during the past forty years; the most obvious of which is the Movement of Syrian Nationalists, the advocates of the Fertile Crescent and similar suspicious projects that were created to destroy Arab unity.

Leadership can only be established in a society with certain characteristics, most important of which is democracy. By democracy we mean a climate of freedom, of popular participation and of respect of the rights of the individual and the group, so that the spirit of solidarity may prevail in political activity, as well as the feeling that we are capable of facing the various situations and challenges from a position of power. If the inner structure is weak, it is impossible to set up a model to be emulated. I must tell you frankly that when I assumed constitutional responsibility in
September 1970, I had to make one of the most important decisions I have faced so far. I had to choose between having the country ruled by the people, through the legal institutions, on the basis of the realities we are living today and on the basis of the true cohesion between people and government, within a framework of truthfulness and amity, devoid of fraud and hatred, that was one choice; the other would have been to have the country ruled through slogans, illusions and outbiddings.

In close connection with this matter, I also had to make a no less important decision: that of crossing the Suez Canal. Crossing the canal with the people of Egypt, supported by the Arab nation, could not have been accomplished without a concomitant decision concerning the method in which the country was to be ruled.

That is why I did not hesitate in setting aside slogans, illusions and the labyrinths in which the Arab nation had been living. Instead, I chose serious work, sweat and construction. I did not hesitate in adopting this decision, because I believe that this is the correct basis for construction, and for the preparation of the battle of crossing the canal. It would have been, and still is, the easiest thing for me to do, to incite the peoples against their legitimate government, and to mobilize the information media in order to plunge the Arab nation in a sea of labyrinths and slogans.

Yet, in order to be true to my personality as you know it, I refused the easy and empty solution. I chose the difficult path because it was the right path. My decision, from the very first moment, was that I must carry on, and the Arab nation along with you, from the defeatism, disruption and loss in which we lived, to dignity, cohesion and victory. It was clear that the decision to cross the canal was at the same time a decision concerning the method in which the country would be run. It was evident
that the crossing of the canal needed effort, sweat and sincerity, so that we could accomplish a cohesion based on love and truthfulness thus making all sacrifices easy to bear.

Taking this as a starting point, you will find that my philosophy of rulership is a series of connected links, most important among which is the decision to cross the canal. This decision, as I said, is closely connected to my decision concerning the method and philosophy of how the country should be run. That is why my conception was very clear, because the key to all these problems resided in choosing the method of ruling which would lead to a full cohesion between the ruler and the ruled.

Just as I expected, the decision to cross the canal was an Egyptian and an Arab solidarity. The move forward was both Egyptian and Arab, allowing us all to cross from disruption to cohesion, and from contradictions to understandings; in fact to cross from total disunity to unity, from the setback to victory. This great edifice could only be based on love and sincerity, and through a proper democratic method on the inside, and in our dealings with the different circles on the outside.

Regimes which are expressed by a minority within their own countries, minorities incapable of having a strong hold on internal affairs save with steel and fire, such regimes cannot claim the right to lead the nation. For even if they can, in one way or another, control the destiny of the people within their limited societies, they cannot establish a dialogue with those who are outside the framework of their authority. The role of such regimes remains within the confined regional limit of the country they are trying to control despite all their attempts to disseminate their erroneous concepts to extend their authority outside their own country.
In connection with all that is the fact that the leading entity must be independent in the true sense of the word. Followers and puppets, even if they are capable of masking their true colours, are finally rejected by the masses of the nation who come to look upon them as being outside the framework of the people. If such leading entities have left the leadership of their country in foreign hands, this is a further reason to reject them, because the people cannot accept to live under foreign tutelage nor to abandon their identity.

For the pioneer experience to become a model to be copied, such an experience must take place in a climate of openness, away from isolationism. That is why some of the rulers who have isolated themselves, and who have erected barriers between them and their people, depriving the latter from interaction with other peoples, such rulers can convince no one of having anything to offer to the nation. Such rulers have failed to offer anything to their peoples except for a vicious circle of slogans, of domination and of force.

That is why Egypt has always made it a point to create an atmosphere of openness, thus allowing dialogue on the inside, and open windows towards the world outside; thus embracing everyone with an idea or a cause, allowing him the opportunity to express ideas and to carry on activities. It is not surprising, then, that Egypt has become the Mecca of all militance in the Arab nation, regardless of their ideological or political affiliations, and even regardless of whether they agree or differ in their points of view with what Egypt believes.

So much for setting examples. But if it is a matter of capability to manoeuvre and to put pressure, then the role of Egypt, and I mean here the role of Egypt in the Arab nation, is the net result of many objective considerations, and not a set-up position
claimed by one person or by one entity, and which they try to impose on others.

The true position of the individual or of a people is one which results from past history, from a record of achievements, and from a continuous capacity to give. The true position is one that is entrusted to the individual or to the entity in question, and it is one that implies general national acceptance. No position can be imposed through manoeuvres or through the falsification of truth.

If it is, however, a matter of capacity to manoeuvre, to put pressure on rulers, or to make mockery of the destiny of people, then it would have been an easy matter for Egypt to follow a policy based on incitement to strife and internal problems in one country or another, in such a way as to maintain the capacity to pressurize and affect the positions of the various parties concerned. Such a behaviour is possible, and there are some, in our countries who incite others to interfere in affairs which are not theirs, because this serves their personal interests or their party interests. That is why such people volunteer themselves as tools, to be used in order to destroy the independence of their own country, and in order to widen the gap among their own peoples.

The policy of mobilizing agents, of buying writers, of issuing hired papers, and of paying mercenaries who will eat at any table, is an easy policy indeed. But is it a policy based on loyalty and a sense of responsibility? Events teach us every day that all this is to no avail, and that only that which serves the peoples will manage to survive.

Today we are faced with the challenge of providing Arab right with the freedom of movement in all directions which lead to the realisation of both short-term and long-term national interest.
Manoeuvres which generate a spark that quickly disappears and is forgotten by history, are of no importance. When the history of this nation at this present stage will be recorded, no one will bother to record the flashy outbiddings, the puny manoeuvres, nor the momentary plots designed to escape internal fight-spots. History will only record the true achievements, and the effective movement in one direction or another. History does not stop at petty activities, nor at childish dramatic actions. History only cares to record the great events which affect the destiny of the peoples, so that every individual, be ruler or ruled, can look back to see what he has accomplished.

As far as the Arab situation is concerned, there is one matter to which I would like to draw your attention. There are some in the Arab world, and also some of their disciples here, who say that Egypt is isolated. Let us look back together at the past five years. What did this isolated Egypt accomplish? We adopted the inevitable decision of militarily confronting Israel. We eliminated the negative aspects which prevailed in Arab relations. I made of the Arab nation a family once more. We established Arab solidarity on new bases which enabled every single Arab, wherever he may be, to feel that he is part of one entity, and to feel responsible in contributing to, and safeguarding this entity. We got rid of the categorizations which separated the Arab states, and which wasted much of the Arab and national effort in internal and secondary fights which could only benefit the enemy. When I say categorizations, I mean labels such as reactionary, progressive and the likes. We mobilized all the resources of the Arab nation for the battle, and mainly, the tremendous wealth in oil which our nation, by using it in a rational and calculated manner, managed to reach a new international position, and succeeded in imposing its presence as a sixth power respected by the entire world; this was achieved through action and not through hollow words.

We changed the Arab world...
Then we adopted the decision to enter the battle against Israeli aggression, depending on ourselves as Arabs. The determination to maintain an independent Arab will, the refusal of any form of tutelage or foreign influence in adopting decision has also been one of our important achievements.

I want you all to remember how I prepared for the battle over the period of one year, and at an international level. This was done by forming a world public opinion condemning the continuing Israeli occupation of Arab territories; and recognizing the right of the Arabs to push back aggression. When Egypt was tightening the circle around Israel within an African and a non-aligned framework, as well as in the United Nations, many Arabs doubted the use of creating such an international coverage for Arab move.

What else did Egypt accomplish over the past five years? We challenged Israel with peace. Israel had always been accusing the Arabs of refusing to carry the problem from the field of war to the field of peace. Yet the Arab nation managed to lay the responsibility on Israel, and succeeded in proving that the continuing tension in the region was Israel's fault. We succeeded in exporting to Israeli society the disruption which prevailed the Arab world. We refused to go back to a state of 'no peace and no war'. We carried the Arab-Israeli problem away from the field of polarization of the two great powers. We drew attention to the fact that the American scene should not be left for Israel to occupy. We opened up towards Europe, and called attention to the importance of allowing Europe to play an important role in establishing peace in the Middle East; this led to closer Arab-European relations in various fields. We varied the sources of armament, thus enabling any Arab state to obtain whatever weapons they might need from wherever they may wish, away from any mono-
Our only criterion is the interest of our country and the interest of our nation.

Let us take our stand from the U.S.A. as an example to what I am trying to say. The history of America’s total commitment to Israel is well-known; we have all lived it and fought it in more ways than one. I have illustrated this fact with several examples, some of which can be traced back to before the October war. I told you of Hafez Ismail’s meeting with Kissinger in Washington, when the latter told him that we had no right to make demands when we had been actually defeated. This is the same Kissinger who was shocked to see the vain power of Israel crumble before the heroism of our soldiers. Kissinger himself had authorized the American aerial bridge to save Israel, and to answer the call for help launched by Golda Meir when the Egyptian Army reached Sinai and threatened the borders of Israel.

The situation has completely changed after the battle. Kissinger’s words and actions have changed after the battle.

I know that the strongest weapon my enemy has used against me, for over a quarter of a century, has been America’s total siding with Israel. But America believed at the time that Israel was invincible. Yet now that we have shaken America’s faith in the invincibility of Israel, America has come to seek us. Am I to turn them away? In whose interest would that be? In the interest of my country or in the interest of someone else? Is our enmity for America an ideological belief that we have adopted, or was it rather an unavoidable political necessity? Who changed this enmity which had reached its peak when they cut off their aid in wheat as well as all other relations? What changed America’s attitude? It was not changed by pleading nor by honeyed words. It was changed by the fact that the Arab people proved their readiness to shed their blood and to raise their banners high. It was proved through the
use of oil in the battle, and of everything else which was necessary for the battle.

One year after the revolution, the strategy of Israel was clear. In 1953, Israel did not want to give our revolution a chance, it did not want our people's hope in reconstruction to come true. Israel's strategy was for Egypt to fall out with America, that is why they sent two saboteurs to blow up American establishments in Egypt. We arrested them, and they confessed. It turned out that the order had been given by Ben Gurion himself, without the knowledge of Lavon, who was then Minister of Defence. It was a notorious scandal in Israel.

If Israel, and Ben Gurion who built Israel and established its security theory, wanted Egypt to be on bad terms with America, so that he may always keep the upper hand, should I allow him to have his way? If I can prevent him, should I not do so?

We, Arabs, seem to suffer from a curse... Our brothers who speak without discrimination, or who deliberately distort the truth, can they sincerely claim that it is wrong to seize the opportunity available to us? Is there a sincere nationalist, loyal to his country and his nation, who can claim that it is not in our interest to overcome this blind bias? I am not saying that America will side with the Arabs, and I have never said so. America has always sided blindly with Israel. But because of the way we have fought, because of our behaviour from the military and civilizational aspects, America is willing to give up this blind, biased attitude. Should I refuse that? In whose interest would that refusal be? The matter is perfectly clear to every man of perception, to any one who is conscientious, and who puts the interests of the nation above all else. We do not need to defend ourselves, because the results speak for themselves; they will be our witness. The slogan we have adopted...
to befriend those who befriend us and to stand against those who are our enemies, is well illustrated in what I have just said.

So much for those who are questioning our attitude towards America, and who are trying to take advantage of the period during which America was siding blindly with Israel, to use it to their own ends, and to claim that we should stay away from America. However, it has been made clear that 99% of the cards of the game are in the hands of America, whether we like it or not, and whether this pleases or displeases the Soviet Union.

Which brings us to the attitude adopted by the Soviet Union, a very grave and serious matter, indeed. Ever since the 1973 War, I had asked the Foreign Minister to prepare a complete summary of the Soviet Union's attitude to follow it up and to analyse it, so that we could discuss it fully at the meetings of the National Security Council and with the heads of the institutions. The main aspects of the Soviet Union's policy towards the Arab region following the 1973 War, were crystallised as follows: The 1973 War, and the events which followed it in the sphere of Egypt's relations with the Soviet Union and the U.S.A., led to serious results in the Soviet Union's policy towards this region in general, and towards Egypt in particular. These results can be summed up in the following manner:

First: An attempt to create axes in the Arab world which would be directly linked to them. I believed we have seen with our own eyes the axes created by the Soviet Union. Brezhnev's last speech was very clear on this matter, since he divided the Arab world according to his own views, and it is a division which is different from the one I mentioned, previously, that of 'reactionary' and 'progressive'. Moamer El Kaddafi had labelled Brezhnev an atheist and a neo-colonialist, yet now, they are on the best of terms. I wonder whether it is Moammer who has become an atheist or
the Soviet Union which has turned into a true believer? I really don't know ... What I know is the practical reality, and that is that the Soviet Union is creating axes in the Arab world.

— The Soviets' re-evaluation of their policy towards: developing countries and national liberation movements, in order to tie these countries and these movements to them. Yet, such a bond is not in its reality based on a revolutionary attitude nor on a common struggle against imperialism. It is based on the interests of the Soviet Union as a great power. There is a mystery here. Moammar labelled them imperialists and colonialists, and he added to these labels that of atheists. What about this new friendship that had cropped up? ... It must be a matter of Soviet interest, because Moammar pays 'CASH', from the tremendous, uncontrolled amounts of money at his disposal. They have begun to oppose the present trend towards peace in our region. They are doing that in a very strange manner ... Following the refusal of the first disengagement, and as long as we were in Aswan, trying to work it out in January 1974, Ismail Fahmy was sending messages to Gromyko, he even sent two messages from Aswan. When we finished, he left for Moscow personally, and Brezhnev issued a statement supporting this step as a step towards peace. Now Brezhnev denies it all, and in his last message, he condemns all these moves. Very strange indeed! What is even more grave is his adamant attitude towards Egypt in the military and economic spheres. In the light of all this, let us examine the statement made by Brezhnev at the Conference of the Communist Party held just about ten days ago.

The statement says: Some of the political regimes and organizations which have set themselves socialist goals and which are undertaking progressive transformations, have been subjected to tremendous pressure from both internal and external reactionary forces. The recent campaign launched by right-wing circles against
Indira Gandhi's government, and the attempt to sabotage the social and political achievements of the Egyptian revolution, are obvious examples to these recent developments. «Attempts to sabotage the social and political achievements of the Egyptian revolution»... this way of putting things as expressed by Brezhnev represents a very grave turning point. While mentioning India, as represented by Indira Gandhi's government, with approval which indicates that they support the line she is following, we find him saying the exact opposite about Egypt. In fact, he is clearly differentiating between the achievements of the Egyptian revolution and the present regime. In so doing, he is totally ignoring the fact that the present regime is the legitimate and natural continuation of the revolution. This indicates the gravity of the error committed by the Soviets in their relations with our State.

On the other hand, they are also showing their basic opposition to the economic, social and political transformations undertaken by Egypt. In fact, Brezhnev is fully opposing the open-door policy. Of course we can guess the logical conclusions he will draw concerning his relations with Egypt.

I would like to take you back in time... The open-door policy he is opposing is the one we initiated in 1974, following the first disengagement. I will deposit here, with the Speaker, a letter sent to me by a man imprisoned at the moment, Sami Sharaf. In this letter, he is appealing to me, and is admitting, in his own handwriting, that ever since 1971, not 1974, Brezhnev's opinion has been that Sadat is liquidating Gamal Abdel Nasser's revolution. Brezhnev told him this in Moscow, when I sent Sami Sharaf on a mission in 1971. I have asked the socialist prosecutor not to reveal this part of the letter in order to protect the revolution.

Today Brezhnev opposes the open-door policy in a speech heard by the entire world... But, in fact, he is not opposing the open-
door policy as such, he has been disapproving our actions ever since 1971, because they had other arrangements. That is why I kept asking them for the treaty for two of three years, and they kept refusing. Now I must reveal the whole story ...

They mourn Gamal Abdel Nasser, and have been doing so ever since 1971! ... When I sent Sami Sharaf with a delegation, they sent back the delegation and kept Sami Sharaf for medical treatment ... When Sami Sharaf came back and was arrested, he wrote this letter, thinking that it would not be included in the official investigation. But I simply gave it to the investigators, and asked them to include it in the documents of the case.

In the letter, Sami Sharaf claims that he was disoriented at the time, and that Brezhnev had met him in Moscow, and had told him that Sadat is liquidating the Revolution. I know exactly what took place at this meeting, perhaps the book which has recently been publishing about Soviet agents and about the role played by Sami Sharaf is very clear on this point.

What have they done with Gamal Abdel Nasser, whom they pretend to mourn up to the present day? I need to go very far back. I will begin with the period immediately following the defeat of 1967. I am sure you were all sitting before your television sets, and saw and heard Gamal Abdel Nasser announcing his abdication. At one point in the speech, there was a brief pause, Gamal Abdel Nasser looked to his left, as someone brought him a letter signed by the three Soviet leaders, a letter in which they were asking him not to abdicate, and promising to sending him everything which the Egyptian Army would need. It is very clear on the television reel Gamal Abdel Nasser looked to his left, refused to stop the speech of abdication, and continued straight on.

They established an aerial bridge and a naval bridge, and sent us armaments in June and July; they sent us the usual amount of
armaments, and said that they would last us for two and perhaps three years. But in less than six months, the amount was used up, particularly after we had opened the training centres. It was clear that we needed weapons, because we wanted to establish our defence line on the western bank of the Suez Canal, as quickly as possible.

Gamal Abdel Nasser sent them a message in July, 1967. The only answer was: «The Soviet leaders are in the Crimean». This visit to the Crimean always begins in June and ends only in September or October. No answers to the messages. Gamal Abdel Nasser sent more than once, and received no answer. Tito came to visit us in Alexandria on August 10th, 1967, and that was the first time I saw Gamal Abdel Nasser lose his temper in the thirty years of our friendship. He told Tito: «I want you to go straight from Alexandria to the Crimean, and to tell those people that I would rather have Israel occupy our country than to have those people treat me in this manner». Tito is alive, and can testify to the fact. This happened in August 1967, though they had sent him the letter asking him not to abdicate, and promising to send all the weapons he would need. 1967, 68 and 69 came and went, and the war of attrition began. To punish Abdel Nasser, they never sent ammunition to replace the one used up in the battle. Because he had started the war of attrition without their orders, they made him suffer for it. But he went on with it through 1969 and 1970. No kind of ammunition was ever replaced. That is why you heard me say that I entered the battle with only one or two lines of ammunition behind each gun, whereas the Syrians had between 8 and 11 lines of ammunition behind each gun. Yet, I did not fail, nor did I lose a single inch of the territory I took in Sinai. Never ...

They speak of the aerial bridge. It is a very simple matter indeed, and I am ready to reveal it, because Brezhnev and I have
exchanged letters on this matter recently. In one of his letters he says that we are distorting the truth. Yet, these matters are officially recorded. What did they send us over this aerial bridge? One of their disciples, whom I have mentioned previously, once wrote that the Soviets sent us exactly what the Americans had sent to the Jews. Yet if the Soviet Union had sent me one quarter of what the Jews received over the American aerial bridge, the Sinai problem would have been ended a long time ago. One quarter and not the exact amount!...

Gamal Abdel Nasser’s fight with them, and my own fight with them, concern armaments. Israel claims to have the upper hand, and says that its arm is long enough to reach anywhere. In fact, you saw for yourselves in 1969 and 1970 how their air force attacked Abu Zaabal, El Tel El Kebeer and Dahshour. They declared, at the time, that Dahshour is a suburb of Cairo, only ten minutes away from the capital ...

Abdel Nasser had to pay them a secret visit, in January 1970, the year in which he died. He agreed on the Sam-3s, and persuaded them to have them manned by Soviet crews, until our crews were trained.

In addition to this, he agreed with them on the deterrent weapon since, until then, Israel could do as it pleased with our depth, while we could not reach theirs, because the Soviet Union did not agree on the deterrent weapons.

They promised to send him the necessary weapons. We received the Sam-3 batteries but after we had constructed the bases for them; yet we did not receive the deterrent weapons.

In May 1970, Abdel Nasser had had enough. He addressed a speech to Nixon saying: «Let me know what is the position of America. If you cannot do anything with Israel, tell me so. Despite
the fact that I have a different view on the matter, at least refrain from supplying arms to it. Then began the dialogue with America, on May 1st, 1970 which is recorded. As a result, the Rogers' initiative was taken.

In June, Abdel Nasser left for the Soviet Union once more. He told them that the deterrent arms they had promised to send had not arrived. He exerted his utmost effort, and eventually he realised that these people were not aware of the true position. We had spent a month planning for this meeting, and sending details with the Soviet Ambassador. Either they did not know, or they knew and did not care. One assumption was worse than the other. Therefore, Nasser was obliged to accept Rogers' initiative at the Kremlin conference table in the meeting between the three leaders. So Brezhnev was upset and Abdel Nasser said: "I have already accepted, whether you like it or not. I've had enough of what you have been doing to me." Then Abdel-Nasser returned and gave me an account of the happening in Moscow. Two months later, he died.

They say that I distort facts. Now I will set facts for history. If they are distorted, let them say so:

Following the war, Podgorny visited us and we asked him for a Soviet air defence commander. He accepted in the morning and went back on his agreement in the afternoon. This is one fact.

Following the set-back, Abdel Nasser asked the appointment of an efficient Soviet air-force commander, but they refused. None of the shots we used in the attrition war were sent back to Abdel Nasser. They came to me over the airlift, and, of course, they did not send me all what I wanted, so I was obliged to borrow from Syria. This is another fact.

They promised to send Abdel Nasser the deterrent arms in
1970, but did not do so. On my first visit to Moscow, when I mentioned the deterrent arms, they said they were willing to supply them, providing it would be used upon instructions from Moscow.

I replied: «Sorry, I do not admit any decision to be taken on Egyptian soil, other than mine and that of the Egyptian people». This conversation took place in front of the Supreme Executive Committee members. They are all alive and well, and can also testify.

I wish to know what facts I have distorted. The story of the departure of the Soviet experts is known. I related it, and they were not able to give me the lie. Now we come to the 1973 War. They deny having sent the Soviet Ambassador to me on October 6, the day the war broke out, at 8 o'clock in the evening, that is, six hours after it started. They said verbatim: «A message from the Soviet command says that Hafez El Assad asked for cease-fire 48 hours before the war started.» The cease-fire was to go into effect 48 hours after its outbreak. In other words, the war started on Saturday, and the cease-fire should have been effected on Monday. This is a fact they communicated to me which I, in turn, communicated in a cable to Hafez El Assad, and his reply came the next day saying «No.» The next day they told me that Hafez El Assad had made a second request. I told them «Shame on you.» The man told me that no such thing had happened. Could this be a distorted fact?

Kossygin came and stayed three days in Cairo during the war, to persuade me to accept the cease-fire, upon grounds of three requests he had received from Syria. I announced this. Could this be a distortion of truth? If they claim that it is, we can produce Marshal Tito as a witness because when Kossygin returned and refused the cease-fire, Brezhnev contacted Tito and told him to advise his friend Sadat that he was setting the world on fire. He said: «What nonsense is this?»
said that Cairo was about to fall, and that Syria had requested
the Soviet Union for a cease-fire officially three times.

When Ismail Fahmi went to visit Brezhnev, he produced the
three official requests and said: «Why is Sadat angry with me?
Here are the three official requests from Syria.» Is this a distor-
tion of facts?

After the war, when Kissinger came to visit me they im-
mediately broke relations with us, completely. Do I distort facts
when I say that for 14 months after the war, I received no re-
placement until January 1976, whereas Syria received replacements
several times over what they had used up in the war? Is that
a distortion of facts?

Would it be distorting the facts when I say that in 1975, when
they let me know that Brezhnev had cancelled his visit to Cairo
in January, to calm me down they sent me some arms. Then they
stopped from January and February 1975 to February 1967. They
sent me one shipful of spare parts, but not the ones I wanted.

If this is distortion of the truth, then I wish to hear it, and
to be called to account. As an individual, and not the President
of Egypt, I refuse to have any one tell me that I am distorting
the facts, it is neither my habit nor my nature to do so.

I contacted them recently, and shall deposit with the Assem-
by Speaker the letters we exchanged to this very day.

The serious matter I came to submit to you is that we have
reached the stage where the Soviets, for over the past two years,
refused to supply me with arms, they refuse to reschedule the
debts despite our economic situation of which I have spoken to you,
and for which we are collecting funds from the Arab nation. A
consortium abroad, from America, Japan, West-Germany and
France, as well as other nations have undertaken consultations in view of helping us. They are responsive to our cause.

Yet the Soviets not only refuse to re-schedule the debts, they are claiming an interest on the military debts when, so far now, they have not yet settled their debts to America for World War II. Military debts are generally not paid, because after the war, the reconstruction operations start, and the military debts are totally cancelled, or at least 2/3 of them are. The payment is only symbolic.

I shall never forget that on December 23, 1973, they contacted me saying that the Arab Republic of Egypt had delayed in settling the amount of 22.1 million roubles that were due by Egypt since last April. This was in payment of the interest for using the loans offered for the arms deals. They were not claiming the price of the arms, but the interest as well. I am going to leave this with the Speaker, at your disposal.

This correspondence shows that the Soviet Union is playing a cat and mouse game with me. After a year or a year and a half, all the arms I possess in Egypt might be used for scrap iron, since they refuse to supply spare parts. They refuse to overhaul the plans and they refuse everything else.

But the most serious thing that happened, and caused all this, not only annoying me, but hurting me as well, is that they have had a standing agreement, over the past ten years, with India for the manufacture of the Mig-21s, for the fabrication of Mig-21s, their overhaul and the supply of spare parts. So I contacted India, since the situation has dragged for two years. The answer was that I was not entitled to overhaul service. This meant that the planes whose engines did not get an overhaul would become scrap iron, and would be of no use. There are tens of engines and...
planes out of use, which means that much money would be deducted from our sustenance funds.

So I contacted India and asked for spare parts and overhaul service for our Mig-21s. Their reply was that they would seek the permission of the Soviet Union. This took four months. Ten days ago, India replied and said that they regretted but the Soviet Union had said, No. Do not supply spare part to Egypt and do not overhaul their Migs.

It is obvious that this is an operation of blockade, an economic and military pressure. Economic pressure because of my economic predicament; military pressure so that after a year, or a year and a half, all my arms would become scrap iron, unless I kneel before them. But I only kneel to God the Almighty.

In the letters exchanged between us, they always justify their actions by referring to the Treaty. If this is the Soviet Union's way of respecting the Treaty and its provisions, if in the view of its leaders the Soviet Union is free to implement or not to implement its provisions at all, because they have the upper hand, then the Treaty becomes mere paper.

This is why I propose to your august Assembly, the Assembly which ratified the Treaty, this draft-law for consideration:

The President of the Republic,

After having consulted the Constitution, and the Republican Decree No. 884 for the year 1971, and after approval of the People's Assembly, the following has been decided:

Article One: To abrogate the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between the United Arab Republic of Egypt and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, approved in Cairo on the 27th May.
**Article Two**: This will go into force from the date of its promulgation.

I still have one request to make. I have told you that I had two points: the first was the draft-law, and the second is the fact that we cannot proceed forward if we keep on looking backward, to past struggles, rancours and hatred. I expressed my view on this, and wish that your August Assembly would express its view on it to the press as you may deem fit.

Brothers and sisters,

Before concluding my speech, allow me to return to the question of platform we are about to establish. I wish to record that though these platforms express diverse opinions, they must have a broad span of commitment between them through the alliance, so that the alliance could be a fact and not mere appearances.

Commitment to liberate the land, commitment to the Constitution and to the achievements recorded therein, to the rights and guarantees it provides; commitment to embark on the battle of reconstruction, since it is the major patriotic battle; one that brooks no outbiddings, and no competition through cheap verbal victories. We are embarking upon another stage, in which we have to succeed. A stage characterized by: greater democracy for the people, greater activity for the constitutional institutions and greater national effort for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

I shall conclude my speech as I began it by saying: « I have turned several pages of my life, and today I open a new page. O Lord, make it a page free from evil, adorned with truth, and innocent of falsehood. Make its beginning and its end loyalty to You and effort for Thy sake.»