

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OCTOBER 28, 1975

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND
ANWAR EL-SADAT
PRESIDENT OF THE
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT
AT THE RECIPROCAL DINNER
HOSTED BY PRESIDENT EL-SADAT

THE ANDERSON HOUSE

10:28 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT EL-SADAT: President and Mrs. Ford, ladies and gentlemen:

I hope I have adequately expressed my feeling, and that of the Egyptian people, towards President Ford and the people of the United States. What I would like to add, however, is that the more I meet with President Ford and pursue with him the stimulating talks and pleasant conversations, the more confirmed becomes the initial impression I got when I first met him. His personality conveys to anyone who gets to know him a sense of confidence, genuineness and warmth.

As you know, President Ford and I will meet again more than once before I leave your beautiful country, and we will have the chance to solidify our relations even further. But let me, now, express my admiration and deep appreciation of President Ford's method of dealing with different situations and his enlightened approach to people and human relations. From this standpoint, he can achieve tremendous progress in various domains and the United States, under his leadership, can reach new horizons commensurate with the challenges of our time. I have no doubt that he will play a most constructive role, both in bringing about peace in the Middle East and in solving complex international problems.

It is an asset that he has an able and dedicated Secretary of State who is a man of experience and vision.

While I propose a toast for President Ford, his charming wife and for the friendship between the American and Egyptian peoples, I am sure that I am expressing sentiments which are genuinely reciprocated by President Ford, his assistants and compatriots towards a country that is known for its fortitude, culture and historical heritage.

MORE

I am certain that when my visit is completed, the picture will be clearer to the American public, to Government officials and legislators. This would definitely lead to cementing the relations between the American people and the Egyptian people as well as the entire Arab nation.

May I propose a toast to the health of President Ford and Mrs. Ford, our dear friends.

Ladies and gentlemen, I seize this opportunity and present to our dear friend, President Ford, our highest decoration. It is the Nile decoration. This is a sign of great respect to himself and to the whole American people.

As a token of our friendship and our admiration to the First Lady and the ladies of the United States, may I present our highest decoration, El Kemal.

MORE

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, Mrs. Sadat, ladies and gentlemen:

First, may I express on behalf of my wife, Betty, and all the ladies that she represents in the United States, and on behalf of myself as well as my countrymen, your thoughtfulness for the wonderful recognition that you have given to us and to those we represent, we in the United States are most grateful for these wonderful awards and I can't express deeply enough our personal appreciation for your thoughtfulness.

Obviously it is very difficult, Mr. President, to match your eloquence in the circumstances here this evening. I want to express as best I can the appreciation that all of us have for your visit to the United States. You have in this audience here this evening many outstanding members of the Legislative Branch, members of the House and the Senate, leaders, individuals who you have met and I hope you will get better acquainted with, so that they can have an opportunity of getting to know you as I have from our first meeting in Salzburg, because I am convinced that they will share with me, once that acquaintanceship begins and develops, the strength and the statesmanship that you have exhibited in the Middle East during a most trying and a very difficult time.

So, as you meet my former colleagues, the members of the Legislative Branch of the Government of the United States, I am sure that you will learn of their importance and their significance in the development of our friendship between your Government as well as ours.

Your hospitality this evening, Mr. President, is almost overwhelming, not only for Mrs. Ford and myself, but all of our guests -- your guests, I should say.

Your historic visit to this country, and it is historic, will lead, I am certain as you travel from here to New York, to Chicago, to Houston, to Florida, to a breadth of understanding between not only yourself and our people, but between your people as well as ours.

I think this opportunity for you to be here and to travel is unique in that they find in you a leader in the Middle East who has not only had the statesmanship to strive for peace but the leadership to achieve and accomplish peace and to broaden and to deepen it, not only on behalf of your people, but all of the Arab people.

MORE

We feel that your presence here in the Capital of the United States is of a special significance. We were delighted to have you in the White House last night with Mrs. Sadat and I know the Secretary hosted some outstanding American citizens, including members of the legislature, with you as his principal guest today, which gave to them, as I have had the opportunity, to see and to hear the breadth and strength of your leadership in the Middle East.

I can assure you that we in the United States cherish and will further the same ideals in the future that we have in the past and we are pleased to know that those are likewise the same ideals and aims and ambitions that you have for your people in your country.

It seems to me that as we work together, and we do have the need and necessity to do that, we can convince others in the Middle East that progress is essential not only in that area. A stalemate and stagnation cannot be condoned, that it is in the best interest of Egypt and Israel, the United States and all Middle Eastern countries and I can assure you, Mr. President, that the American people will work with you and seek to achieve with you the aims of your people and yourself for the kind of a peace on a broad, firm, equitable, secure basis that is in the dreams of people in all of the Middle East.

Let me conclude, Mr. President, that Mrs. Ford and I have been delighted to have the opportunity to get better acquainted and let me add in closing that I have instructed our Secretary of State to continue to explore every possibility to continue the diplomatic successes that were achieved in recent months.

I know that he will continue to work with the Foreign Minister, Foreign Minister Fahmi. They have been a good team in the step-by-step process that was essential to keep the momentum going. Both are seasoned, tireless, effective, dedicated diplomats that have and will contribute to the success in the future.

Let me simply conclude by saying that we are honored to have you in America, with Mrs. Sadat, and let me say that it is a pleasure and a privilege for me to offer a toast to you and the people that you represent, the great people of the Government of Israel -- Egypt, excuse me.

END

(AT 10:44 P.M. EDT)