PRESS CONFERENCE

held by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

before leaving Chicago for Houston

October 31, 1975

At the Press Conference held by President Anwar El-Sadat before leaving Chicago for Houston the President affirmed that the Middle East can never reach peace without the Palestinians for they are the core of the problem. That is why I demanded that the Palestine Liberation Organization attend the Geneva Conference.

The President added that he supports what Yasser Arafat requested in the United Nations that Palestine becomes a secular state in which Moslems, Christians and Jews can co-exist.

The President said that the disengagement on the Sinai front and that on the Golan front are but steps towards an overall solution of the Palestinian problem. After these agreements have been reached we have to look for an overall solution through the reconvening of the Geneva conference.

In answer to a question concerning manufacturing arms instead of purchasing them, the President said: «The sale of arms had always been used by the big countries as an instrument for exercising pressure on small countries. We have set up a body together with some of our Arab brothers for the manufacture of arms but this will take some time. We cannot all
of a sudden manufacture all kinds of weapons if we take into consideration the continual development in modern technology.

The President continued: Together with the Armed Forces, I have adopted a decision to diversify the sources of weapons. We have actually initiated this process and during the last October 6 military parade, new weapons appeared together with the weapons we already had from the Soviet Union.

Asked if he agrees to the limitation of arms sales to the Middle East countries, he said «I agree, but on one condition, namely that Israel should withdraw to its borders, and I myself will work to realise this withdrawal».

Asked about the Jews' boycotting of the reception given in his honour, the President answered: this will not affect nor hinder my efforts to reach the best understanding possible between our two peoples for the welfare of peace in our area and the entire world.

In answer to a question about Zionism, the President said: «how can we be anti-Semitic as we are accused of being when we ourselves are Semites, it is illogical. We were always living in peace with the Jews and up to date there are still Jews in Egypt who remained with us and refused to quit our country.

He added: «I condemn Zionism, for since it came to our area, it has brought terrorism. I think you all remember the assassination of Count Bernadotte and Lord Moyne, and even in 1975, the Israelis demanded the corpses of the terrorists who had killed Moyne and took them back to Israel where they were buried with the honour due to heroes.

We are not against Jews or the Jewish faith but we are against Zionism and its expansionist aims. Concerning Lebanon, the President said that if the situation in Lebanon should arise, we will stand against it».

Asked if Egypt, who is a Jew, have our traditions, he said: «As for the Mayor who is a Jew, he has our traditions.»

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The President said that Egypt has its traditions, «we are about to become hostages» he said, «I know that you may say, for I know that you may say, for I know that you may say, I don't think so». He added: «I don't think so.»

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The President of the Arab Club, it was di
President said that if Israel attempted to take advantage of the situation in Lebanon to launch an attack, the whole Arab world will stand against it. This was the decision adopted by the Arab Foreign Ministers at their last meeting held in Cairo.

Asked if Egypt was prepared to receive the New-York Mayor who is a Jew, the President replied: «We are Arabs and have our traditions. Anyone who comes to visit us is welcomed. As for the Mayor of New-York the President said that he refused to meet him because he (the President) was not received by him as he should have been.

«This didn’t worry nor embarrass me, and has not affected my visit to the US.».

Asked to comment on what was attributed to Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, the President said: «I have no comment to make on what Heikal says.»

Regarding the Palestine question the President also said: Egypt has its traditional responsibilities in the area. Egypt is about to become half the Arab world, and whatever others may say, for I know that the Palestinians criticise me, this will not divert me from shoudering my responsibility before my people and before the Arab world at large, nor will it deter me from acknowledging truth and reality.

Asked about the effect of his visit to the US on the Arab countries, he said: there is no contradiction at all between establishing better relations between Egypt and the US and establishing better relations between us and our Arab brothers.

The President added: As I said before at the Economic Club, it was disastrous in the past to form traditional friendships with one side and traditional enmities with another.
Once more, the question about whether President Anwar El Sadat had asked for specific weapons from the American President Ford was raised. The President said: «As I have previously explained, a campaign had been launched before my arrival to the US, whose gist was that President Sadat is basically visiting the US for the purpose of obtaining arms.

The President added: «This campaign was far from being correct. As I said at the Economic Club I didn't come to the US to obtain arms but simply to consolidate relations between our two countries and to promote our mutual understanding.

The President continued that during his talks with President Ford, the subject of weapons was discussed in general and that the discussions did not deal with specifics as regards this subject. «And as I said before I didn't come to the US with a shopping list.

One of the Arab pressmen asked President Sadat if he was able by one way or another to convince President Ford not to supply Israel with Pershing missiles. President Sadat replied that before his arrival to the US and when this issue had been raised, he had sent a message to President Ford concerning this matter. When he arrived at the US and began his talks with American President, President Sadat informed him that he (Sadat) is against the US supply of Pershings to Israel, on account that this will escalate the arms race in the area.

Concerning the distribution of the American foreign aid of which a large part was designated for Israel, and a lesser part for Egypt, the President said he is grateful to President Ford and to the American people for any American aid to Egypt.
President Anwar Sadat is a hero to the American public. As I have said before my country and I regard this visit as a basis for future relations.

I came from being asked to come to the US to improve relations between my country and the US with a 

President, a general and the US President. But he regards this visit as an opportunity to improve relations between my country and the US with a view to achieving peace in the Middle East.

The President was asked if he was not to meet Ford not to raise the issue of arms. He replied that he would not raise arms in this matter. However, my relations with America are strong because we believe that this means that this visit is an opportunity to improve relations between my country and the US with a view to achieving peace in the Middle East.

The President said: "Regardless of economic aid or arms, my country aims at the establishment of sound relations with the US."

If my visit to the US results merely in the re-instatement of our relations in their true context I will have achieved everything.

The President affirmed that he dedicates all his efforts to provide essentials especially food supplies to his people.