INTERVIEW

given by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

to the

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Question: I believe it is my duty to congratulate you for all the efforts you exerted not only for the good of your country and people, but also for the entire area and for the whole world. I must say that I felt numerous changes and noticed remarkable improvements in the daily life of the Egyptian people since I last had the honour of visiting your magnificent country a year and a half ago. Meantime, you had recently said that the Egyptian people should wait for four years more until the country's economic conditions as well as all other conditions are improved. In my opinion, this is a frank outlook to matters, and I believe that the reason that made you say this is your full trust in your people, particularly as it is extremely difficult for a leader to tell his people that they have to wait for four years more. On the other hand, your people accept everything you tell them because you kept to your word and fulfilled all your promises to them.

My questions now, Mr. President, is what you have you not achieved in the past five or six years that you really wanted to achieve? And what do you look forward to fulfil in the next five years?
President: There is still a great deal that must be accomplished in order to make life easy for my people in spite of the motive power with which we embarked on the stage of reconstruction in the country following the first disengagement agreement in 1974. However, we have already accomplished a great deal. For instance, we must fulfil self-sufficiency in the field of food, with the exception of wheat... Anyway, I am doing my utmost and personally supervising these projects, because work on their implementation should have begun a year and half ago, but we were delayed for some reasons. That is why I personally supervise these food projects for my people in the hope of being able to realise our plan in an extremely short period.

Furthermore, I started a programme of social insurances for every citizen living on the land of Egypt. It gives me pleasure to say that we realised 80% of the programme, and I hope I shall be able to complete the remaining 20% before the termination of my first term of office this year, that is within a few months from now.

As for the open-door policy, I must admit that as a result of the negligence which prevailed in the public services of the country for 12 years, we cannot meet the great enthusiasm of foreigners who are desirous to come to Egypt, for one simple reason, that is the lack of sufficient hotels and means of communications with the outside world. However, we initiated a telestar programme and a telex programme to serve businessmen... Though Port Said has become a free zone, its harbour still needs some time in order to be ready to receive foreign businessmen with their ventures. I would like to seize this opportunity to thank my brother the Emperor of Iran for all the assistance he offered us, particularly in the reconstruction of Port Said... Moreover, there are many works, joint ventures between the Iranians and Egyptians in Port Said; such ventures, I hope, will bear fruit in the near future, and contribute to the pros-

perity of the region.

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accomplished motive power construction in the instance of some reason.

I hope to be able to initiate the so-called stage of «take off» by the end of the next four years.

In 1980 the Suez Canal revenue will be doubled. The first increase will be achieved in 1978, that is, two years from now. In this respect I would like to tell you that the Japanese have been working very hard on this programme for a few months ago, and they will finish the first stage in 1978. This project will help double the Canal's revenue. After the end of the first stage in 1978, they will, immediately, begin the second stage which will result in doubling the Canal's revenue once again in 1980.

Moreover, by 1980 we shall be able to produce one million barrels of petroleum daily due to the petroleum we already have and to the new fields we explored under the Suez Gulf... This is in addition to another 22 concessions we offered to different companies from all over the world, in order to start the prospection works in the Mediterranean, and the Delta itself where we previously explored for gas, a matter which opened the door of new hopes before us.

I also hope we shall be able to operate the SUFEMED pipeline by next December, and I believe we will, though it might need a few more months to operate it in full capacity.

Furthermore, I concentrate enormous efforts on the production of fertilizers due to the fact that we are an agricultural country and we mainly depend on agriculture in our life. But as I said, my main concern is to direct all my efforts to the food problem, with the exception of wheat. In my coming talks with my brother the Shahenshah, I shall endeavour to reach a kind of cooperation and coordi-
nation between us and our Irani brothers so that we can begin a policy of coordination in the field of industry... We consider the industry established in Iran is our own industry, and they will begin erecting a new industry here in Egypt so that we can complement each other's activities, and do away with competition between us... many fields of activity we can achieve in Iran, just as there are many others the Iranians can achieve here in Egypt... I really look with admiration and appreciation upon the achievements accomplished by the Shahenshah in the different fields of industry in Iran... I hope to realise for Egypt part of the magnificent things the Shah has accomplished for Iran.

Question: Your third visit to Iran will take place shortly, and certainly such visits, including that of the Emperor to Egypt a year and half ago, and that of the Crown Prince to attend the celebrations of the reopening of the Suez Canal last June, are indications enough of the steadily increasing friendship and closely-knit bonds between our two countries. So what are the main subjects you plan to discuss during your official visit?

President: My meeting with the Shahenshah, which will take place very shortly, will give me the opportunity to widely review not only our bilateral relations, the economic cooperation the fruits of which are ready to be reaped, but also all the problems of the area we live in, namely, the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli dispute, the policies of the big powers around us and in the whole world, and the relations between the Arabs and Iran. We are not in need of discussing the bilateral relations between Egypt and Iran because as you see they have attained far-reaching dimensions, but I am concerned with the relations between Iran and the Arabs as a whole. Iran is a sister country and we have one face in all our dealings with the Iranians, we have the same principles and values, and share their culture and civilisation which we consider our own — I shall discuss...
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numerous issues with my brother the Shahenshah, as we did when
he was here in Egypt a year and half ago. We are looking forward
to continue discussing the different variables which took place in
the whole world, the policies of the super-powers, the economic
situation, joint ventures and the armament question.

Question: One of Iran’s declared objectives is to work for the
liberation of the Gulf area and the Indian Ocean from all forms of
foreign influence particularly that of the two super-powers. So, what
is your point of view, Mr. President, in this regard; and what is the
solution you recommend in order to reach this end as soon as
possible?

President: I believe I expressed my opinion before, and it is
high time now to reach a solution. We are very vigilant now, and
are responsible for our countries and the entire area we live in.

It is high time for the super-powers to realise that we are very
keen on clarifying matters, and I mean to ascertain that we shall
not allow any changes imposed by any big power on the area, which-
ever this big power may be... If it is possible, we can follow up the
proposal concerning the establishment of a neutral one in this area...
When I say neutral I mean with regards to atomic weapons... As
our brothers in Iran had already adopted this matter, I am certain
a great deal will be realised.

Meantime, it is very essential for us to approach each other
so that those who live outside our area would fully realise that
it is impossible to impose their influence on us as long as there
is a kind of affinity linking us, and as long as we adopt a certain
strategy. Therefore, they will think twice before embarking on
anything of the sort. I am certain that if we can establish such a
strategy with a clear vision of the future, all the big powers will
respect us; and this will be just the first step to persuade them
all that in this area we, alone, are responsible for our countries, and for our area... In this area the decision is only our own and absolutely not that of any power outside the area.

**Question:** Reverting to the local field, despite the opening of the Suez Canal, the inauguration, later this year, of the Suez Alexandria (SUEMED) pipe-line and the export of petroleum, your income in foreign currency is still small, compared to the speedily increasing population. Is not this the crux of your present problems? Could your Excellency tell us precisely the extent of Egypt's indebtedness at present, and especially Egypt's debts to the Soviet Union, and how you tackle the problem of settling these debts?

**President:** Frankly, what we face now is a tangled economic problem. Our difficulties lie in the fact that we have a great many short-term loans, the interest of some of which reaches 20%. This is truly my major problem. Our plan is to convert these loans to medium term ones; or long term ones to take a respite, that is to give our economy a respite. We are doing all that lies within our power; in this connection I hope that we will be receiving aid from our Arab brothers. We did actually receive aid from our Irani brothers.

We shall never forget the Shahenshah's generous response, when I asked him to supply us with oil. He immediately sent us 600,000 tons. Thank God, as I said before, we will be exporting oil. I hope that by 1980, we shall be producing one million barrels per day.

We do have oil now, but we shall never forget the response of my brother, the Shahenshah and the Irani people.

Consequently, our prime concern at present is converting the short-term loans to medium-term ones for which purpose we have been receiving favourable offers, particularly after my recent visit
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Likewise, our Arab brothers are working for the estab-
ment of a financial fund in our favour to aid us in facing this problem.

There is also a consortium to be formed by the United States,
West Germany and Japan from which we hope to obtain another
form of aid. As for our brother the Shahenshah, he has already
played his part in aiding us.

Our debts are of two categories; commercial debts for the
settlement of which we do not find any difficulty, and for which
we are indebted to the Soviet Union, and a military debt, also to
the Soviet Union.

The commercial debt does not present any difficulty, as at any
rate, we begin payment, after the project factory begins produc-
tion. But I am principally concerned about the military debt.

I asked for a period of grace — they actually granted Syria
one — I am in fact asking for a period of grace both as regards
the commercial debt and the military one — Syria has had both —
yet they have not agreed with me on that, as yet.

As far as World War II is concerned, I used to work in politics
then and you must have been young. The Soviet Union has not settled
its debts as yet, in conformity with the Lend and Lease Law passed
by Roosevelt at the time. They did not settle their military debt as
yet. It is accepted all over the world that rehabilitation takes prece-
dence over military debts, on which matter I am endeavouring to
come to an understanding with the Soviets.

Our Ambassador in Moscow left the country yesterday, June 11.
I received him the day before and gave him my detailed instructions
on the matter. Good relations between us can only be established
upon the basis of taking us as we are, and not as they would have us. I hope that he will succeed in this undertaking.

When I laid my plan for the coming years, it was revealed that we were in pressing need of about $20 billion, in addition to $12 billion which we shall obtain from local currency with which to implement the 5-year Plan. After that, our economy will be balanced. As I told you we can start our drive.

One might wonder what potentials we have. We shall become self-sufficient in fertilizers this year. Next year, 1977, we shall export fertilizers for which we have demands from all over the world.

During this year, we shall obtain from the Suez Canal an amount ranging between $400-450 million, for the first year, though all the Suez Canal-User companies, have not returned to it as yet.

Gradually, the companies will be able to change their route, dates and schedules. Therefore, we hope that the Canal revenue shall rise from $500 to $600 millions.

In 1978, within two years, the revenue will be doubled. This means a billion and 200,000,000. In 1980, after the execution of the second stage of the programme, we hope that the revenue will be trebled that is, it will become about a billion and 500,000,000.

This is in addition to what we will be getting from beneath the Suez Gulf waters, what we are at present preparing to produce, and over which I flew on June 5th. In 1980 we shall produce one million barrels of oil per day.

All these are in addition to other projects we will be embarking upon, shortly, as I told you, in the industrial and agricultural complexes. The prospect shall become very bright and promising as of 1980. But we have to confront hardships until then.

Question: What are the real figures for your debts?

President: Some time ago, my Finance Minister at the time,
I have been informed that the figure of our indebtedness was $4 billions, which was an easy matter, then. But after Mamdouh Salem became Prime Minister and began to work with his team of economy, Planning and Finance Ministers, we discovered that it was over L.E. 4 billion and not only $4 billion. We have to face L.E. 4 billion debt for the coming three or four years.

**Question:** During the dispute in Lebanon, Your Excellency, advocated the policy of «Hands off Lebanon». What is your reaction now to the direct invasion of Lebanon by Syrian troops? Do you believe that a conspiracy is afoot to partition Lebanon into three sections, as Kamal Jumblat and Raymond Ede claim?

**President:** It is pretty obvious now, to the Arab world and the world at large that I was right when I suggested «hands off Lebanon». Now you are with us, here, we have held a meeting in the Arab League and Syria has agreed to cease-fire and to withdraw its troops, leaving the Lebanese to settle the entire problem themselves.

Now they are perfectly convinced, after 15 months, of what I had told them, that unless we begin what we have actually begun now in the Arab League, the position would blow up. They received the same suggestion from Riyadh, last April and I notified the Arab League Secretary-General to be ready. But no one approved my proposal. But now they have, and the Secretary-General is pursuing his efforts. He was in Damascus and has returned today (June 13). We hope that he reaches a solution.

Before my meeting with you, I had a meeting with Yasser Arafat the Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. He left Cairo immediately following our meeting. I wonder whether what is going on now in Lebanon is a conspiracy. I do feel and smell something suspicious about all that problem. The partitioning could well be the aim.
The other objects are unknown to us until now, but behind what is going on in Lebanon, one imagines that anything might happen. But I perfectly agree with Jumblat and Edde, as Jumblat is the boldest of Lebanese leaders, placing all the facts before the Lebanese people, the Arab world and the world at large. Apart from being the bravest, he is also the most patriotic of Lebanese leaders.

Question: Will Syria refrain from voting in favor of the Arab League resolution? Will this conspiracy go on? Will Egypt adopt any practical steps to loosen the blockade imposed by the Syrian forces on Moslems, the Lebanese Fedayeen and the Palestinians?

President: We shall always work in conformity with our convictions that Lebanon should not be partitioned, we shall always support the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and shall always stand against the extermination of Palestinians or any such thing. But will Syria pursue this despite the Arab League resolutions? If it does, it will face the same fate as America in Vietnam. Whatever the forces they will send to Lebanon, they will never be able to occupy it, nor solve the problem. At the end, they will commit suicide.

They are doing so already, but the final act will take place in Lebanon. Unless responsible Syrians re-assess their position, at which point they will find it necessary to withdraw and leave the entire problem for the Lebanese to settle by themselves.

Question: Apart from the difference over Lebanon and the pre-1975 problems, what is the gist of your difference with Syria?

President: This is a very simple matter. With regard to strategy, there never has been any difference over strategy. The two-point strategy adopted in the Rabat Summit Conference providing that not a span of land should be surrendered and no compromise accepted where Palestinian rights are concerned. We do not differ over that.

But we disagree on the need to use force to protect our national interests. The United States, the United Kingdom and France are united in this view. The United States continues to play the role it played in the Vietnam War.

American, British and French statesmen believe that if we want to preserve the world, we have to accept that there is no better solution than the Vietnam Solution.

We believe that the Vietnam Solution is not the solution for the Middle East. Either China joins the Arab League, or we prevent it from joining.

It is necessary to set a limit. If Syria, the Palestinians and Egypt are united in taking practical steps to prevent the partition of Lebanon and preserve the national unity, we think it is possible to reconcile the people of Lebanon and the Arab League to the recommendations of the Rabat Summit Conference.

Question: Apart from the spirit present in the Arab countries uniting in resistance, it is because of the strong pressure of them is that we think it is possible to reconcile Lebanon and the Arab League.
But we disagree over tactics and my conviction that we should keep up the momentum of the entire peace operation, thereupon, it is necessary that we should expose Israel everywhere, especially in the United States where it has always exerted big pressure and continues to do so.

As you see, we have succeeded in exposing Israel as the entire world knows, we have ample scope for manœuvre starting from China in the East to America in the West, with Europe in-between.

We have imparted a new outlook on the Palestinian cause, hitherto unknown in these regions. We utterly refuse to standstill. Either we are in a state of war, 'hot war' as was the case in 1973, or we pursue our diplomatic campaigns to reach our aim.

It is expected that we should meet in Geneva during this year to set the framework for an overall solution, in the presence of Palestinians. But on account of the Lebanese problem and what is taking place there, it has been delayed. But this is not going to prevent us from keeping up the momentum of the peace operation and preserving its driving force, disregarding what the Syrians might think or do. We shall keep up the driving force and the momentum of the peace operation to the end, as peace is vital for all of us, for the reconstruction of our country.

Question: Unfortunately, contrary to the atmosphere and the spirit preceding the successful Ramadan War when the Arab countries united in one powerful front, there are now various groups because of a prevailing misunderstanding in the Arab world. One of them is the 'Rejection Front' which was talked about lately, especially since it was said that Libya offered to give huge financial support in the shape of cheap petroleum and paying the Syrian debts as a counter-move to the Saudi Arabia and Kuwait attempts to reconcile Egypt and Syria. Now, as regards your being one of the
greatest Arab leaders, what is the solution you can present for his regrettable situation?

President: First, I should frankly tell you that this is not strange. In the history of Arabs we are used to what you see now. But believe me, inspite of all you may hear or see, the Arab solidarity established before and during the Ramadan War is safe. Take Libya as an example, before, during and after the Ramadan War. Libya has any thing in the Arab solidarity. We all know that the man over there (El-Kazzafy) is suffering of mental sickness. He wants to fight in Ireland and in the Philippines and recently I think he declared war on Iran. Enough of this man. Let us take Libya as an example. They did not affect Arab solidarity at all, because this was their attitude before, during and after the war. They would never be able to touch Arab solidarity. Well, the man (El-Kazzafy) is just shouting over there; the same thing applies to others. Arab solidarity has become greatly consolidated and established, to the extent that such behaviour or sayings such as is taking place in Libya or elsewhere will never cause any real harm to Arab solidarity. And as I have told you we are used to such situations throughout the history of the Arab world. Believe me, we do not attach too much importance to it. Should necessity call for one Arab stand you will always find more than 99% of them standing together and facing anything. However, in daily life and in the same family, you find brothers completely different from one another. We are human creatures, so we should not attach too much importance to all these differences, because as I told you when the moment comes to adopt the same stand, you will find us always together. But unfortunately, the disputes are the daily bread of the Arab world. This is why I do not worry myself over all that, because I know that and deals. How do you view King Hussein's plans concerning buying Soviet arms?

Question: After Egypt's experience with the Soviet Union aims deals. How do you view King Hussein's plans concerning buying Soviet arms?

President: Of course Ethiopia's experience with the Soviet Union is not easy for him. But it would not surprise us if Hussein were to follow it from Western countries. Hussein is the first Arab to buy arms from Western countries. If he is not enough to convinced you, it is a matter of card. His time is not useful at all. If this has been made clear to the circles to other Arab countries, then it is a victory for the Arab world. Let us see the Soviets. Let us solve this. In the end we shall solve this.

Question: Engagement and disengagement of a nation in the Middle East? Are you going to much longer. I feel that the Middle East is dead except for the possibility...
President: I am sorry to say that King Hussein is trying to play with what we call the American-Russian card. But it is not easy for him to do that. Let us wait and see, because all this would not succeed at all, since all the available weapons with King Hussein are western. It took us more than seven years to change from Western to Soviet weapons; that was when we made the first arms deal in 1955. Should King Hussein start to equip his forces with Soviet weapons, this will take more time. I do not think that he is ready to do this. I even do not think that he will receive enough to change his weapons from Western to Eastern. As I told you, it is a manoeuvre used before it is called the American-Russian card. His timing is both right and wrong because this card is not useful at all, and the end everything will be clear, it has already been made clear. But if he wants to practise pressure on some Arab circles to obtain more aid or more money or something like that, then it is a well-known fact all over the Arab World. I do not think he will succeed. May be I should tell you that no country in the Arab world has gone through an experience similar to ours with the Soviets. Let him begin then, and let us wait and see because in the end we shall laugh together.

Question: Since the signing of the agreement of the second disengagement of forces in Sinai, there has been a long period of stagnation in the efforts towards peace. Such a situation cannot last much longer. What are the new developments you expect? Do you feel that the American elections will bring forth a new method of dealing with the situation? Which candidate do you feel is more efficient, enthusiastic and capable of establishing peace in the Middle East? And when can the Geneva Conference be resumed with the possibility of attaining a final solution?
President: Well, as I told you, we move according to the demands of peace, despite the fact that this year is the year of the American elections. Notice my words... I have always been saying this, and what I said still stands true so far, and till the next year, or thereabouts. The Americans hold more than 99% of the cards of the game. We should never ignore America and its role. That is why, exactly as you said, there has been a state of stagnation. As I told you the Geneva Conference was supposed to be held in the course of 1976, and we were supposed to fight to make the Palestinians take part with us in the Geneva conference. Following that we would start laying down the foundations of an overall solution, because the United States is the main party whether we like it or not.

As I told you, we were supposed to work within the framework of the overall solution till the American elections in November, after that whoever the next president may be, we would have to face the facts and work with him whether he is a republican or a democrat, because this matter is for the Americans to decide. But we will have to work with any president, because as I told you this is the real role of the United States. I do not know if I have answered you.

Question: Do you prefer not to mention the name of the candidate whom you feel is more enthusiastic, efficient and capable of finding a solution for the Middle East problem?

President: Well, I have twice met President Ford. Once in Salzburg last year and another time during my visit to the United States. For sure the man is ready. He reflects the right image of the United States. He is a straightforward trustworthy man who keeps to his word. Even on the personal level, he is attractive you cannot help loving him. He reflects the right image of the United States. I do not know anything about Carter and perhaps many all over the world do not know anything about him. Even concerning his future, he did not declare any definite matter.
Question: What in your view is the thing achieved for Egypt by the Sinai agreement and which could not have been achieved in any other way?

President: Well, it was not the Sinai agreement that gave us what we have achieved. It was the Ramadan War that made that achievement possible. I will tell you something; in February, 1973 my Counsellor for Security Affairs met Kissinger; that was nearly seven months prior to the war. I want you to notice what Kissinger said to my Counsellor, after holding discussions and after my Counsellor expressed our point of view. Dr. Kissinger told him that we were not practical because we had been defeated. The world sees only facts, and it was a fact that we had been defeated. He also told him that what we asked for could not be realised, that the Americans would not be able to do anything or give any help in this respect because we must admit the fact that we had been defeated. Kissinger added that it was not likely that he should advise us to change the position because in that case we might be faced with another defeat.

This happened in February, 1973 and we started the war six or seven months later and Kissinger himself started exerting efforts and he visited me for the first time in November 1973 few weeks after the start of the war and following the ceasefire. He said that we had completely changed the situation. He said «Everything should now take on a new aspect». We have begun. Therefore, what we have achieved is due to what we have done, to what we have accomplished in the Ramadan war. In the first disengagement of forces agreement, they were more eager than I was, because they thought that the infiltration of the western bank would strike us with panic, but this never happened. Later on it turned out to be a trap for them, because they put 400 tanks and thousands of soldiers in such a narrow place. Moreover, they did not at all have any chance for manoeuvring, while around them I had 800 tanks in December in
addition to five battalions in Sinai fully equipped. That is why they were so keen to avoid this trap in the first agreement for the disengagement of forces. In the second disengagement of forces agreement, America exerted a real effort towards realising peace. We should say that they failed in the first stage in March, 1975 but they achieved that in September 1975. This occurred as a result of the changes effected by the Ramadan war.

Question: For some time now Israel has been considered as one of the countries which may possibly own nuclear weapons, and some recently published reports claimed that it actually does. Mr. President, do you think that these reports are true? And if that is so, what are your plans? Should the Arab countries be equipped with atomic weapons? Would not that lead to a state of military freezing in the area? If the matter was so, what are the other alternatives concerning holding negotiations, the petroleum, an economic blockade on Israel or the pressure of the super-powers?

President: Well, I consider this talk of the nuclear power as part of the Israeli psychological war, one they always try to frighten us with. It is not at all easy to frighten us with, and I have said more than once that if Israel introduces atomic weapons in the area, they will have to bear the consequences. I am not going to say what I shall do in such a case but I shall repeat the comment I said when they shelled with bombs a school for children here in Egypt in 1970. I shall say that Israel will not go unpunished. I did punish them three years after that accident. Well, if they are going to introduce atomic weapons in the area, they will bear the consequences because we will not stand with our arms folded.

Question: Many Arabs believe you to be deceived by the Americans — what is your comment? Do you still regard Henry Kissinger as a magician? And would you like to see him in the same post in the coming American government?
President: I ought to say something about my stand as regards Americans, but before doing so, some aspects have to be taken into consideration. First of all, there were no diplomatic relations between us up till 1974, despite the fact that I tried all I could in June 1967, to unveil the facts to them. I introduced my first initiative in 1971 to Mr. Rogers, who was then Secretary of State, and I introduced further initiatives, but my attempts were unsuccessful because the Israelis frightened him. I then stood against them because they lied to me, and all these procedures are being recorded here. I attacked them in 1971, 1972 until 1973 because they did not keep their word, and by that I mean Mr. Rogers.

After the war and after facing America ten days, we were able to reach a ceasefire agreement. I said I was not willing to ruin my country by fighting America, I could keep on fighting Israel for one year or more, but I would not fight America, because it is a matter of destiny of my people, so I accepted the ceasefire agreement. Ever since that victory, we regained confidence in ourselves, since we were not facing Israel alone, but the Americans too, used the most modern weapons, such as the «Mavic» bomb.

This bomb was exclusively produced for America and up till now, not one single country has been supplied with it; it has then been experimented, but the Americans who went to Israel, brought it with them and employed it against me. I now have no more complexes, for we regained confidence in ourselves as fighters.

Now when Henry Kissinger met me here in November, I welcomed the idea of cooperation with America, as I found him to be a gentleman who keeps his word. At the same time I kept on rendering facilities to the Soviets in the Mediterranean Sea, and did not put an end to all this until they began to exert both economic and military pressure upon us. As an example, they refused to allow India to give me the spare parts I needed. This means that they exert...
pressure upon me and impose a boycott around me, but since I am capable of taking decisions, I took the initiative instead of just reacting. They led India to react in this manner though it is a non-aligned country, that is why I had to take the immediate step of abrogating the Friendship Treaty and putting an end to the marine facilities in 1976, not before. I hold good relations with America ever since 1973 but I never gave them marine facilities or conclude any sort of agreement with them.

This is the case, and most certainly if you ask me my opinion, I tell you it is up to the American people to elect their own President and it is entirely the authority of the President to appoint his ministers. But if you wish to know my personal opinion, I would, most certainly, like to see Kissinger remain in his office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as he is a man who lives up to his word.

Question: The African continent is facing today another dangerous crisis, that of Rhodesia and South Africa. What, according to you, should the African nations do to ensure the right steps that ought to be taken to speed up the rule of the majority?

President: We are working together with our friends in Africa by means of a committee, presided over by Egypt, to back up the liberation movements in Rhodesia and South Africa and Joshua N’komo, one of the African leaders, is now staying in Egypt. We shall cooperate with our friends and fellow African brothers to face the consequences of this problem, and however long this task may take, there is this truth — It is impossible to turn back the hands of the clock, for the march has already begun, so whatever time this job will take, these liberation movements will attain their independence, but with a price to be paid; there is always a price to be paid for achieving independence, and they are willing to pay this price, with the aid of all the African friends and fellow brothers.

Question: Now, and after your boycott with the Russians, the
infiltration of the Soviet weapons and influence over the Arab and
African regions and nations adjacent to Egypt has greatly increased,
more than at any other time in the past. Don't you feel that this
growing Soviet presence around you, particularly in the Mediterr-
anean Sea region and Bab El Mandab, which is a region of ex-
treme importance, is likely to create instability in your country
and in the region as a whole?

President: For many reasons, I prefer not to answer that ques-
tion at the moment, and I'd rather keep my reply for the near
future, since I do not wish to escalate the situation between me and
the Russians. Let us hope that they will go back to their senses and
agree to reschedule our debts and grant us the period of grace we
asked for. Let us hope that something might occur before I express
my opinion on this matter.

Question: Egypt, since it is the most influential country on the
African continent, has had a prominent role in African affairs as
a whole and has paid particular attention to the liberation move-
ments. Now with the difficulties Egypt is facing today, can she still
take the same energetic role in Africa as before? Would you think
the situation of Angola could have been otherwise if the African
nations followed a more active role? It would have been liberated
from the influence of any country.

President: Egypt has always been the eldest sister in Africa
and is still playing that role, for all; the African liberation move-
ments seek shelter in Cairo which was, and will always be, a refuge
for all liberation movements. We are perfectly in good terms with
our friends the leaders of the African countries. I ought to seize this
opportunity to tell you, how my friends, the Africans marvelously
backed up the Arab cause before, during and after the October war,
for which I am deeply obliged.
Egypt will always remain, for many reasons, a refuge for any liberation movement and for all the national hopes in all parts of Africa. As for Angola, unluckily it was an issue of dispute between the two superpowers; we did all we could to help our African friends, and we all agreed not to give foreign powers the chance to practise their pressure upon the continent or be present there. But it was an absolute war or struggle between the two superpowers; the Soviets have succeeded in sending Cubans there with big amounts of ammunition, and when most of the countries participating in the African Unity Organisation recognized Angola as an independent country, we all did the same. We hope that Angola will adopt a policy of its own after obtaining independence. This is all I can say regarding this problem; but it is a lesson that taught us not to give any of the two super-powers any opportunity to attempt manoeuvres.

**Question**: Your Excellency, Mr. President, I am much obliged for the great honour you bestowed upon my colleagues and myself, and for the ample time you gave me despite your numerous pre-occupations. That was a great honour to us. As I told you in our previous meeting, it was a great honour for me to see you, and I would like you to consider me as one of your loyal soldiers whose weapon is the pen.

The Iranian people hold you in great admiration, and we are very much looking forward to greet you, particularly since we have had this pleasure before, when you came to Iran, accompanied by Mrs. Gihan El Sadat and your children — this is a great honour and one which we are eagerly looking forward to.

**President**: I thank you so much and I shall always, whenever granted this opportunity, express my gratitude to my brother, the Emperor, for what he did personally and on behalf of the Iranian people, for his brothers in Egypt. We shall never forget those times.