

No Voice of Dissent To Mar Nixon Visit

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CAIRO, June 13—By the time he leaves Egypt tomorrow afternoon President Nixon will have been seen and cheered by several million Egyptians.

So far there has not been an incident in the entire extraordinary spectacle. Not a single jarring note, not a single dissenting voice has been heard.

Two facts stand out: The Government could have brought out some of these people but not all of them. And it could not have made them climb trees and run along the railroad tracks cheering and waving banners.

Second, no security service in the world, no matter how effective, could have prevented an armed and determined individual or small group from joining the crowds and taking a shot at President Nixon or President Anwar el-Sadat of Egypt. The Egyptian and American authorities felt that there would be no assassination attempt, but they couldn't possibly have prevented one.

Abreast the Presidents' Car

On the road from the airport yesterday enterprising drivers soon found that they could drive their cars and packed buses abreast the Presidents' car simply by tearing down the wrong side of the divided highway, separated from the open limousine only by a grass strip and an occasional flaming red tree in bloom.

The policemen at intersections were concerned only that the intruders might try to cross over and join the convoy. Grinning, they waved them down the one-way street the wrong way. Even in normal times Cairo is a place where in exchange for a smile or a friendly salute, a policeman will wave you through a red light with large, inviting gesture.

Just what made the crowds so big and so happy? The soul of Egyptian crowds is always hard to know.

Curiosity played a role. So did natural exuberance, pleasure over an unscheduled holiday and, in the case of workers in state factories, over an unhopd for outing on the company truck.

Would the crowds have turned out in equal numbers and with the same warm affection for Leonid I. Brezhnev or Valéry Giscard d'Estaing? The answer of every Cairene is "no."

Nikita S. Khrushchev got a

good turnout when he went to Aswan to celebrate the completion of the high dam, but it was nothing like this.

America and Americans have long had a special place in the views of many Egyptians. But the feeling of warmth had been damned up because of American identification with Israel. This dam was undermined by Secretary of State Kissinger's efforts. Yesterday the dam broke, and the pent-up affection poured out.

Wealth, technology and informality are among the things that the average Egyptian feels are part of American life, and in cheering Mr. Nixon he gave vent to his hope that some of all three will rub off on Egypt at last.

"America to us means white bread," one Cairene said this morning. "Do you know that we are the last Arab country to eat black bread?" Wheat, sugar and other staple foods are heavily subsidized and chronic shortages persist. Until 1965, when shipments stopped, Egypt relied for half of her wheat on the United States. One of the strongest hopes here is that shipments will soon be resumed.

"Friendship with America to us means an open window on the West, lots of tourists, businessmen and a freer life than we had when the war with Israel dominated our thoughts and the Russians were our only friends," another Cairene said.

Mr. Nixon's troubles have been given fairly wide coverage in the press. But most Egyptians tend to dismiss Watergate as a "Zionist plot" cooked up by the "Zionist American press."

Officials make it clear that in receiving Mr. Nixon they are dealing not with an individual but with the United States—the most powerful nation and the only one that can conceivably bring a settlement to the Middle East.

Beyond that, if the trip helps Mr. Nixon the feeling here is that "one good turn deserves another."

There are some skeptics who believe that expectations may have been awakened among the Egyptian people that the United States may not be able to fulfill.

"I hope the euphoria lasts," a journalist said this morning. Another added: "I hope it does not turn out to be a case of 'fly now, pay later.'"