INTERVIEW

given by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

to the

American Broadcasting Corporation «A.B.C»

November 6, 1975

Question: Can I possibly know something about the American military aid which Egypt is demanding from the United States?

President: As a matter of fact, I want to clarify my attitude to the American people. Ever since the ceasefire, I have not received any replacements for the weapons we lost, whereas Israel received replacements which exceeded the weapons it lost, even before the ceasefire was put into force on Oct. 22. Syria also received weapons more than it lost during war. Consequently, I took my decision to diversify the sources of armaments and I have begun to make transactions with Western Europe. So are you ready to help me in this matter, this is the question which I am asking?

Question: In case you do not obtain weapons from the U.S. will you go once again to the Soviet Union for it?

President: I already bought weapons from Britain and France and shall continue to buy weapons from any state that is willing to sell weapons to us. I cannot foresee what will be
the attitude of the Soviet Union but if we review the trend of
relations between us during the last two years, I can say that
the Soviet Union will not supply us with arms... The Soviets are
even refusing to supply us with the spare-parts we asked from
them and not the armaments themselves.

**Question**: The news circulated points out that the U.S. in-
tends to sell nuclear power reactors to Egypt. For what pur-
poses will these reactors be used?

**President**: These reactors will be used for the desalination
of the sea water and have no relation whatsoever with any other
nuclear activities from the technical point of view. We live on
an area that constitutes only 4% of our land, the other 96%
is desert... Whenever we find water we can cultivate the land...
This, in fact, is the reason I asked for this reactor which is only
concerned with the desalination of the sea water.

**Question**: Is this the only field in which the nuclear reac-
tor will be used?

**President**: Exactly and it has no relation whatsoever with
any other activity concerning atomic energy and all the techni-
cians know this quite well.

**Question**: Mr President, you have talked about the neces-
sity of concluding another agreement for the disengagement of
forces between Syria and Israel, and before your trip you stated
that you have assurances from the U.S. with this respect.
Nevertheless, so far no move was taken in this connection?

**President**: I have found that President Ford and Kissinger,
the Secretary of State are ready to act in this connection. Now
the whole matter is up to our Syrian brothers to decide what
they want.
Question: In case no negotiations are conducted with Syria, what will your attitude be?

President: «I have done my utmost in this respect. As I told you, Ford and Dr. Kissinger, the Secretary of State, are ready to initiate this operation. So, why should I be blamed if the Syrians do not agree.

Question: You stated that you will help the Syrians by participating with them in any war launched by Israel against Syria... So, what will be your attitude in case it is Syria which attacks Israel?

President: I have explained this point very clearly before, and affirmed that Syria will never begin an attack.

Question: Why not?

President: I am certain of this.

Question: But in the event of Syria launching an attack, will Egypt join it, or is it in your power to prevent it from carrying out such an act?

President: In such a case an extremely grave situation will arise... So let us be guided now by the English proverb which says «don't cross your bridges until you come to them».

Question: You mentioned in the National Press Club the story of the merchant who refused to sell you a radio-set because he was carrying out the Zionist orders not to sell anything to members of the Armed Forces. This story has enraged many of the Jews, and made them feel that you are basically biased against them.

President: I recounted this story in the course of the questions which I was asked about my opinion of the Zionist quest-
tion that was raised in the U.N. I was just answering questions, and expressing my ideas on this subject. I quoted this story as an example of the reality of Zionism, but we do not bear any grudges at all against the Jews, and absolutely not against the Jewish religion... On the contrary, God has ordered us in our religion to acknowledge the Jewish and Christian religions... Nevertheless, I would like to say that despite the fact that the Jews dominated our economy, we were living together in peace until Zionism appeared in the area...

Why ? Because Zionism brought expansion, occupation of the Arab territories by force, and the complete denial of the Palestinians’ rights along with it. However, if this problem is cured we are ready to view this matter in a different way.

*Question*: To many people Zionism and Israel mean one and the same thing. They believe that Zionism is a movement of national independence.

*President*: You can believe and decide what you like, I have no objection to that. But I am informing you with facts in our region. When Zionism came to the region, it brought along with it expansion, occupation of Arab territories by force, and denial of the Palestinian rights. These are facts that I cannot possibly ignore, therefore, my position is that I cannot agree with Zionism. Maybe you regard it as a liberation movement, it is up to you to decide. But this is what happened in our region.

*Question*: Do you believe in the existence of the State of Israel ?

*President*: That is a reality. I said it before, Israel is a reality. When we accepted Resolution 242, we agreed that Israel was a reality.
Question: How do you expect Israel to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, when the Organisation refuses to recognise the existence of Israel?

President: Had you been in the same position and led the same life you would have done exactly the same thing, believe me.

Question: What if you were in the position of the Israelis?

President: They should understand the truth of the situation. They have been denying the Palestinians the most elementary human rights, for the past 27 years. They must realise that.

Question: Will you be doing the same with Arafat; that is, persuade him to accept the realities of the situation and to recognise the existence of Israel?

President: No I shall not ask him to do that. But I shall ask all my friends in the United States to try to persuade Israel not to assume such a position, and to accept facts.

Question: You believe that this should come from the Americans.

President: The United States is the only party capable of doing it.

Question: Why?

President: Because you have special relations with Israel and you supply them with everything. They are not likely to listen to any one in the world but you.

Question: Can you tell me where you think the new State of Palestine should be established?
President: I cannot speak on behalf of the Palestinians, they must speak for themselves. But what I personally think is that it should begin with the Western Bank and Gaza, with a passage linking the two.

Question: Will this be satisfactory to the Palestine Liberation Organisation?

President: I don't know what the reaction of the P.L.O. might be. You are asking me for my private opinion and I am telling it to you. They may reject it, that is up to them. But I believe that it would be a very good solution.

Question: What about the other shortcomings that hinder American industry from your country?

President: As I told you, the basic framework of economy in my country has been badly damaged. I am starting from zero but I've pulled down the iron curtain that has shut us out of the world for the past twenty years. I admit that and don't deny it. We have difficulties and you will be facing them with us. But you must know that I'm exerting my utmost efforts, and the Government likewise, to create a favourable atmosphere for any businessman coming to our country.

Question: When Kissinger is no more Secretary of State, what will this mean to Egypt?

President: We are seeking to establish a friendship with the American people in the first place. Therefore, we must deal with any man the American deem fit to elect. This is my opinion, but if Henry remains, matters will be much easier. I do not exaggerate when I say that Henry has radically changed the picture of America in our region.