

S P E E C H

by

PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT

BEFORE THE

EXECUTIVE AND POPULAR LEADERSHIP

at Port-Said Governorate

March 22, 1976

In the name of Allah,

Brothers and sons of Port-Said

I thank God that every time I visit you I find a new building or event taking shape in the process of reconstruction, and towards the prosperity of this country.

Last year our meeting was on June, 5, the day of the reopening of the Suez Canal; this date on which the world shared our joys, and made of it a celebration of victory after a bitter defeat. Even before that, I gave my orders for the return of all the evacuees to their cities and homes. Then, at the beginning of last January, I issued a decree for turning all the city of Port-Said into a free zone.

I thank God that every time I meet you there are achievements, and there is continuous work. . Nevertheless, I still maintain the fact that we are facing many difficulties in our economy at the level of the Republic. Perhaps you have heard me say that

there is still some time before we can develop our economy in a sound manner; and the Prime Minister is strenuously working with world experts, as well as our own experts, for the realisation of that objective.

I have one word to say to all of Egypt from Port-Said. . . It is the duty of every Egyptian to compensate Port Said for all what it lost and endured for all of us. . . What you have endured was not for Port-Said alone, but for all of Egypt.

You have paid a tax in emigration and expatriation. . . You have paid a tax in the destruction and ruin which struck your homes. . . You have paid the tax of man being evicted from his land, city and home.

People in Cairo and Alexandria cannot fully realise this because they have not been in the same position. It would have been different, had anyone of them been emigrated or taken away from his homeland, had lived long years of disruption, defeat, sufferings and bitterness, and endured all what you have gone through. . . You have endured a great deal for us, and for this reason, all what Egypt can offer you is nothing in comparison with what you sacrificed on behalf of the Egyptian people.

However, we have reaped the fruits of the sacrifices you made on behalf of the people of Egypt. I am very glad to meet you, and I thank God for it.

Whenever I visit Port-Said, I see a new achievement taking place. . . We are now passing through a magnificent and profound stage of transformation due to the October victory, and to holding the initiative in our hands since October 1973 and up to this very moment.

Re-opening the Suez Canal was the outcome and the inevitable result of the October victory. . . This city was also turned into a free zone as a result of this victory.

We shall never let the initiative slip out of our hands, and we shall continue on our way until the complete liberation of Sinai and all the occupied Arab territories.

In accordance with the second disengagement agreement, Israel pulled out behind the passes, and we recovered our oilfields. Thanks be to God for all the achievements and feats we fulfilled.

Today, we are living through a stage of transformation, in a bid to apply the sixth principle of the July 23 Revolution, and the Rectification Revolution of May, 15, namely, the establishment of a sound democratic life.

I thank God for granting me life over the past 24 years, since the inception of the Revolution, so that I can say to the people of Egypt «here is the trust», I am giving it back to you complete, bright, towering high and lofty, with all its achievements in the social, political and military fields. I have handed the trust in the most magnificent manner.

Let us now commence the stage of full democracy; this stage which requires many commitments, from us in the sense that we should adopt a democratic behaviour; and this democratic behaviour should be characterised by the honour of responsibility.

It is regrettable to say that as a result of releasing the freedom of the press in 1973, numerous errors were committed by the press.

Egyptian communities in some Arab countries, especially in Kuwait, were extremely astounded by the news they read, and exclaiming, «what is happening in our country». It seems the freedom of the press is misused after a long and continuous forty years of suppression.

Nevertheless, I shall look for the reasons behind this deviation from the sound behaviour, and we shall not remedy these

reasons by withdrawing the freedom of the press. No, I shall never go back on the freedom of the press, nor on the granting of any other freedoms.

In application of democracy, you should always uphold the honour of responsibility. For instance, Port Said is entirely your own, the decision is yours, what you want or think should be put into effect, has my approval in advance. We must always stick to the honour of responsibility in every dialogue, and rights should be balanced with duties.

It is high time to realise that there are no rights without duties, and vice versa.

Thanks be to God that time has come for us to reach this stage of complete maturity. We are not passing through political adolescence, and this should be clear before our Arab brothers in the entire Arab nation. Mistakes are committed, but they can be made right. Nobody is above error, and those who do not err, are the ones who do not work, and this is admissible within the limits of non-negligence.

As I said, take over responsibility in your country and make up for the seven black years of emigration. Hence the decision of commencing the process of reconstruction in the Canal zone; in Port Said, Ismailia and Suez. It was a political decision, exactly like that of the High Dam. It was imperative that the evacuees should return to their homes, and that life should prosper in the three cities for those who paid the tax of Egypt.

I thank God that we have taken long strides on our way. All I recommend is to the honour of responsibility, to realise that there are no rights without duties and to always take into consideration our duties towards Egypt. Egypt, our country which

we love and worship, which inspired us with all the values, and even bestowed a 7000 years civilisation on the world.

Egypt will always remain Egypt, with its power and not with altercations and interference in others' affairs.. It is the best example to be followed by all our Arab brothers.. We want them to see democracy applied 100%.

Egypt had regained its position and power by the freedom of movement which we snatched from Israel. The whole world now acknowledges Egypt's rights and weight.. We are dealing with all without any complexes whatsoever.. We befriend, and go very far in our friendship with those who befriend us, and become enemies of those who antagonise us.

Egypt has the capacity and power to maintain and prove its place, dignity and responsibilities to the Arab nation, and the entire world.

May God guide your steps in shouldering the responsibility, and give me the chance to always visit you and see your steady prosperity and welfare.. All the welfare you can fulfil is your absolute right in return for what you offered and did on behalf of all of Egypt.

I hope we shall derive an excellent example from Port Said economically as a free zone, or from the political and democratic point of view.

In conclusion, my advice to you is to always give a good example, as you did when you endured sufferings, eviction and disruption. You must give a good example in reconstruction, and assuming the honour of responsibility in your area, and even all the country.

May God grant you success.