

S P E E C H

by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

in Ghardaka

June 5, 1976

As I said today, when I met our workers and sons in a cherished and liberated part of dear Sinai, this occasion is one of the happiest days of my life. I remember the last time I visited you here and talked to you in this very hall ; it was before the battle... days which were fraught with pain, bitterness and disruption. I admit that during the past six years I had never felt joy or happiness except amidst my sons, members of the Armed Forces, because we were all tirelessly working for the one major objective, namely, the battle. I also remember that I had talked to you in this particular hall, about the inevitability of the battle, and the whole situation with all its military, political and economic aspects, and our relations with the big powers. Then, I went to the operation room in order to check on the decision of the Commander of the Red Sea zone. We had talked for long and discussed it in detail... Today, as I come to you on the 5th of June, I can say very frankly that, before 1973, the mere coming of the month of June used to arouse feelings of pain, rupture and grief in our hearts. Nevertheless, with the beginning of 1973, and on June the 5th in particular, I went to meet members of the Armed Forces and the Second and Third Armies. On that day, June 5, 1973, I visited the positions established by our Armed Forces after the late Field Marshal Ahmed Ismail had assu-

med command. We discussed all the details of the plan. On that day, too, I crossed to Sinai from Port Said, and went 15 km inside Sinai, and then returned to Cairo very satisfied and content because I inspected with all the commanders our positions along a confrontation line ranging between 160 and 170 kms. I was really satisfied and determined to wage a battle. Then came the October War, and there was this magnificent saga and splendid symphony all along the Suez Canal over a frontline of 130 kms. As you were firmly and courageously fighting all along the frontline, your people were standing behind you as one man and one hand. I shall never forget this heroic stand of our people. I shall never forget the sacrifices made by our Armed Forces with limitless generosity, sincerity and loyalty, and the magnificent performance which was beyond description. Such a performance enhanced the effectiveness of the weapons in your hands and rendered them more effective than it could be imagined. Meantime, I shall never forget the stand of your people here, where petroleum, the backbone of the battle, of peace and of war, is found. Today, I was just telling the workers in the Abu Rudeis oilfields in the liberated Sinai land, how I summoned the Minister of Petroleum and discussed with him the smallest details and minutest points of the plan. This plan was thoroughly studied, even to extinguishing the petroleum flame in the Morgan oilfields. I asked him not to extinguish the flame except half an hour before the outbreak of the war, so that the enemy may not feel or suspect anything. I did not inform him of the fixed date for the battle except two days before. Thus, the plan was laid down, and then came a moment when it was apparent that the implementation of such a plan might expose some of our workers to danger. I requested that the plan to be put into effect in such a way as not to expose one single worker to danger. The Minister kept his promise, and not one single worker was harmed while implementing the plan in the sea. Perhaps you have heard what the Minister of

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Petroleum said about the deficit we were suffering at the time ; and now, in 1976, we dispose of a surplus which has increased our budget, and helped change the annual rate of development. In addition to the revenue from the Suez Canal, a new and direct revenue was thus obtained further adding to the people's prosperity. I declare this today in acknowledgement of what our workers, our people and our Armed Forces behind them have done and gone through to achieve this end.

I say this now because, since 1967 and until 1973, as soon as May ended and June began, we all started to feel pain and bitterness in our hearts.

On June 5, 1974, and after the first disengagement agreement, I have inspecting the forces of the Second and Third Armies directly behind the frontline. We came out of the battle with more than 85% of our weapons intact. The enemy had planned to make us lose all our weapons and equipments, and the battle as a whole... However, we came out victorious. For this reason I was inspecting the army directly behind the frontline... As a matter of fact, we consider June 5 a turning point in our life. We were accustomed to look upon it as a day of grief and pains. It was a black mark in our history. Now, we are celebrating it as one of our most magnificent feasts. Instead of being a black point, we made of it a white page reminding the world that throughout the years the effects of the October battle will, year after year, help restore the dignity, prestige, pride and inalienable rights of our people and the entire Arab nation.

I have come to you today, June 5, 1976 ; we have forgotten the bitterness and disruption, and gained the respect of the whole world, even the appreciation of the enemy before the friend, for the military performance you carried out. I come to you on that particular day in order to visit a cherished and liberated area of Sinai where

our workers are performing their duty in the battle of reconstruction which followed the battle of liberation.

Now that we have listened to the report of the Minister of Petroleum, we know that Egypt will become a petroleum exporting country this year, and that we actually have a surplus even now. Today, I declare that in 1980 Egypt will produce one million barrels daily. These are the figures that do not err, mislead or lie. The capacities of this people were given full scope after your battle. Today, I come to you after we have concluded the second disengagement agreement whereby we restored the passes... Today I was flying over our Gulf and over our beloved Sinai.

I pledged to God, as we ourselves had pledged, to finish the mission we have begun. As I explained to you, the sequence was that in 1973 there was the battle, in June 1974 I inspected the Second and Third Armies, on June 5, 1975 we reopened the Suez Canal, and on June 5, 1976 we are celebrating the production of petroleum and the reconstruction operations. When I meet you on June 5, 1977, we shall be on our way to complete the liberation battle after finishing the reconstruction one.

I thank God for all the achievements we have fulfilled. I thank God for all the help He extended to us. Today, the path has become very clear before us, whether in the military performance of our tasks, or in our performance in the reconstruction battle.

The people have suffered a great deal, but they were never shaken. The path is now very clear, and we only have to forge ahead, confront and overcome all the economic obstacles that might impede our march, but which will diminish if we regain our self-confidence. All difficulties become easy to handle when we feel security and assurance ; when every individual feels secure for his day and his morrow... When we realise how much the world respects

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and appreciates Egypt, its people, and Armed Forces, the dignity and word of Egypt, all difficulties will be vanquished and we shall be able, God willing, to complete building up our society and further advance on our path. We shall declare to the whole world, day after day, that Egypt, with its 7000 years of history and civilisation, and its people, have its standing and pride. We shall build up our society on love, fraternity, loyalty and all the values which God has allowed to prevail in this honourable and strong land throughout the years.

I pray God to grant you success in all the responsibilities you shoulder... The difficult part of our responsibilities has passed, and only the easy one remains, namely, to overcome our economic crisis and lay down the solid foundation of the homeland on the basis of the most up-to-date technology and progress, whether in the army, in the factories, fields or schools. We shall establish the state of science and faith for all those who will succeed us, and we shall hand them the trust with pride in them just as they will be proud of us.