

A D D R E S S

by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

to the population of Ismailia at the « El-Shifa » Mosque

(March 19, 1976)

In the name of the Merciful and the Compassionate

Dear Brothers,

It gives me pleasure to meet you in one of the houses of God that faced the ordeal of the people of the Canal and the people of Egypt. I am overjoyed at the re-opening of this mosque, and I shall visit the nearby church, which also did not escape the same fate, though God desired the national unity of this people to remain forever strong and lasting. As a nation, we all face sorrows, and have faith in the revival of our hopes.

A few days ago, you heard my speech in which I spoke of the initiation of a new stage of freedom, constituting a turning point in our lives and our history. Why ? because it marks our transition from revolutionary legitimacy to constitutional legitimacy. This means that like any mature state that has attained full political growth, without passing through a stage of political puberty as other nations around us, we have attained majority.

The Constitution is the father of all laws, it is the source we respect and venerate, since it preserves the rights of all and orders all the people, from the President down to the smallest

citizen, equal before the law. With this constitutional legitimacy no one can have privileges other than those who serve the interests of the country.

The Constitution is once again the basic and sacred authority. This is why I mention this.

Twenty-four years ago we led the July 23rd Revolution and I was one of the 9 who led it. It was I who announced its inception. I thank Almighty God for living to see the day when I stood before the People's Assembly and told the people : «I restore to you what you have entrusted us with. It is sound and politically powerful. We now have relations with all the world, when formerly we were in a stage of frightful struggle. Egypt has now a greater position than ever. God be thanked, at present, Egypt is considered in the East, the West and in our Arab nation, as the key to this region. They know this, not through propaganda or loud words, but, in fact, deed and work.

In the military field, God be thanked, we proved ourselves. We demolished, for good, the wall of fear and defeatism. Yet some defeatism lingers on which is a natural thing. There will remain some frightened people until they will be cured of fear, forever.

But it pleases me to say that the people as a whole, in its fundamental base, have never been shaken. They have always stood by me : during the allegations of the defeatists, the claims of our enemies, the fierce psychological warfare, some people were shaken, but the broad base of the people have not been affected. I must say that the people as a whole stood by me. When I issued my orders to the Armed Forces on October 6th, they backed their Armed Forces in a truly wonderful manner, unprecedented in the history of Egypt, not for Egypt alone but also for the entire Arab nation,

With regard to economy, we are seeking the means to build

sound economic structure in all the world with our Arab brothers and our friends in the world; they are all offering to help Egypt recover its position, not by written articles and propaganda, but through shedding blood and political practice, in conformity with the scientific, administrative, military and political practices of the age. Egypt has attained its position through blood sacrifices and the gigantic efforts it has exerted.

I am indeed happy, that 24 years after the day when I announced the inception of the Revolution, when some of the present citizens were not born or were still young I stood up in the People's Assembly and rendered into the people what was rightfully theirs.

Five out of the six principles of the revolution have been implemented. Only the sixth, concerning establishment of a sound political life remained, and now even that has been implemented.

The forums have been established as permanent forums, and the Arab Socialist Union is merely a recipient to preserve national unity, the inevitability of the socialist solution, the gains of farmers and workers and social peace.

As for forums, a person can join the one he chooses, and political practice will proceed, but with the checks and controls I mentioned. When freedom of the press was released following the October War, after 40 years of press censorship, it was natural that errors should be committed, and they were committed, but we corrected them.

You also heard me speak of the legislative authority. I was speaker for the People's Assembly for a long while. In 1966 I proposed the statutes being applied at present, to offer the Assembly an open horizon for practising in full its legislative and supervisory authority.

You heard me speak of all we faced in the past stage. Now we need to look forward to the future. Those who dig up the past and want us to live it are truly rancorous people. But this will never be.

When I say the President of the Republic is to be an arbiter, I mean precisely, that, as long as we continue to regard the President as father and arbiter, we continue to protect one another.

I said that the heaviest legacy I inherited was not the political, the economic or the military position, despite all the hardships I faced in these domains. The heaviest legacy was the rancour. That was a devastating thing, and its vestiges linger to this day. This is why in the 1971 Constitution there is a provision stipulating that the President of the Republic should act as an arbiter among the authorities.

We learned from our experiment examples I related about Nehru in India, the President of the Republic should be the head of the family, siding with the right and the masses of the people. The rule should be to regard all as honest citizens, until the contrary has been proved, by law and sovereignty of the law. The position of the President of the Republic should act as safety valve with no conflict going on there. I do not say this to stay on for another term, we saw that when the freedom of the press was released, some persons deviated in words. In the People's Assembly some persons also deviated in words. Leave this post (of President) free from conflict. And let us apply the Constitution. I said that constitutional legitimacy means that the Constitution is sacred. The National Charter, the March 30th Declaration and the October Paper — all these are explanatory notes and have become obsolete. Why the Constitution ? Because we are a mature state.

Coming to the part of the Armed Forces, I have to thank them but they do not need any thanks. Egypt rendered and renders

thanks to its Armed Forces every day. It never begrudges them anything. But it was necessary that I should deliver the trust to the People's Assembly, on behalf of the Armed Forces.

This is why I was unutterably happy that I announced the inception of the revolution on a day 24 years ago, and also delivered the trust intact undiminished yet some people try to misunderstand words and twist the meaning.

Now our Armed Forces protect constitutional legitimacy. The Armed Forces will not be involved in politics, neither from near nor from far. If any body comes or a new friend turns up and tries to cut out a new Constitution for the country to suit his taste, he may not do so. Talk is against the people, against their aims and their revolution which broke out on July 23, and was rectified on May 15, 1971, that was the part of the Armed Forces.

As for political practice, the Armed Forces have nothing to do with it. The most perfect example of honesty is for them to hand over the trust after performing their duty, here, at a distance of a few meters from where we stand, on the front and in Sinai. Thank God, we can now enter Sinai and drive for forty or fifty kilometres. God willing, the rest will come soon.

I am overjoyed at delivering the trust.

All the six principles of the Revolution have been completely implemented.

First Principle : Elimination of imperialism and its treacherous agents. Elimination of feudalism. The shaky framework of the structure was restored, wherein 1/2% possessed 3/4 of the country. The Royal Family, for instance, possessed 1/3 of the arable land. Feudalism was eliminated. Ownership was limited in three consecutive laws : the first law was three months after the inception

of the Revolution and two others followed. Ownership was limited and became clear-cut as provided in the Constitution : That is beyond discussion. Elimination of monopoly and domination of capital: Cabinets are no longer formed by money, in our country, as they used to be in the past, so that the Cabinet would be reshuffled and the new Cabinet would exempt a capitalist from taxes, or some such thing.

Establishing social justice : We did not only establish social justice, we introduced socialism. Workers and farmers have a 50% share of the seats at all levels. Those who speak of the July 23 Revolution, have lived through the pre-revolution era. Yet they forget that we were on the threshold of a bloody revolution which was also sought by some of the centres of power, when they wanted to provoke a struggle inside the country, a struggle put up by the rancour of their clique, but it did not succeed, since our country is not one for rancour.

With love, with righteousness, with justice and charity we can do anything. But a bloody struggle, a rancorous struggle is out of place here. This was why we were ruptured from within, the Arab nation was ruptured alongside of us, and our relations with the world were also ruptured.

But with knowledge and faith, as I say, the logic of the age, and the values we inherited : authenticity, solidity, faith and love, we reached this point. This is why we are rebuilding our country at present, in conformity with the latest technology of the age.

Fourth principle is social justice. Which has become socialism. Farmers and workers have a 50% share in it. There is free education and equal opportunities. A youth may be coming from the village, yet the son of a Minister or the President of the Republic may not take his turn in admission to the university. Only the

average counts. These are gains that may not be revoked. The revolution has saved the country from a sanguinary struggle that was about to take place before 1952 and after 1971. The Rectification Revolution eliminated the rancour that was about to take us back to what we were prior to 1952.

Fifth principle : A strong national Army. God be thanked for it. The best witness is this place we are sitting at, and your base. Your army not only fought for Egypt, the Arab nation and the world at large, keeping to its position, not interfering in politics or political practice, but observing constitutional legitimacy. This means that no one can come and abrogate the Constitution or amend it.

Its amendment is provided for within the Constitution itself. This is the work of politicians and political struggle.

As for infringement of the Constitution or a new friend attempting to provide a Constitution for itself, this must be stopped. All the securities gained by the people after a long period of bitterness and suffering, all their securities and freedoms are stipulated in the Constitution and are safeguarded in application. It is necessary that they should remain in application.

The sixth principle was the establishment of a sound democratic life. God be praised, we have reached it. Some persons imagined that the future political interpretation is based on classes. That is wrong, as that would take us back to class struggle. Undoubtedly there is struggle, but we say that it should be conducted by peaceful means.

Furthermore, experience during the past 18 years has proved that when we tried to resort to methods which we did not believe in, we faced disasters and then came the sequestrations, the arrests, the detention camps, and degrading the dignity of man. All this has

happened, and we are all witnesses to it. I say that I am responsible for all that has taken place in the past interval, for I never shirk my responsibility. Gamal Abdel Nasser has handed over the country and the trust to me. That is sufficient. I am responsible for every decision he has adopted and shall remain so. I told the People's Assembly to call me to account for this responsibility in any manner it desires.

But now I am speaking for the future. Let us look ahead of us but never backwards. Big nations always look ahead, with their heads lifted high. Thank God, our head is high, up in seventh heaven. We should only consider the future with its hopes and dimensions. God be thanked, the trust has been delivered to its owners who are the people, 50% to the farmers and workers, now sitting in the People's Assembly and the other 50% to other groups. The trust has been handed over intact and honest. After all the bitterness and the sufferings we went through, we should never go back to rancorous measures, whatever happens.

By provision of our jurisprudence, and without any rancour, if any one goes beyond his limits, he is to be called to account.

The ruler should be like a father. The ruler can keep people to their limits by provision of the law. He can place the rights of the people, and the broad base of the people above the interests of individuals, above everything else. This is within the rulers prerogatives, but without rancour, since we tried that, and saw where it led us. Every one hated the other in Egypt. Unfortunately this was the worst part of the legacy I inherited... But God willing, I shall overcome it. I never despair. I am optimistic, since my faith and my nature render me so, even in the darkest days. I am also optimistic since I know well the soil and nature of the country and the people we come from.

This land we hold sacred, I know its authenticity, solidity and how it resisted invaders, over thousands of years. All of the invaders were absorbed by the people of Egypt, but none of them absorbed the people of Egypt. I believe in my country, I am proud of my people, the piece of land and the palm tree. I believe in this people who gave the world its first civilization, 7000 years ago. This first government in the world was formed on the banks of the Nile.

This people will contribute a great deal, in the coming stage, when it will return to its original nature and sound traditions of love, charity, righteousness and justice.

With these values, our people can work miracles. There is no place for rancour among us. This is the one thing I shall resist with all my force. Apart from that, the President of the Republic will remain father to all, no matter how much his children blunder. The father remains the father, whatever the circumstances.

From now on, we shall place the whole truth before the people, since there is no reasons for hiding anything. The people must perform their part in full and call to account any person they choose.

I would have liked to join one of the forums, and have the opportunity for political practice. But my position prevents me from this. The father must be devoid of emotion against any one. At any time, he may be resorted to for rectifying errors, I believe in all I said, i.e. that there should always be safety valve. In the meantime, he (the father of the nation) will be practising his work through the State of institutions : the Council of Ministers with its full powers, the People's Assembly, the legislative authority with its full powers, the judiciary authority, with immunities and dignity restored — and the fourth authority, the press which will be joining the others. We must organise, we must render account to the people for every deviator. Nowadays some people follow the fashion of discrediting their country, just to show off.

Others work in papers abroad and insult their country. There are still others, inside the country, who insult it, just for the fun of doing so to be conspicuous. All this will be put before the people. Egypt grants protection to all its sons, without exception but will put every one in his place. It is about time the people hear this and feel it with their hands.

Formerly, the passive attitude was the only way before the people. We lost a great deal during that stage, and expelled many, We lost a great many opportunities to re-construct. Thank God, all that is over and done with.

The people now practise politics. The revolution after having completed its mission and rectified itself, handed over the trust to the people. It is now up to you. Each one of you should play his part with love, righteousness, compassion, charity and social peace between us. Our tolerant nature should never be changed to one of sanguinary struggle, just because one ideology or another upholds it.

Brezhnev's criticism of our system is strange, indeed. We rectified ourselves on May 15, because there were errors, and big errors at that. Ever since, he has turned against our system. Why does he not care for his own ?

What is it that has changed in our system ? The 50% workers' and farmers' share is still there, free education is there, the public sector leads development. The L.E. 7 million private sector by the time it reaches the L.E. 1 billion of the public sector, the latter will have reached L.E. 10 or 20 billion.

All the economic base is run by the public sector. What could be lacking and provoking Brezhnev ? To speak frankly, the sequestration has ended, arrests have been stopped and there is no work for agents. He knows well enough that ever since my assumption

of power, the experiment has been progressing, even better than before. At first it was being pushed forward by rancour, while now it develops through love, compassion and righteousness. The day I see some one departing from the line, in my capacity as father, I shall ask him to go back to his place. The jurisprudence gives me this right. Also I can ask a person with excess money to give part of it to the state. The Islamic jurisprudence gives the ruler this right, but not in rancour, hate or humiliation, as was the case in the past with the Committee for Feudalism and others. This is what Brezhnev wants. Sorry we cannot do that. We have chosen our way and are pursuing it. My advice to you is righteousness, love, compassion and charity. These are the roots of our people and the soil of our land. This is the constructive soil of our country. For 7000 years it has constructed and has never demolished. This is why we have been standing on our feet for 7000 years. It was the first civilization based on love and righteousness above all. We build with love, justice, peace and charity, and the edifice shall rise up high. God willing.

God guide you in the forthcoming political practice. I thank God for helping us to reopen this mosque after its being demolished, we will pray in it again. We can now take the boat, sail in the Canal, land in Sinai and walk in it for tens of kilometres. God willing, we shall recover the rest of it.

As for the Arab Socialist Union, where I shall remain to observe the implementation of the three principles I mentioned : national unity, inevitability of the Socialist solution, the gains of workers and farmers, all the Socialist gains. In addition to observing these principles, with regard to the forums, one of them departs from one or all of these principles, its attention will be called. It will render account before the people in an open session. The Socialist Union has no authority in this connection. There will be free prac-

tice, but with free debate before the people to the effect that such and such forum has violated such and such a principle. This will be debated openly, and the people will judge.

The Socialist Union will handle three matters : the Woman's Organisation, the Press and the Youth Organisation. This Union at the head of which will be the President, to observe national unity, will take charge of the vanguard youth until they are of age to join one of the forums. What applies to the boy also applies to the girl. In the Vanguards there is the youth and the women's organisations.

With regard to the press, I shall take charge, in the Socialist Union, through the Higher Press Council to set all the guarantees for freedom, first to ensure the freedom of the Press, permanently, and also for sound practice. This will not be secret but openly before the people. Nothing will be kept in the dark.

I would have liked—had I not chosen this position — to form the July 23 and May 15 Revolution Forums at once. You were to organise yourselves, pending the publication of the programmes of the forums, and then each would have joined the forum to his liking. But through my 34 years of experience, 24 in the revolution and ten previously in prisons and detention camps, these long years of experience entitle me to tell you that rancour, sanguinary class struggle, and cording it over the people are inconsistent with the nature of our country, and tear at the true texture of the people which is made of a fine fabric. The best position for me after 34 years of political practice is in position not subjected to struggle, in fact that of a father whose role is not disputed.

Otherwise I would have established the platform of the 1952 Revolution and that of the May 15 Revolution.

It is up to you now to organise yourselves, until the programmes of the platforms are published, then you can join the platform of your choice.