

I N T E R V I E W

given by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

to Radio Baden Baden

March 9, 1976

Question : Mr. President, we sought this interview for the reasons:

First : On account of your prospective visit to Germany, and the second → in « EGYPT'S WEEK » in the West German Broadcasting-Radio Baden-Baden. Before we broach the subject of politics would you give a short address to the audience in Germany ?

President : I am very happy indeed about my forthcoming visit to Germany.

I wish you to know that the Egyptian people greatly appreciate the German people and are eager to foster relations with Federal Germany.

It is indeed wonderful that the West-German Broadcasting Services should devote a week for Egypt to give its German audience a true picture of our country. This will inevitably contribute to better knowledge and greater understanding between the two countries.

Question : Mr. President, you will be paying an official visit to Federal Germany this month. What is your view of the relations

between our two countries, and your anticipations concerning the talks that will be held with the Bonn Government.

President : First I wish to state that I am very happy about my forthcoming visit to Germany, I am also happy that our relations have recently attained the level they should have attained after a long period of estrangement.

Here in Egypt we have great admiration for the German mentality and the German people. It is for this reason that I took forward eagerly to the talks with our friends, there, President Scheel, whom I know and who has visited me in Egypt, and Chancellor Schmidt, whom I have not met but of whom I heard a great deal from our mutual friend, Dr. Kissinger; also Foreign Minister Gensher who has visited us recently and whom I know.

Question : Mr. President, what are the key matters in the peaceful economic and social development of your country, and what is the scientific aid Federal Germany could offer Egypt, either directly, or in the framework of the European Community?

President : Our economy is passing through a difficult stage at present. A few days ago, I returned from a trip to six Arab nations which I started in Saudi Arabia and ended in Kuwait; my purpose was to seek the aid of our Arab brothers. Previously, we had sought the aid of Germany, Western-Europe, America, and Japan.

Our Arab brothers decided on the establishment of a fund designed to balance our economy. In our negotiations with Chancellor Schmidt, there undoubtedly will be something basic concerning the part Germany can play to aid us, bilaterally, and then through the consortium with the European Community countries and with America and Japan.

We wish to be clear about one thing. We do not seek aid as much as long-term loans or joint projects. This is the basis for our forthcoming stage, and one of which I have spoken with the Arab brothers, as well.

I shall communicate to Chancellor Schmidt what I have reached with the Arab brothers and with America. But it must be understood that Federal Germany has a principal part to play in the bilateral relations and bilateral aid to us in addition to its part within any consortium.

Question : Mr. President, after a number of sanguinary battles you have taken a step, by means of the two Sinai Agreements, towards peace in the region. What is your appraisal of further steps on this way? And what part can the two super-powers, America and the Soviet Union, play?

President : This is a historic moment and a turning point for the establishment of true peace, in the region. The efforts that were exerted by Dr. Kissinger, since November 1973, that is directly after the War, have had a salutary effect. I can say now that a turning point for true peace has actually, become possible after 27 years of blood, hatred and violence, also thanks to the good offices of America, the Soviet Union and Europe. I insist that our friends in Western Europe should play their part, especially when it comes to providing guarantees for final peace. I recently read in Brezhnev's speech that he has adopted my view and claims that Britain and France join in providing guarantees.

Since, as I say, there is a golden opportunity for the establishment of true peace, provided it is understood that the basic problem is Palestine and not Sinai or Golan.

Question : Mr. President, the crux of the Middle East conflict, as seen by the Arab side, is the Palestine Cause. Do you see a pos-

sibility of conciliation between the Palestinians' claim to the right to self-determination, and the recognition of the state of Israel and its right to exist within secure borders?

President : I do not wish our friends in Western Germany to fall into the same error set for them by Israel.

Where is the Palestinian State that can recognize Israel ? The Palestinians have no state, so how can we ask them to recognize Israel as a state before they themselves have one ? This is the kind of approach Israel resorts to for propaganda. But let us be fair. Let us first endeavour to meet in Geneva, and let the Palestinians participate as a principal party and obtain their State.

Only then, can you ask them for what you want, and not before. It is absolutely unfair to ask anything of those who have no homeland, who were rendered homeless and who are deprived of the most elementary of the human rights. How can we ask them for anything when they themselves have no state and have been given no solution to their problem one way or the other.

Question : Mr. President, Egypt has made many sacrifices, in recent years, and it stands among the nations which call for an equitable peace. Do you, Mr. President, feel that this attitude is liable to isolate Egypt within the Arab Camp ?

Or do you believe the other Arab nations, with Syria in the lead, will take the same path as Egypt in order to gradually achieve peace with Israel ?

President : I am very much astonished at the propaganda which asserts the isolation of Egypt. How could Egypt be isolated when, in fact, it is the heart of the Arab nation ? It is Egypt which is the main factor in the Arab nation. As I have previously mentioned, I visited a short while ago, six Arab countries, we did

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not discuss the Sinai Treaty or any of the matters which Syria contests, we discussed the future of the Arab World, and all the Arabs discuss the future. Egypt, because of its historical position, is the heart and key of the Arab nation.

Following the October War of 1973, we, Arabs, became, a matter recognized by Western circles, the sixth power of the world, and he who does not wish to maintain this position with us, will evidently become isolated, not Egypt.

Consequently, Syria's attempts are nothing but narrow-minded party operations though some people in Germany have their different views, but it does not harm us one way or the other.

What I would like to say is this, after concluding our first disengagement, Syria too, concluded its first disengagement. But when we concluded the second disengagement, Syria put itself in a tight-spot, as a result of the narrow-minded party operations, though it was eager to reach this disengagement. This step might be reached at this stage between them, America and King Hussein.

I perfectly agree with you that the process of building up prosperity in Egypt, of re-constructing what had been devastated, really needs enormous efforts and a long time. I assure you that our people are noble in this connection, and that they perhaps bear much more than others can. We follow the Germans as a model in this respect. After World War II, Germany was completely destroyed, however, its sons rebuilt it anew, and today it has become, if not the richest yet one of the richest states of the world. Concerning economy and construction, I have been admiring two things I mentioned and often repeated to the Prime Minister and the Ministers concerned.

First : I greatly admire the role played by the banks in Germany after the war in the re-establishment of Germany. Not only

were there the efforts of the government, but also those exerted by the banks. The second thing is that the sound path that appeals to me most is the one I witnessed in Austria, one which is adopted by my friend Dr. Kreisky who applies a wonderful type of socialism, one of prosperity. I do believe in it.

Consequently, I sent the A.S.U. Secretary General, the Ministers of Planning and Housing and others, for I periodically send the responsible officials at present, to Dr. Kreisky in order to observe the experience in Austria, which is a mixture of socialism and open-door policy that is to say the public sector constitutes 63% of the economy while the remaining part is the responsibility of the private sector. It is my view that the prosperity in Austria is the ideal road for us to follow, or let me say it is this kind of socialism that is the most appropriate way for the implementation of our operation of reconstruction. That is why we intend to adopt the above-mentioned method as our own.

Question : Mr. President, the Federal Government has attempted — particularly, in the recent period — to improve its relations with Egypt and the rest of the Arab world, since it is also striving to pursue a balanced policy in dealing with the Arab countries on one hand and with Israel on the other. Can you understand, Mr. President, that being the legitimate heir to the German Reich, which, under Hitler, had caused the annihilation of most of the European Jews, it is impossible for Germany to appear on the international scene with a policy endangering or ever questioning the existence of the Jewish State.

President : I believe that time has come for the German people to get rid of the guilt complex Israel is trying, by all means and ways, to keep alive for special reasons of its own. We Arabs are not to blame for what Hitler has done to the Jews for them to come to our region and do the same to the Arabs.

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Thus, we ask Germany to have a balanced policy.

It has recently become evident that Germany is actually heading towards a balanced policy. We welcome this new German approach, whilst advising our German friends that it is about time to put an end to the guilt complex by means of which the Israelis are attempting to blackmail Germany into giving them moral and material support.