

SADAT SPEECH

HON. JONATHAN B. BINGHAM

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 23, 1975

Mr. BINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I strongly object to the decision by the

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House and Senate leadership to invite Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to address a joint session of the Congress on November 5, 1975. This rarely extended privilege is an inappropriate action for the United States at this time. It is said to have had its origins in a specific request from President Sadat to address the Congress, a request which was endorsed by the administration. Sadat is understandably eager to advance his view of recent events in the Middle East and make a case for large new amounts of American aid to his country. Confronted with what amounted to a fait accompli, the leadership in both House and Senate decided to demonstrate U.S. good will and evenhandedness by agreeing to the appearance, and by arranging a similar appearance by the Prime Minister of Israel in the near future.

While heads of state are occasionally invited to address a joint session, I cannot agree that President Sadat deserves such an invitation at this juncture. His reputation as a peacemaker is of very recent vintage and it is impossible to know yet if it will mature into real and long-lasting peace.

He has taken a few risky steps toward establishing a less belligerent relationship with the nation of Israel and people around the world hold deep hopes that more steps will follow. But Egypt's moves toward peace in the Middle East have only just begun and pale in comparison with 28 years of off-and-on war with the objective of destroying the state of Israel.

It is important to note that during that same 28 years no invitation of this kind was extended to the Government of Israel. Why is it that this valiant democracy only offered this opportunity in the wake of an announcement that the leader of the principal Arab confrontation state will appear before the Congress on November 5?