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21 November 1973

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The Right Honourable The Earl of Cromer KCMG MBE PC
British Embassy
Washington

Thank you very much for your letter of 14 November about the ceasefire canards. I do indeed realise that Kissinger is not given to apology and I could hardly believe my ears when he uttered the word!

2. I hope I may have dispelled from his mind any thought that we here advised the Egyptians against acceptance of a ceasefire. Of course it was only to be expected that the Egyptians, when asked, should set their opening bid pretty high. Very probably they would have accepted, no doubt with loud protests, something less if it had come to the point. But it is significant that Sadat unhesitatingly rejected the sort of compromise resolution which I was instructed to put to him in FCO telegram No. 536 of 13 October. As I said in my very brief word with Kissinger, it was (and remains) my clear impression that Sadat would not at any stage have accepted a resolution which did not link the ceasefire directly to the making of a final settlement: and in that sense I agree with you that the outcome would have been the same, whichever of the two questions described in my letter of 9 November to Tony Parsons I had put. But I thought Kissinger showed that he accepted that assessment when he said to me twice in a couple of minutes that the Americans had been misled. I presumed he meant by the Russians.

3. As early as 7 October when I saw Sadat at his request and without instructions, I said that HM Government were men of peace and I was sure that I would be receiving instructions to work in every way possible to stop the fighting. Sadat was personally well aware of our view that war was no way to settle the Middle East problem and that we considered the risks of a spread of the conflagration most serious and indeed unacceptable. As you will have seen from the telegrams, I was instructed repeatedly to go on probing Egyptian positions with a view to finding the earliest moment at which they would accept a ceasefire, and to urge that no opportunity of making progress towards a peaceful settlement should be lost.

4. I hope that these hares have now stopped running; and

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that you will let me know if you think there is anything I
could usefully do at this end.

P G D Adams

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