

PRESS CONFERENCE

held by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

Teheran, June 19, 1976

Question : What kind of military cooperation do you expect with Iran ?

President : There are many fields for cooperation and the exchange of know-how. An Irani military delegation visited Sinai and they saw for themselves what our forces had achieved. Then, I came here, and our Minister of War also came, and we watched military manoeuvres. We shall exchange delegations in the future with a view to fulfilling further cooperation between our two countries.

Question : Do you intend, Mr. President, to resume the Cape Town-Cairo railway ?

President : We are boycotting South Africa's apartheid policy; if the situation changes, we shall be ready to do this.

Question : Mr. President, you will be visiting several Arab countries after your visit to Iran; what are the objectives and reasons behind this visit ?

President : I shall be going to Saudi Arabia, Qattar and Abu-Dhabi. . I believe it is only natural and necessary to carry on consultations with my colleagues in Saudi Arabia due to the approaching meeting of the Prime Ministers of the four countries on June 23. . Moreover, there are some other questions I have to discuss

concerning the Arab Consolidation Fund in which the Union of Arab Emirates and Qattar are participating. I will, of course, have a great deal to say to my brothers in the State of the Arab Emirates and Qattar concerning the Gulf, particularly after my visit to Iran.

Question : What is your attitude regarding the intervention of foreign troops in the African continent ?

President : I have always denounced any foreign intervention in Africa, from the very beginning. The continent cannot become a centre for the conflict of the big powers. We, the Heads of all African states, are of the same opinion about this. I had, lately, heard that all the foreign troops in Angola will be withdrawn. We shall do our utmost, in the future, not to allow any foreign intervention whatsoever in the African continent. We shall always support liberation, and we have a committee for the liberation of Africa.

In realisation of this objective, our slogan is that the big powers should take their hands off Africa.

Question : You had previously stated, Mr. President, that King Hussein is playing the Soviet-American card ?

President : Today King Hussein is in Moscow, and he is playing the Russian-American card. . Nevertheless, he cannot add anything new to my relations with the Soviet Union. . Our relations with the Soviet Union are still strained, and our disagreement is concentrated on two points : the replacement of our weapons, and re-scheduling of our debts. . In both cases no progress has been achieved. Following the arrival of the Egyptian Ambassador in Moscow, I gave him my instructions to begin activating matters. In September we shall receive a Soviet delegation regarding the re-scheduling of our debts.

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Question : Has Israel obtained nuclear weapons ?

President : We must face this reality. . . Prior to the ceasefire America supplied Israel with all the weapons it lost, and the Soviet Union replaced all the weapons Syria lost. For three years now they have been receiving the most up-to-date and sophisticated weapons. We have recently been hearing threat of nuclear weapons in the area. . . Such a threat will not intimidate us and we shall not be the first to obtain nuclear bombs. Should Israel do this, it has to bear the consequences.

Question : Do you expect, Mr. President, a new withdrawal from Sinai on the part of Israel ?

President : After the second disengagement agreement, we agreed that it is the end of the step by step policy, provided that we should go to Geneva in 1977, after the American elections, in order to reach an overall peaceful settlement.

Question : Is the idea of holding an Islamic Conference to discuss the problem of Lebanon, still standing ?

President : I discussed this point with the Shah, and there is a pressing necessity that bloodshed should be stopped. . . Following the tragedy of the assassination of the American Ambassador, we agreed on the necessity to support any measures taken in any meeting held with a view to preventing bloodshed.

Question : Have you, Mr. President, received any answers to your messages to both Presidents d'Estaing and Ford ?

President : My primary objective was to stop the deteriorating situation in Lebanon. When President d'Estaing contacted me, and I talked with the Shah and reached profound understanding, I sent these messages to the United States and France. I am not in a position to say any thing more on this subject.

Question : Would you dispatch Egyptian troops to Lebanon ?

President : From the beginning I expressed my opinion that we do not want to dispatch Egyptian troops to Lebanon, and I would rather not join this Force. However, if necessity calls, and there is a need for such a Force, we are ready to join it.

Question : Do you expect, Mr. President, a coup d'état in Syria as a result of the Syrian intervention in Lebanon ?

President : The Syrian intervention in Lebanon is really a regretful and deplorable matter, particularly as I said, since even if they occupy all of Lebanon, they shall drown there. We are pursuing a policy of watchfulness and waiting. . . We shall meet in Riyadh on June 23, and the major question on our agenda will be the Lebanese crisis.

Question : Do you expect an intervention by Israel in Lebanon ?

President : Merely a possibility. . . We sent to America warning that Israel should not exploit the situation in Lebanon. So far, nothing, has happened.

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