

Nixon Receives Joyful Welcome From Egyptians

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Washington Post Foreign Service

CAIRO, June 12—President Nixon, buoyed by a tumultuous and joyful welcome here from enormous crowds, pledged today to work with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to cement "a new relationship between two great peoples."

Both presidents promised that they were putting behind them an era of misunderstanding and hostility and laying a foundation in their conferences for peace and economic progress in the Middle East.

The huge crowds which lined the more than seven miles of the route from the airport to Kubbeh Palace, where Mr. Nixon and his wife are staying, seemed to sense the dramatic change in America's relation with the Arab world which the visit symbolizes.

Security almost broke down at times as the crowds surged toward the open car in which the two presidents stood for the 45-minute drive. But there were no hostile demonstrations, and the crowd was in a holiday mood.

Most striking were the smiling faces of the people. Placards proclaimed both presidents as great men dedicated to peace and progress.

Mr. Nixon flew here from Salzburg for the first stop on a five-nation Middle East tour which includes four Arab states and Israel.

He is the first President since Franklin D. Roosevelt to visit Egypt and the first President ever to tour the region.

President Sadat greeted the President and Mrs. Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at the airport where a brief formal reception was held.

Then the two presidents drove through packed streets and friendly crowds to the palace where they exchanged speeches of greeting. Later they held a business meeting and tonight the Sadats gave an official dinner on the spacious grounds of the palace.

In his dinner toast, Sadat spoke more bluntly of the difficulties of solving the Palestinian problem.

"Let me be candid with you, lest in the future there would be a misunderstanding or false reading of the turn of events in our region," the Egyptian president said.

A solution to the Palestine problem is "indispensable," he said.

This does not mean, he added, "that this would lead to the liquidation of Israel."

Mr. Nixon replied that he would be less than candid if he did not acknowl-

edge that "I did not come here with ready-made solutions to these complex problems."

A settlement will require "dedicated diplomacy," Mr. Nixon said. He promised that the United States "will play a positive role."

President Sadat said that the visit at this point, when the Middle East is "geared toward a peaceful, honorable and just settlement," is of major significance.

It will be remembered, he said, as "a milestone in the shaping and evolution of American-Egyptian relations" and "will compensate for the long years of strain and lack of understanding."

"I am fully aware," the Egyptian leader said to his guest, "that you share with me the belief that this is a unique moment and a major turning point which should not be lost but rather grasped with vigilance, persistence and dedication to build a durable and honorable peace."

Sadat stressed both the sense of accomplishment from the U.S. peace effort and the fact that much remains to be done before a permanent peace is achieved.

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PRESIDENT, From A1

Referring to the Egyptian and Syrian disengagement agreements with Israel, the Egyptian president said: "Despite the fact that this is but one step, it is, however, a right one and in the right direction, and without it no progress could have been achieved in the long road to peace."

Earlier, he defined "the challenge" to the United States as being "whether to substitute this precarious situation of cease-fire with a just and durable peace so that our area would be ushered into an era of normalcy."

President Nixon declared that he was "enormously moved" by the Cairo reception. Although he called this period "one of those great turning points," he, too, stressed that much remains to be done to achieve "the goal of peace."

Economic progress and progress toward peace go together, and neither is possible without the other, he said. However, he made no immediate promises of new U.S. aid to

Egypt.

Paying a special tribute to Sadat, Mr. Nixon said that without his courage, wisdom and statesmanship, "we would not have made the progress toward peace that we have made, and the world owes him a great debt for what he has done."

The public reception was easily the largest outpouring of expression in Egypt since the funeral of President Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1970, officials here said.

It was also the most significant welcome for a foreign leader, they said, since Nikita Khrushchev visited Egypt in 1964 for the dedication of the Aswan High Dam, which the Soviet Union helped build.

Several hundred thousand Egyptians stood on the curbstones and on balconies and roofs of buildings to cheer the two leaders.

Peasants dressed in flowing robes, soldiers in khaki uniforms and factory workers posed in from the industrial suburb of Helwan stood in sweltering 90-degree heat to cheer the two men they believe may bring peace and economic hope.

Many waved banners supplied by the Arab Socialist Union, Egypt's only political party. The banners hailed Mr. Nixon as "a man of honor" and the United States as a peace-loving nation.

Other banners said, "Keep it up, Nixon, you have our confidence," and, "Long live Egyptian-American friendship."

One sign called on the U.S. President to remember the Palestinians, and one hand-painted banner read "Welleome Nekson."

Cairo airport was closed for 2½ hours for the Nixon arrival. Before the plane landed trucks of workers and children who were excused from factories and schools made their way to the motorcade route.

(The Egyptian government returned the 55-year-old American University in Cairo to American control today, UPI reported. The school had been seized in 1967 when relations with the United States were broken over Washington's support for Israel in the six-day war.)

The dinner at Kubbeh Palace was staged with an Arabian nights flavor. Clusters of brightly colored red, yellow and lime light bulbs were strung in palm trees all across the well-groomed lawn, which was swept by a soft breeze. A show of oriental dancing followed dinner.

Continuing the day of mutual adulation, Sadat presented Mr. Nixon with the Collar of the Nile, Egypt's highest order, normally given to heads of



United Press International

Presidents Nixon and Sadat return waves of crowd thronging route from Cairo airport to Kubbeh Palace.

state "in recognition of extraordinary service to Egypt or to mankind." Mrs. Nixon received the Order of Perfection, and Kissinger was awarded the Collar of the Republic, Egypt's second highest order.

The references by both presidents to what Sadat called "the long years of strain and lack of understanding" reflected two decades of open hostility between the two states that Mr. Nixon's visit is designed to help erase.

Sadat's predecessor, Gamal Abdel Nasser, clashed sharply with the Eisenhower administration after the United States reneged on a promise to help build the most ambitious project of the Nasser era, the Aswan High Dam. Nasser turned to the Soviet Union for help with the dam and for military aid.

Relations improved sharply, however, after the United States helped pressure Israel into returning the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt after the 1956 Suez campaign. This use of U.S. leverage on Israel has remained sharply focused in Egyptian memory, and the Egyptians are obviously hoping they can achieve the same result through the Nixon administration's efforts.

But as U.S. aid to Israel was stepped up Nasser again turned to attacking the United States and in June 1967 he angrily accused the United States of helping Israel smash the Egyptian army and occupy the Sinai again. Nasser broke diplomatic relations with the U.S. that month.

Taking office in 1970 Sadat seemed to follow Nasser's love-hate relationship with the United States. He welcomed the peace initiative by then Secretary of State William P. Rogers but then accused Rogers of betraying him when the effort produced no results.

Two years ago Sadat expelled more than 15,000 Russian military advisers from Egypt, and, according to his senior aides, awaited a new U.S. initiative.

When it did not come he followed through on his frequently ridiculed promises to go to war by sending Egyptian troops across the Suez Canal last October.

Throughout his rule, however, Sadat has repeatedly said that the United States holds the key to getting Israel to return the Arab lands occupied in 1967 and achieving a solution to the Palestinian problem. The warm welcome that he pledged would continue throughout Mr. Nixon's 48-hour stay here is obviously keyed to that belief, aides report.