President Sadat Answers the Questions
Of The Central Committee Members

Akhbar published the full text of the answers given by President Sadat to the questions put to him by the Central Committee members.

Following is a summary:

Q: Our military front is now in a state of full preparedness to confront any move by the enemy. Has it become capable of fighting the liberation battle?

A: The state of full preparedness is maintained round-the-clock by our military forces because it is highly probable that Israel launch a preventive war. She may wage a preventive war before we start. However no army is 100% ready when it engages in a battle. This has never happened throughout history. We are completing our preparations through the Soviet Union. However this does not mean that we are not ready. No. We are ready to confront any move by Israel. Meanwhile we are preparing ourselves for the battle so that we may be the first to start. As to the timing, this will be fixed politically, because as I said we have no alternative to the battle.

Q: Can we purchase offensive weapons especially aircraft from countries other than the Soviet Union?

A: Aircraft and arms of this kind are not a commercial commodity. The purchase of such arms is a political issue. In other words when I
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want to buy a fighter-bomber from any country, the factory has first to get the permission of his foreign ministry before concluding the deal. I told you before, that even if I have enough hard currency to purchase what I want from the West, I would not even get one single rifle, because of the political stand the West adopts towards us.

Q:

To what extent is the Soviet Union committed to the supply of Egypt with the necessary and suitable arms to counter balance the supply of Israel with American phantom and skyhawk planes. Rumours cast doubts on the success of President Sadat's visit to Moscow. For instance it was rumoured that the Soviet Union attached certain conditions including the setting up of naval bases in Egypt, and that it did not supply Egypt with MIG 23 planes.

A:

The Soviet Union as I told you supplies us with arms. But what happens is that it tells us that it will give us this and then waits a little before it gives us the second kind. After the passage of a month I make a second request asking it to furnish the second kind. In this way there is some sort of give and take. It did not ask for bases.

There are rumours designed to cast doubts, not only on the success of my visit, but also on everything. According to the principles of the July 23 revolution, we would not give bases to any one. I gave the Soviet Union facilities in the Mediterranean sea because of its support to us during the hard times we went through in 1967. I declared this to the Peoples Assembly, the whole world and I wrote to Nixon.
In 1968 President Johnson sent the former Secretary of Finance to President Nasser requesting the resumption of relations. At first he resorted to threats and then he tried to lure us with economic aid, but to no avail. President Nasser said to Johnson's envoy: How can I justify to my people the resumption of relations with you, at the time you supply Israel with everything. The third time Johnson sent us his envoy to tell us that Communism and Russia were a threat to us. To this Nasser asked the American envoy to tell President Johnson that he only gave the Soviet Union facilities in the Mediterranean sea but did not give it any bases. As to the question that the Soviet Union did not supply us with MiG 23, I would not go into details. Dealings between us and the Soviet Union are considered dealings between friends. There is shortage in some of things which the Soviet Union did not furnish. But this does not mean that the Soviet Union is following a certain line or policy and it attaches certain conditions to its aid. If this was the case, it would have been a violation of our friendship. There is nothing more than friendship between us and the Soviet Union. The USSR says it will give us this kind today and to this I say thank you. The next week it gives me the second kind I wanted, and so on. Therefore there is no need for this campaign of doubts, and the talks about bases and what it gives and what it does not give. This is all nonsense.

Q: Did the Soviet Union supply us with the sophisticated arms which Gen. Sadeq referred to so that we may be able to strike at the hinterland of Israel. And did Sadat's visit have positive results?
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A: Again this is a part of the campaign of doubts. I would never say what is happening between us and the USSR. The Soviet Union gives us. But I would not give details of what it furnishes. We almost speak together all the 24 hours. But we shall say nothing. I can say we everything, but I take the country's interest into account and have to control our nerves. As a matter of principle if anything wrong happens between us and the Soviet Union, you will know and I will tell the whole people. The Soviet Union is aware of this. Otherwise, everything is proceeding naturally.

Q: Did the Soviet Union refuse to supply Egypt with aircraft factories, and Libya purchased some of these factories during Jallud's visit to Moscow and gave them to Egypt?

A: I have one answer to this question. We decided at the Federal Presidential Council to manufacture everything inside the Confederation using our own potentialities. Agreements were concluded between Libya and the Soviet Union. There are also agreements with some elements from Western Europe. I would not say more. In other words we must manufacture everything we need in our country.

Q: With regard to the President's statement that we shall enter the stage of manufacturing modern arms, the people wonder if the battle could wait until we start the industrialization.

A: I did not say this. I said last May that we will make of the defeat of 1967 a starting point to erect a new building. But the construction
process will go hand in hand with the liberation battle.

Q: What are the results of the recent treaties and agreements which were recently concluded with the Soviet Union in the military and economic fields?

A: I would not speak about the military field. As to the economic field, we signed a 5-year agreement to build a developed industry including the Iron and Steel Complex which is the foundation stone of all these industries. We formed a committee for atomic affairs comprising representatives for Egypt and Libya. The Soviet Union agreed to build the first nuclear power station in the Middle East to link the two power networks in Egypt and Libya. This will help us analyse sea water and enter the age of the atom and heavy water.

Q: Don't you think that depending on the Soviet Union alone, is considered some sort of alignment and this is considered a departure from the policy of non-alignment which we are considered its pioneers?

A: This is again in line with the campaign of doubts. How could this be alignment. Nobody wants to stand on my side politically, militarily and economically except the Soviet Union. How could we abolish our relations with the Soviet Union for the sake of non-alignment and leave the Americans and Dayan occupy our country in the name of non-alignment. Did America offer anything and I said no. Why was this stuff heard only after October when I uncovered the Americans to the whole world. We are ready to accept any aid from East or West. But nobody stands on our side except the Soviet Union.
Q: Would the promotion of relations between us and China affect our relations with the Soviet Union? Does this mean that we are searching for another friend after the fog enveloped our relations with the Soviet Union? Could the rapprochement between the US and China give the latter leverage to put pressure on the US to solve the Middle East problem?

A: There is a contradiction in these questions. We say we are free to contact every one. China is now one of the big powers and she has the right of veto at the Security Council. How can I ignore it? If we did not do this they would say that the Soviet Union had tied our hands. We don't establish friendly relations with anyone at the expense of the other. China's stand was very clear and frank and it fully supports us. Riyad's visit was excellent and the results were excellent.

Q: The people wonder if France is supplying Israel with spare parts for its aircraft through Belgium?

A: This casts doubts on France's stand. France is the only country in Western Europe which stands on our side. May be this is happening behind the back of the French Government as the French boats were spirited out of France. However Belgium manufactures the Mirage. We too get things from France, Britain, the West and every place inspite of the embargo. The official stand of the French Government is on our side.
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Q: The people are afraid of this state of stagnancy where the Arab cause is concerned and are afraid that what happened to the territory occupied in 1948 happens to the territories which were occupied in 1967. Israel's behaviour confirms this.

A: This too falls within the framework of the campaign of doubts. In 1956 we remember that after the tripartite aggression, Golda Meir, the then Foreign Minister in the Ben Gurion Cabinet declared in an official statement at the Knesset the annexation of Sinai to Israel. I said this to President Ceausescu during his visit to Egypt. I asked him to go and ask Mrs. Meir if it was true that she announced the annexation of Sinai to Israel in 1956. I told him that Israel has a sharp appetite. The Rumanian President did not believe me and said that the Israelis do not want territory. As to the question about the state of stalemate, I would like to say that there is no stalemate. This would have been true if we continued to pursue a peaceful solution and maintained our contacts with the U.S. But we are getting ready for the battle. Therefore we should not care for what is said. Israel has even declared the annexation of Sinai and gave Sharm al Shaikh an Israeli name. But this is nonsense. When we start the battle, all this nonsense will vanish into thin air.

Q: Is time on our side or on Israel's side, especially after King Hussain announced his plan and plots are expected to continue in the future?
A: This depends on us. If we want to fight then there is nothing called time, and time would be of no value. We shall engage in the battle at zero hour.

Q: People wonder if the passage of long years would not affect the soldiers' morale. More than 5 years have passed with the armed forces along the battle frontline, and this could have adverse results when the battle starts.

A: No this is wrong. Our sons are burning with desire and want to plunge into battle. As time passes, they get more angry, but this could not weaken their morale.

Q: There are attempts at dividing the internal front. Attempts are also made to impair the relations between the internal front and the armed forces by circulating rumours about the seriousness of the war preparations made by the home front.

A: This is true and the information media and all authorities concerned should refute this campaign of doubts.

Q: What is the stand of the Eastern front in case fighting flares up?

A: The Eastern front is Jordan. But King Hussain has finished off the resistance. Iraq withdrew her forces from the Eastern front. King Hussain too withdrew his forces, and is now carrying out an American scheme, which carries his name. This plan aims at destroying the Palestinian cause root and branch.
Q: Reform has become necessary after embezzlements and bribes increased in the Public Sector, and the black market flourished.

A; I want to call your attention to this campaign of doubts which aims at exaggerating the embezzlements and bribes at the Public Sector. But had it not been for the Public Sector, we could not have maintained our economic steadfastness. How could we supply the soldiers with food and arms without the Public Sector. Russia does not send us a cheque as America sends Israel. It is true there are many mistakes, but things are put in their right perspective. There is no country in the whole world either in the East or West without deviators.

Q: The people wonder about the wisdom of the austerity drive at the time the state is expanding in giving allowances to senior officials which are at the same time free from taxes?

A: I would like to give you a small example in answer to this question. The Egyptian who was getting 100 pounds a month before the oil refinery was hit, was paid 1000 sterling by Algeria. Jordan which takes its budget from America pays higher salaries to the members of the Chamber of Deputies. The Syrian member of the Peoples Assembly gets three or four times the salary of the Egyptian. The salaries of the Federal National Assembly members are puzzling because there will be a horrible gap between their salaries and the salaries of the Egyptian Peoples Assembly members.
Q: The present stage calls upon us to commit ourselves to one ideology emanating from the political command. But the people wonder about the clear contradiction between Haikal's articles and the reasons why these articles are broadcast every week on Cairo radio, without broadcasting the other articles which are considered a direct answer to what Haikal says.

A: It is not true that Haikal's articles are the only ones which are broadcast. The articles written by Ihsan Abdul Quddus, Musa Sabri and Abdul Rahman al Sharqawi are broadcast too. With regard to the general picture we are entering a new stage in which the people must get accustomed to voicing their opinion, without departing from the line taken by the political command. The battle means the battle. I received a question from Matruh and I gave it to Haikal and asked him to read it to avoid any confusion when he writes again on the battle.