

M E S S A G E

from

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

to the Palestine Seminar convened in Brussels

May 13, 1976

President Mohamed Anwar El Sadat, in a message to the Palestine Seminar convened in Brussels, asserted the rights of the Palestinian people to repatriation, recovery of their usurped property and their right to self-determination. The President called on all civilised societies to support these rights on the basis that world peace relies on settlement of the Middle East problem, the key to which is an equitable solution to the problem.

The President went on to say that the most tangible result of the October War was the fact that the Palestinian entity and personality had found expression, and had begun to take shape before the eyes of the world. There has been greater recognition, by the world community, for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, considering that it is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Then the Palestinian cause won a signal political victory in November 1974, when Yasser Arafat spoke from the U.N. rostrum, addressing world public opinion, and revealing to the world the delusive campaign to which the Palestinian people had been subjected, by means of Zionist' propaganda organs.

The President said that Egypt would never let an opportunity

slip without using it to the advantage of the Palestinian entity. Egypt took upon itself to support the Palestine entity. Egypt believes that an equitable solution to the Palestinian problem constitutes an indispensable condition for the lasting settlement of the Middle East question, as a whole.

The President said that there can be no peace in the area without a peaceful solution to the Palestine question. It is not acceptable that the Palestinian people should remain scattered and homeless. They should have their entity and establish their independent state, so that they may contribute to the progress of the international community.

Egypt assumed the responsibility of protecting this people, against the incessant aggression they are subjected to by Israel. When Israel launched an aggression on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, on December 2, 1975, Egypt immediately called for a Security Council meeting for consideration of this aggression, whilst insisting that the Palestinian Liberation Organisation should attend the debate, in its capacity as representative of the Palestinian people.

The Security Council responded to Egypt's proposal and adopted Resolution No. 383, calling the organisation to take part in the debate, on par with the delegations of the parties concerned. This means the right of the organisation to take part in all the stages of the debate and not merely delivering a statement, a matter which is in itself quite an accomplishment and a new gain for the Palestinian struggle, and its attempt to carry its voice to the conscience of the world.

Ever since the idea of the Geneva Conference for Peace in the Middle East was crystallized, the non-Arab parties have been attempting to prevent the participation of the P.L.O. in it. But Egypt

insisted that the organisation should have a presence and a representation in the conference.

A passing glance at the achievements of the Palestinian people is sufficient to provoke optimism. The P.L.O. is now presented in nearly all of the general international gatherings, such as the Non-Alignment Group. Likewise, the number of capitals where offices of the organisation have been established, are increasing. This is expressive of the faith of the host nations in the justice of the Palestinian cause, and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Even in the United States, there are evidences indicating that the American attitude towards the Organisation and its part in the settlement of the problem is about to change, even though the change is progressing at a slow pace, in the face of an opposition that still has a strong influence in the American society.

The President further said that Egypt supported the cause of the Palestinian people from the very outset, and lived their disaster, ever since it had occurred, since it believes in the common fate of the Arab nation and the unity of struggle against the imperialist and Zionist forces.

In his message, the President called for over-all discussion of the Middle East question in all its branches, before the Geneva Peace Conference and in the presence of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, on par with the rest of the parties concerned.

The President spoke of the development of the Palestine question since 1917, when the Palestinians constituted 96% of the population, and possessed 98% of the land. This was the case until the Partition Resolution, as in 1948 the Israeli forces occupied 72% of Palestinian territories, for which purpose they drove the original inhabitants of the country from their homes and left them without shelter. In fact they destroyed entire villages, houses and popu-

lations. There are many instances of Israeli atrocities committed at the time, but the worst of all and the most inhuman was that of Deir Yasseen.

The President said,

« The United Nations, since its Twenty-Ninth Session, began to limit and define the unalienable rights of the Palestinian people. On November 22, 1974 it adopted resolution 323 which should be considered as the cornerstone in seeking an equitable solution to the Palestinian problem. By provision of this resolution, the General Assembly defined the rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination, without foreign intervention; the right of Palestinians to independence and national sovereignty and their right to repatriation and the restoration of their property which was forcibly taken from them. In the same resolution, the General Assembly provided that the Palestinian people should constitute a principal party in establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

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