

## **I N T E R V I E W**

given by

**PRESIDENT MOHAMED ANWAR EL SADAT**

to the British TV. Correspondent in Muscat

February 26, 1976

In answer to a question on the economic difficulties facing Egypt at present, President Sadat replied :

«This is a fact I cannot deny. To overcome these difficulties we need to work for peace. This was my plan since the October War. I reached an agreement over Sinai, and am prepared to promote peace. We must build up our country, and to achieve that we need peace».

In reply to a comment that his efforts for peace had subjected him to criticism and the accusation that «Egypt had deserted the battle», the President replied :

«We are used to such talk. The differences between us are only tactical, but the strategy remains the same. The latest strategy we set at the Rabat Summit Conference was : We shall not cede a span of the occupied Arab territories and shall not compromise over the rights of the Palestinian people».

Commenting on the statements of the Israeli Foreign Minister, wherein he asked for the termination of the state of war, the President said :

«We want to reach the state of non-aggression, but we do not want the Israelis to impose their conditions upon us».

In answer to a question on whether he was in agreement with the Palestinians he replied :

«Let us go to Geneva, with the Palestinians participating since we cannot reach any peace without them. We cannot reach peace unless, we, Arabs, are agreed. There, in Geneva, the Palestinians can have their say. If after 27 years we can reach a state of 'non-aggression', we will have accomplished something. But all the Arab parties will have to sit together and agree .. But you can altogether discard the idea that any of us is prepared to reach peace, unilaterally».

In answer to a question on the purpose of his trip to the Gulf States, and whether it was with the intention of persuading its rulers to approve of his policy, the President replied :

«I am not taking this trip to prevail on anyone to adopt my line. They all know my strategy. I did not come here to sell my ideas. I have been wanting to come here, for quite some time. This is the first time I visit Oman, and I shall discuss with my brother Sultan Kabbous the Arab situation and the variables surrounding us, as well as the future of this region».

In answer to a question on the relations between Oman and South Yemen, the President said :

«I am exerting my utmost and so are some Arab brothers, and we hope to accomplish something concerning this problem, in the near future».

Commenting on the possibility of new American efforts being exerted for a new disengagement on the Golan, the President replied :

«As you know, it was repeated following the Sinai agreement, that the latter contained a secret article. I wish to say that this secret article was a commitment by America to effect a second disengagement in the Golan».

The President was asked concerning the form of economic aid he sought from the countries of the region. He replied :

«I want long-term loans because we have been harassed by the short-term loans on which we pay interests reaching 20%. I shall also ask them for joint projects».

Replying to a question on the nature of these joint projects he said:

«I shall leave that to the experts. We have nothing to hide. The experts will talk in detail concerning these projects».

In reply to a question on the nature of the relations between Egypt and America the President replied :

«Most of the western commentators were pessimistic when President Nixon visited us in 1974. But I was optimistic. We accomplished in 1975 what we would have accomplished in 1974, had not President Nixon resigned for I believe that the U.S. holds 99% of the cards of the game. I am persuaded that Arab politicians who believe differently are wrong. It is the United States that supplied Israel from its very bread and butter to the Phantom. I believe that America has a big part to play and a tremendous commitment towards the solution of this problem. I was right in my optimism, and let us hope that America will continue to promote the wheel of peace.

To the last question which was as to whether the President's optimism went to the extent of expecting peace, the President replied :

«The step by step policy is no more. We are heading towards the comprehensive and final solution».