

GWS 1000  
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PS TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET

Egypt

FM CAIRO 101220Z SEP 81  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TEL NO 504 OF 101220Z SEP 81  
INFO ROUTINE AMMAN, JEDDA, DAMASCUS, BEIRUT, TEL AVIV, UKHISNEW YORK  
WASHINGTON, MODUK(FOR D14)  
SAVING ALL OTHER MIDDLE EAST POSTS.

MY TEL NO 500: SADAT'S CRACK DOWN

1. SADAT ANSWERED IN ENGLISH QUESTIONS FROM FOREIGN AND EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS FOR 90 MINUTES YESTERDAY IN HIS VILLAGE OF MIT ABUL KUM. HE WAS FLANKED BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND MANSOUR HASSAN, ALL EGYPTIAN EDITORS-IN-CHIEF WERE IN ATTENDANCE. SADAT APPEARED TENSE, AND LOST HIS TEMPER AT LEAST ONCE. IN LINE WITH THE POLICY OF GIVING THE CRACK-DOWN FAIR COVERAGE IN THE DOMESTIC MEDIA, EGYPTIAN TELEVISION LAST NIGHT CARRIED A FULL RECORDING OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE, AND TODAY'S PAPERS PRINT FULL TRANSCRIPTS.

2. SADAT STUCK CLOSELY TO THE THEMES OF HIS 5 SEPTEMBER SPEECH, REPEATEDLY STRESSING THAT HIS PURPOSE WAS TO ELIMINATE SECTARIAN STRIFE, NOT TO CRACK DOWN ON HIS OPPONENTS, WHICH WAS HOW THE WORLD'S PRESS HAD MISTAKENLY AND PERVERSELY REPRESENTED HIS MEASURES. JUDGING FROM THIS AND SATURDAY'S SPEECH IT SEEMS THAT SADAT REALLY DOES BELIEVE THAT SECTARIAN STRIFE, THE RISE OF THE ISLAMIC GROUPS AND THE INCREASINGLY STRIDENT LEFTIST OPPOSITION ARE ALL PART OF THE SAME SYNDROME. YESTERDAY'S PERFORMANCE CONFIRMED BOTH THAT HIS EVIDENCE FOR A GENERAL CONSPIRACY TO PROMOTE SECTARIAN STRIFE REMAINS FLIMSY AND THAT HE ATTACHES ENORMOUS IMPORTANCE TO THE COVERAGE HE RECEIVES IN THE WESTERN PARTICULARLY AMERICAN MEDIA. BUT ONE HAS TO ADMIRE HIS COURAGE IN INVITING A FREE-FOR-ALL WITH WESTERN JOURNALISTS ON SUCH A SENSITIVE TOPIC.

3. SADAT MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS OF INTEREST:  
(A) EGYPT WAS STABLE, AND NOT TO BE COMPARED TO IRAN, NOR THE PRESIDENT TO THE SHAH. THE FACT THAT THE SHAH'S FUNERAL HAD TAKEN PLACE PUBLICLY IN CAIRO WITHOUT INCIDENT SHOWED THAT THE PEOPLE SUPPORTED SADAT.  
(B) EGYPT HAD A STRONG GOVERNMENT, AND NOW NEEDED A STRONG OPPOSITION. SADAT WOULD SOON SUMMON A MEETING OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, SHURA COUNCIL, PROFESSIONAL SYNDICATES AND TRADES UNIONS TO PUT BEFORE THEM A CHARTER FOR POLITICAL OPPOSITION.

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(C) EGYPT

(C) EGYPT'S TRANSITION FROM TOTALITARIANISM TO A MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM COMPARED FAVOURABLY WITH PORTUGAL'S DEGENERATION FROM TOTALITARIANISM TO CHAOS IN JUST TWO YEARS.

(D) HE WOULD WAIT UNTIL THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR HAD COMPLETED HIS INVESTIGATIONS BEFORE SAYING WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN A FOREIGN HAND IN THE DISTURBANCES.

(E) AFTER ALL THE DAMAGE HE HAD DONE TO EGYPT SHENOUDA WAS LUCKY TO HAVE MERELY BEEN REMOVED FROM OFFICE. HEIKAL HAD BEEN ARRESTED BECAUSE HE HAD WRITTEN ARTICLES AND GIVEN INTERVIEWS ABROAD WHICH HAD DAMAGED EGYPT. THE SOCIALIST PROSECUTOR WOULD PUT THIS BEFORE THE WORLD. HEIKAL'S EDITOR FRIENDS COULD NOT GIVE HIM IMMUNITY.

4. SADAT DWELT AT LENGTH ON THE AMERICAN RELATIONS. 230605  
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4. SADAT DWELT AT LENGTH ON THE AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP. EGYPT WAS INDEBTED TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR THEIR "GALLANT ASSISTANCE", AND FOR THEIR HELP IN THE PEACE PROCESS FROM THE FIRST DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT TO THE FINAL EVACUATION OF SINAI. AS ALWAYS, EGYPT WAS READY TO GIVE THE UNITED STATES FACILITIES, BUT NOT BASES, TO AID ANY MOSLEM COUNTRY. JOINT EGYPTIAN /AMERICAN MANOEUVRES WOULD TAKE PLACE SHORTLY. BUT EGYPT'S DECISIONS WERE HER OWN. SADAT BECAME VERY ANGRY WHEN ASKED WHETHER REAGAN HAD BEEN CONSULTED ON THE RECENT MEASURES.

5. SADAT VIGOROUSLY ATTACKED FOREIGN NEWS COVERAGE, IN PARTICULAR DAVID HIRST (THE GUARDIAN CORRESPONDENT WHOM HE EXPELLED IN 1973) AND ABC TELEVISION. HE ALSO READ OUT AND CORRECTED LONG PASSAGES FROM AN ARTICLE BY WILLIAM SAFIRE QUESTIONING THE STABILITY OF HIS REGIME.

FCO PSE PASS SAVING ALL OTHER MIDDLE EAST POSTS.  
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