JOINT MEETING OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

The SPEAKER of the House presided.

The Doorkeeper, Hon. James T. Molloy, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to conduct the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt into the Chamber the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. O'NEILL; the gentleman from Arizona, Mr. RHODES; the gentleman from California, Mr. MCFALL; the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. MICHEL; the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. MORGAN; and the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. BROOMFIELD.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to accompany the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt into the Chamber the Senator from Mississippi, Mr. EASTLAND; the Senator from Montana, Mr. MANSFIELD; the Senator from West Virginia, Mr. ROBERT C. BYRD; the Senator from Utah, Mr. Moss; the Senator from Alabama, Mr. SPARKMAN; the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. YOUNG; the Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. HUGH SCOTT; the Senator from Texas, Mr. TOWER; the Senator from Vermont, Mr. STAFFORD; and the Senator from New Jersey, Mr. CASE.

The Doorkeeper announced the Ambassadors, Ministers, and Chargés d'Affaires of foreign governments.

The Ambassadors, Ministers, and Chargés d'Affaires of foreign governments entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them.

The Doorkeeper announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 12 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m., the Doorkeeper announced the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, His Excellency, Mohammed Anwar El-Sadat.

President Sadat, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, and stood at the Clerk's desk.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

The SPEAKER. Members of the Congress, it is my great privilege, and I deem it a high honor and personal pleasure, to present to you His Excellency, Anwar El-Sadat, the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

President SADAT. Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Members of Congress, I would like, first, to thank you for extending this invitation to me, thus affording me a unique opportunity to meet with you all in a pleasant continuation of the conversations I have had with a good many of you who visited Egypt. I have always found these talks stimulating, informative and rewarding. I believe, in all sincerity, that there is no substitute for direct person-to-person contacts that go deep into the heart of all the problems which invoke our common concern and capture our imagination. There is no better way to reach a profound insight of the complexity of the world we live in and grasp the immense problems we face today and are likely to encounter in the future. In the process, our opinions might differ and our views might occasionally diverge. Indeed, our culture emphasizes diversity and multiplicity as a means of reaching consensus and compatability. What is required is not identity of viewpoints, but a genuine acceptance of each other's right to hold different opinions and entertain different ideas.

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, we are faced, together with all other nations, with one of the greatest challenges of our time, namely the task of convincing this generation, and those to follow, that we can finally build a viable international system capable of meeting the demands of tomorrow and solving the problems of the coming age. It is a foregone conclusion that old techniques are no longer working and that it is not possible any longer to encounter new problems with old ideas, and worn-out solutions. The legacy of the past should be utilized, not as an inhibiting factor, but rather as an inspiring revelation. We ought not to demoralize the dreamer or stifle the revolutionary. It is true that the magnitude and entanglement of the problems of today have a tendency to overwhelm us in our endeavor to sail to the shore of security and fulfillment. However, we should never allow visionary thinking to be replaced by the urgency of alleviating short-term problems.

To attain that, it is an absolute must to establish a new world order, where the arbiter among nations is not sheer power or might, but allegiance to legitimacy and compliance with the rule of law. A new international economic system has to be devised to remedy the grave injustices of the past and pave the way for a more equitable definition of rights and duties. The developing countries are increasingly witnessing an upsurge of the feeling that the time has come for them to have a better standard of living, much more akin to that of the peoples of the industrialized countries. These hopes must be realized so long as we are seeking the closeness of men from all corners of the world, whose basic regard is the belief in peace, justice and the universal brotherhood of man.

I am stating all this here, before you, because I believe that this country has a special responsibility in the process of making the necessary adjustment and facilitating the transformation to the new international structure. I believe also that the United States has no alternative but to accept the challenge and bear its responsibility with vision and determination. This Nation, like all other nations throughout the history of man, shall be judged, not by the power it exercises or the wealth it accumulates, but by the values it upholds and the principles it honors. Fortunately, your history is impregnated with shining examples of genuine devotion to higher values and norms. Abraham Lincoln chose to describe this Nation as "one conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Woodrow Wilson stated, in an address to Congress, that "only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end, and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own." John F. Kennedy urged all sides, "to join in creating a new endeavor . . . not a new balance of power, but a new world of law where the strong are just, and the weak secure and the peace preserved."

Long before that, your first President, George Washington, in his prophetic farewell address, urged all citizens "to observe good faith and justice towards all nations" and warned against both "inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others," noting that "a passionate attachment, among other evils, facilitates the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists."

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, I did not come here seeking aid or soliciting promises and commitments. Rather, I came to extend to you and all Americans a hand of friendship and understanding. I am not addressing you as an ally, but as a true friend, who is most willing to support you when you are right, and equally ready to draw your attention when we believe you are wrong. I will not attempt to lure you with the illusion that our interests are identical with yours. In fact they often converge but at times diverge, which is only natural. But in all dealings with you, we proceed with a view to strengthen the ties of friendship and cooperation between the two nations. Our strict adherence to the principles of non-alignment guides us in our sincere drive to improve our relations with different nations.

There is no limit as to how far we can go in improving our relations and strengthening our ties. We have always admired many things in America and looked forward to the day when we work together towards a better understanding. We spare no effort in this endeavor. You have been responsive and cooperative. Lately, more promising signs have surfaced in the form of a higher degree of understanding of the situation and a better assessment of your national interests.

Our bilateral relations are developing along lines which we accept and endorse, namely those of equal footing, respect for each other's independent will, noninterference in each other's domestic affairs and mutual cooperation. We propose to work, together with you, towards enlarging the area of cooperation on a sound basis in order that it may encompass more and more activities, both on the official and non-official levels. We would like to see more contacts between our two peoples * * * parliamentarians, professionals, journalists, writers, artists,

businessmen, technicians and academicians.

Perhaps it has been established now, beyond doubt, that we are not ready to compromise our independence or mortgage our will to any power under any circumstances. Our relations with a given nation are not conducted to the detriment of those we maintain with other countries. We should always bear in mind that Egypt is the oldest nation-state that has enjoyed an uninterrupted existence within the same boundaries for over 7,000 years. You certainly can appreciate the impact and reflection of this phenomenon on our political behavior among nations today.

We are doing all we can in order to develop our country socially and economically in every possible field. We are embarking on an ambitious but essential plan for overall development and socio-economic transformation. We are trying to secure a job for every man and woman, a hospital room for every sick person, a seat in the classroom for every child. We are trying to make life easier for toiling farmers and workers. We are determined to achieve all that, while striving, at the same time, to catch up with the latest advances in technology and science. We are earmarking more funds for investment, simultaneously with the reimbursement of our accumulated debts. We are committed to improve the quality of life in Egypt. Throughout this process, we rely first and foremost on our own people, our own resources and, above all, on our hope in the future. We welcome any unconditional help from friendly nations in whatever form. We thank those who are willing to help (and may I identify you with all gratitude in this respect) and we understand the position of those who are not, for one reason or another.

Perhaps you are aware of the fact that we share the little we have with other nations. Egyptian aid is given without hesitation to sister African and Asian countries hit by disasters. We are building roads, schools, hospitals in remote places, in the belief that whatever is good for these people is good for the Egyptian people.

Our engineers, doctors, teachers, and technicians are contributing to the improvement of life in almost every State in the region. Some have questioned the setting of our priorities and the wisdom of spreading our resources in such a manner. But we think that human progress is indivisible and that every nation should share in the cost and fruit alike.

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, many of your friends around the world expect American policy to be based on justice and fairness, supporting the oppressed and the deprived. Similarly, we believe it is important that the United States apply the same standards in dealing with other peoples as those you strove for when you launched your revolution. The United States has to be counted among the supporters of any revolution that seeks the freedom and dignity of man. Consequently, is there any logical reason why the United States should treat the Palestinian problem differently? You are well aware that the Palestinians have suffered occasionally from excesses, lack of discipline and abuse. They feel, not without justification to be sure, that the Palestinian people have long been neglected by the international community. It was only a few years ago that their legitimate struggle caught the imagination, and hence gained the sympathy, of the world. Nations began, after being aware of the plight of the Palestinians, to recognize their right to self-determination and statehood. Even when nations had their reservations as to certain aspects of the Palestinian resistance, that did not hinder them from lending it their understanding and support. Of almost all nations, the United States remains as the sole dissenter in the long over-due trend of establishing contacts with the Palestinians. Contacts bring understanding. Understanding helps develop solutions.

In this connection I must say, with all fairness, that I have seen certain promising signs in the past few weeks with some of you, Senators and Congressmen, both individually and in committees and subcommittees, demonstrating a keen interest in the cause of the Palestinians and exploring ways and means of solving their problem and putting an end to their predicament. Still, much remains to be done and the aggrieved cannot be expected to wait long. Therefore, I urge you, in the most emphatic term, to lend the Palestinian people your understanding and support. Help them to overcome despair and frustration. The continuation of neglect and defiance is but an open invitation to violence, negativism and extremism. With your understanding and support, moderation would reign and reason would prevail. Above all, a sympathetic stand on the part of the United States towards the aspirations of the Palestinians and their right to establish their own state shall contribute greatly to a speedy solution of the problem. I trust that what I have been reiterating for years has become crystal clear today; namely, that the Palestinian question is the heart and core of the entire dispute. Once solved, all other outstanding issues can be solved, thus realizing the hopes of many of us who are striving to make peace a living reality.

You know that we Arabs have no problem whatsoever coexisting with others of different ethnic or religious backgrounds. Our history is a testimony to the fact that we have never harbored any ill-feeling towards any people. Nor have we known doctrines of racial or religious discrimination as did other nations. The teachings of Islam and the tenets of our culture make it incumbent upon us to respect all peoples and deal with all nations as equals for we believe that Islam is a continuation of the process of human submission to the Divine will since the inception of mankind. We are commanded in our Holy Book to say that "we believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus and that to all prophets from their Lord. We make no difference between one and another of them and we bow to God in Islam."

To us peace is not only a cherished ideal, but also an imperative commandment to which we are committed. Our way of expressing our reverence to the prophets is to pray to God to bestow peace on their souls. Is it any wonder that the Arab nation should be dedicated to the cause of peace, a cause that is inherent in its faith and profoundly interwoven into the fabric of its culture? Recent events have proven, beyond any doubt, that our desire to establish peace is our paramount consideration and overriding concern. We took the steps we did in the belief that we are paving the road to peace, even if this entails taking some risks. But let me remind you that a very important factor behind our attitude is the constructive and more impartial role we expect the United States to play.

Enough has been mentioned about American commitments to this party or that. But the real commitment that is required of the United States is one to peace and justice. We are not asking your country to abandon anyone or turn friends into enemies. We simply expect the United States not to condone expansion or tolerate aggression. We often hear about the binding force of commitments, which often contradict one another. However, the only guarantee for a commitment to hold is that it be based on principles, not expediency and on objectively ascertainable criteria. We expect the United States to cooperate with us in our drive to set in motion the process of an overall settlement that tackles all aspects of the Middle East conflict. We expect it to refrain from spurring the arms race in the area, for this would certainly lead to the renewal of armed conflict.

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, ever since I knew President Ford, first through correspondence and then after meeting him in person, I have found him a man of vision, deep understanding and compassion. He has been a man of integrity who always kept his word. He is given to candor and honesty. In short, he is the kind of statesman to like and trust. His commitment to peace is paramount and genuine.

In the past ten days, I have had the opportunity to visit many parts of your great country. I was struck by the warmth, the hospitality and the genuineness of the American people's desire for peace and progress, not only for themselves, but for the world. Truly, you and we have much in common and I am encouraged that we can continue to work together to achieve the great objectives we have set for ourselves. I take this opportunity to convey to the American people, through their representatives, my thanks and my best wishes for happiness and prosperity.

I am mindful of the fact that I paid this visit on the eve of the Bicentennial anniversary of the American revolution. On behalf of the people and government of Egypt, I extend to every American our warm congratulations on this great occasion in your history. Out of the throes of revolution . . . out of the fight against oppression and injustice . . . out of a firm conviction in the rights of man, you have

created a youthful country that turned out to be the super power of today and a country capable of advancing the cause of human progress.

Again, may I thank you for availing me of this opportunity. As you see, I have spoken to you in all sincerity in the belief that we should never miss any opportunity of building bridges of real friendship and genuine understanding between nations . . . until the day comes when they beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Thank you.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

At 1 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m., His Excellency, Mohammed Anwar El-Sadat, the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Doorkeeper, Hon. James T. Molloy, escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order: The members of the President's Cabinet, the Ambassadors, Ministers, and Chargé d'Affaires of foreign governments.