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**The Political and Organizational**

**The Political and Organizational Dimensions  
of the 15 May, 1971 Movement in Egypt**

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### Research Problem:

The problem of the present research is the conditions that surrounded Egypt in the late 1960s and early 1970s at the local, regional and international levels. At the local level, Egypt adopted the socialist ruling system and means of production that departed from the liberal system which existed in the country before the outbreak of the 1952 Revolution. At the regional level, there were disputes and enmities between the Egyptian Revolutionary Regime and conservative Arab regimes, especially Saudi Arabia, besides the defeats that befell the Arab armies in the face of Israel in June, 1967 and the Israeli occupation of Sinai, the West Bank of the Jordanian River, and Golan Heights in Syria in the greatest setback Egypt and the Arab Nation underwent in modern history. At the international level, the Cold War between the East Camp led by the Soviet Union and the West Camp led by the United States of America

was at its height, each trying to win Egypt to its side. All these problems accumulated before the Egyptian leadership represented in President Mohamed. Anwar Al-Sadat, imposing a great package of challenges, hypotheses and questions that needed to be answered such as: What to do in such circumstances? How to deal with them? How to get out of these crises and cross to the future amid such storms? and many other questions.

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### **Research Objective:**

The present research aims at identifying and analyzing the structural changes in the Egyptian political system in the early 1970s, those changes which grew and developed over time to create a new thought and trend towards democracy, pluralism and liberalism despite the opposition, crises and conflicts that trend faced amongst the Egyptian ruling elite. The research also aims at revealing the general condition of the Egyptian society, how far it accepted the change adopted by President Sadat, and the keenness of the president and society to establish what was called "the State of Institutions."

**Research Method:** The present research adopted the historical method which is based on examining, analyzing and testing the documents, originals, sources, witnesses current events, which are considered the elements and bases of the research problems, and the political and organizational dimensions of this problems so as to derive the topic under study. The present research also adopted the descriptive method which observes the phenomenon, identifies its features and relation to other phenomena which, in their entirety, constitute the sample under study, and subjects all these to criticism and analysis.

### **Introduction:**

June Defeat posed drastic and profound questions related to the wrongness or rightness of the political and organizational structure of the country as a society and a state, especially after the defeat uncovered what came to be known as the power centers which, in one sense, means the establishment of an oligarchy instead of the State of Law, and the personal congregations inside the authority instead of the objective distribution of authorities among different legislative, executive and judicial institutions.

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Voices rose calling for democracy, freedom and rule of law to change the features and essence of the political and organizational system which led to the defeat and the negative aspects resulting from it. Students and laborers' demonstrations broke out in 1968 protesting against the policies of the government, calling for change, the issuance and enforcement of freedom laws, the expansion of the democratic rights of the citizens, and demanding that different trends and movements be allowed to express themselves freely and independently and that detained students be set free. Thus, the political system faced a challenge for change and reform.

Thus, President Abdel-Nasser started to adopt a new moderate policy at the domestic and foreign levels in recognition of the public's devotion to him which made him declare his return, to rule the country again on June 10, 1967. He reviewed the most important changes which occurred in society after 1967 defeat. Among those changes-was the rebuilding of the armed forces to remedy the effects of the defeat, remove the effects of the attack and meet the economic steadfastness demand supported with a clear public desire and an Arab *position, in* support of Egypt and the frontline countries in Khartoum, Conference after the Revolutionary System In Egypt had recondition with conservative Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, and after getting rid of the power centers through public trials that exposed the corruption and mistakes of the previous stage. Besides, there was the direct political activity with the Soviet Union, nonaligned nations, Islamic countries and other Asian, African and Latin American countries. The president provided an agenda that is based on this axes. The first is the mobilization of all our military, economic and intellectual capacities along our lines with the enemy to restore our land and achieve victory. The second is the mobilization of all people with their entire capabilities and

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powers to achieve victory and also to achieve the post-victory hopes.

The 30<sup>th</sup> March Statement was issued, which focused on restructuring the only political organization in the country; namely, the Socialist Union, to avoid its negative aspects and support the building of the modern state based on democracy, science and technology for the sake of restructuring and development. Depending on his constitutional authorities, President Abdel-Nasser called the people for a referendum to vote on that declaration on Thursday, May 2, 1968. The people voted for that declaration.

### **Controversy over Sadat's Coming to Power as President:**

On December 19, 1969 President Gamal Abdel-Nasser summoned Mr. Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat and asked him to swear the solemn oath as vice-president. This happened before President Abdel-Nasser traveled to attend the Arab Summit Conference in Rabat, Morocco. The sudden death of President Abdel-Nasser had its impact on those surrounding him, who gathered in the large hall on the first floor of the President's house to discuss that matter. Anwar El-Sadat began his speech by asking Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, the Minister of National Counseling, the chairman of Al-Ahram, and the closest person to the late president, about what he saw then. Heikal said, "It is important now to make people feel that things are going on. We must not innovate or invent. Rather, we must appeal to a previously set rule. There is no rule but the Constitution. The Constitution says that if the President dies, his deputy must assume the presidency as an acting president for sixty days until a referendum is conducted to vote on the person who is to succeed him." (1), No one of the attendees objected to Heikal's suggestion. The situation was critical, and the sudden or unexpected event was too great for all. The majority of the attendees would prefer the continuity of the political line and a quiet transfer of authority.

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There was an almost unanimous and stable agreement to nominate Sadat as President Abdel Nasser's successor despite all the reservations expressed and the feeling that the choice would not appeal to many people, to the extent that Hussein El-Shafie expressed his fear that Sadat might not win the majority of votes in the referendum and suggested to the executive committee, in its meeting to discuss that matter, postponing nominating Sadat as president till the effects of the attack were removed. Hussein El-Shafie's attitude appealed to his ambitions to win the office (2).

On the other hand, Sadat suggested spending the remaining period, of Gamal Abdel Nasser's presidency as vice-president till the effects of the attack were removed (3). With that suggestion Sadat seemed to try to know the attendees' desire and opinions on his running for the presidency. The majority of the attendees objected to that suggestion.

This happened at a time when the old members of the Revolutionary Command Council began to muse and emerge of the scene. Spotlights were directed *on* Zakaria Mohie El-Din during Abdel Nasser's funeral. He was the person who Abdel Nasser announced would succeed him when he directed his abdication on June 9, 1967. Kamal El-Din Hussein sought to meet with the old members of the Revolutionary Command Council who wrote a memo expressing their opinion which Sadat received and which provided that a collective leadership for the country be established and a national association representing the people's sovereignty with all their constitutional and legislative authorities be elected and that such national association act as the permanent constitution of the United Arab Republic, for which the people had been long waiting. The task of the collective leadership would end as soon as the constitutional leadership was established pursuant to the permanent constitution(4).

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When Abdel-Latif Al-Baghdady, as an old member of the Revolutionary Command Council, met with Sadat, the latter expressed his refusal of the content of that memo and told him that Abdel-Nasser's regime neglected the members of the Revolutionary Command Council and that Abdel-Nasser had started a new era for which people were called for a great referendum to vote on it on June 9 and 10, 1967. There was another referendum when six million Egyptian citizens went out to pay Abdel-Nasser the last honors (5).

Meanwhile, general Mohamed Fawzy, the Minister of Defense, on behalf of the commanders and officers of the armed forces, sent a message to Sadat, declaring that the armed forces supported the nomination of Mr. Anwar El-Sadat as president of the republic for the sake of the stability of leadership in the country as he was vice-president when Abdel-Nasser died. That message had its great effect on the people, as the people readily repeated everywhere saying "The army wants Sadat" (6).

The nomination of Sadat as president of the republic was brought before the Supreme Executive Committee of the Socialist Union, which approved of the nomination. The Central Committee approved of the nomination, too. After that the parliament was called into session on Wednesday, **October 7, 1970** to approve of the nomination of Sadat. On that day Sadat announced before the council his program and the principles on which he would work if his nomination was approved of. He said, "I came to you following Abdel-Nasser's course. I consider your nomination of me as president of the republic as a direction to follow Abdel-Nasser's course." The council approved of the nomination of Sadat. The public referendum was conducted on October 15, and Sadat got 90.04% of the total votes of those who participated in that referendum, according to what Sha'rawy



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Gomaa, the Minister of the Interior, declared(7).

In his book "In Quest of Identity", Sadat remarks on the controversy over his election as president, "On Thursday, after the funeral, I summoned the officials and told them that I had changed my mind and would be no longer vice-president and that election was a must ... After that elections were held and the people elected me president of the republic. That was in October, 1970"(8).

On October 17, 1970, The parliament met in order that Sadat would swear the constitutional oath as president of the republic before it pursuant to the provision of Article 104 of the Constitution. On Sadat's takeover of the presidency, Mahmoud Riyad says, "Sadat took over the presidency in implementation of the Constitution. He did not usurp power and no one did him a favor to appoint him as president of the republic. He was chosen not because he was a controllable person as some people said as the issue of choice was not raised at all (9).

### **Second- Features of the New Wav:**

#### **1. President Sadat and the Beginning of Authority Responsibility:**

After the death of President Gamal Abdel-Nasser, there were no trends, policies or lines that would diverge or conflict with what the late president had started in all fields. The general official or public situation would not allow any ideas or opinions that might deviate from what the late president had drawn or planned. President Anwar El-Sadat was intelligent enough to declare his commitment to the late president's thought and course. Thus, he declared to the people that he came following Abdel-Nasser's course. When he did not get 100% in the referendum on the presidency, he declared that the Egyptian people could not give their entire votes to anyone but Gamal

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Abdel-Nasser. When Hussein El-Shafie objected to the nomination of Sadat as president of to be republic in the meeting of the Supreme Executive Committee of the Socialist Union, he did not object to Sadat's personality. What was more important was Sadat's commitment to Abdel-Nasser's thought and course which represented the thought and course of July 23 Revolution.

For all that, it was necessary for Sadat to adopt a .strategy which society approved and believed in, a strategy that society saw as the only way to the future. How would that strategy be adopted and how could it be made to be consistent with the requirements and changes of the next stage? That was the challenge and the dilemma which Sadat faced since he had assumed the presidency.

This was evident *on* the opening of the new Parliamentary cycle on November 19, 1970, Sadat made a statement defining the tasks of the next stage as he conceived then. focusing *on* the necessity of the battle for the complete liberation of all Arab land as well as on building a free life for the people through the economic and .social construction battle. the socialism *of* the Stare., the provision of the opportunity to practice democracy as the sate way towards the right decision within the framework of the coalition of the public work force, and the establishment of a modern state in which speaking about science and technology would turn into a work style and practical achievement of the goals of a society which had great responsibilities to bear(10).

Sadat passed his decree No. 1880 dated November 18, 1970 regarding the formation of the new cabinet headed by Dr. Mahmoud Fawzy. It involved four vice prime ministers in addition to twenty-six ministers, a vice-minister of commerce and a vice-minister of foreign trade(11).

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The preliminary remark on the formation of that cabinet is that it did not rely greatly on the military. It was formed mostly of specialized technical civilians as ten ministers were Ph.D. holders and some were engineers and professionals such as technical and specialist. That was the first evident and tangible shift in the formation of cabinets since the July 23, 1952 Revolution. Its premier, Dr. Mahmoud Fawzy, was the first civilian Egyptian prime minister after Ali Maher at the time of the Revolution. Sadat also passed a decree appointing both Mr. Ali Sabry and Mr. Hussein El-Shafie as vice-presidents.

### **2. A New Vision of Existing Issues:**

President Sadat tried to affirm that his political course and line were different from those of Abdel-Nasser, by seeking to instituting a ruling system based on the Egyptian traditions which Abdel-Nasser had somewhat ignored(12). He began to exalt family. He frequently liked to refer to himself as the head of the family and to the Egyptian people as his children. The President also used to wear a unique and distinguished military costume which he studded it with military medals and Badges. He always wore it on official occasions and military parades, inaugurating those with a baton which he carried under his arm or held in his hand(13).

Through the two examples previously, namely the formation of the cabinet and his different behavior and appearance, Sadat seemed to try to establish his vision, political line, and legitimacy of rule. That was clearly evident in his approaching the most intestinal issues at that time, most notably the occupation of Sinai. Sadat based his strategy regarding that issue on the necessity of delaying war and making way for the peaceful solution. He found that the keys to that solution lied in making contact with the United States of America, especially after he himself heard Cosjen, the

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Russian Prime Minister, during the latter's meeting with the new political leadership in Egypt, say, "You must open channels with Americans and contact with them." This meant that even the Soviets found that the United States of America was the most important element of the peaceful solution, if there was a way to reach it(14).

From here started the shift in Egypt's foreign policy, especial in the Arab world, in order to work to .solve the most intestinal problems, i.e. the occupation of Sinai. President Sadat sought to establish good relations with the Arab countries which petroleum producing and pro- west in general, and pro-USA country in particular .the most important of those countries was the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (15) which were not on good terms with Egypt during Abdel Nasser's reign for several reasons, most notably *the Yemeni War*. A series of contacts was made through official and unofficial chanelns, especially with *Kamal Adham*. the director of Saudi Intelligence Agency and King Feisal's brother la-law and Donald .Bruges. us charge d'affaires under the umbrella of the Spanish Embassy in Cairo (16). This vision of President sadet had its effect on many of the political □□□ of Egypt and the United States in the region and was the comerstone of the formation and development of many domestic and foreign Egyptian issuer

### **Third- Issues which Triggered Conflict within the Ruling Elite:**

**1- Confiscations Issue.** President Sadat's vision regarding tending towards the United States in his foreign relations had its impact on the development of the domestic situation. President Sadat also had his vision as regards dealing with domestic issues and problems in a way that is different from that of the former president. This aroused the anger of those around Sadat in the ruling and decision-making circle. However, Sadat, in

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some of his speeches and statements, referred to his style and vision as regards the exercise of authority. An example is what he said before parliament on October 7, 1970 immediately after his nomination for the presidency. He said, "... but I'd like to add something and say honestly and responsibly that working to implement March 30 program in the presence of Gamal Abdel- Nasser is something, and implementation in the absence of Gamal Abdel-Nasser is something else ... Responsibility must be assumed totally by the public with their free work force, institutions, organizations and generations"(17). By saying so, Sadat referred to the necessity of completing or activating political organizations to build the State of Institutions.

As for confiscations, their story in the modern history of Egypt dates back to 1956, when a decree was passed to confiscate the funds of English and French nationals due to their attack on Egypt in that year, as well as the funds of the Jews in Egypt who began to immigrate abroad because of Israel's participation in attacking on Egypt and also to Egyptianize Egyptian economy(18).

After that, the property of some profiteers and drug dealers Put was under confiscations because who could not justify the sources of their wealth, some former politicians and feudalists was confiscated according to the decisions of the Feudalism Liquidation Committee. Therefore, confiscations increased, and that was regulated by several laws including Emergency Law No. 162 for the year 1958, Law No. 119 for the year 1964 on security measures, and Law No. 150 for the year 1964 on lifting custody on the funds and property of some people(19).

About fifteen years after confiscating the property of anybody the department found must be put into custody. President Abdel-Nasser found

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that there was no longer any need to continue such confiscations for several considerations. Therefore, he decreed that they be settlement it. Committees began to work to eliminate such confiscations and settlement it department. Decrees were passed so that the secondment of any employee to that department might not be renewed. All the employees of that department, were seconded, and its officials were judges. By the end of 1970, the liquidation committees had achieved a lot, and only about two hundred cases that required long, complex procedures remained(20). Sadat stressed this in a speech which he gave in Tanta on January 8, 1970. He said, "There were a lot of things which Gamal (May he rest in peace) wanted to carry out but needed time to do so. Now I am carrying them out. He had passed the confiscation elimination decree(21).

On December 29, 1970, President Sadat enjoined that the confiscation elimination decree be published in the newspapers. It included several points such as the following:

- a) Eliminating confiscations,
- b) No confiscation without a judge and judicial procedures.
- c) The appointment of a socialist prosecutor to be in charge of these tasks(22).

The publication of the confiscation elimination decree in the newspapers aroused the anger of many of Sadat's men and his ministers because they had not been informed of that decree. That anger was expressed by Sha'rawy Gomaa, the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, when he entered to attend the cabinet meeting. He said loudly and angrily, "By God, no one in this country knows how this country is going on ... We are ministers who read about new laws in the newspapers of which we have

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no knowledge about it(23).

As a result of the people's acceptance of the confiscation liquidation decree, Sadat's men and ministers who opposed him could do nothing in public against that decree, but the conflict between them and Sadat heightened and they began to say in the Socialist Union meetings that the decree offend Egypt before socialist countries. Sadat says, "That conflict was on their part. As for me, I'm sitting on the edge of the canal waiting till corpses pass in front on me one by one, as the Chinese proverb says. There is nothing that shakes me"(24). After that, Law No. 34 for the year 1971 on the organization of confiscation and securing the safety of the people was passed after it was approved by Parliament (25). Then Law No. 52 for the year 1972 on the liquidation of **confiscations was** passed on October 1, pursuant to Law No. 150 for the year 1964. Law No. 53 for the year 1972 on the liquidation of confiscation prior to Law No. 34 for the year 1970 was also passed on October 1(26).

1. **February 4.1971 Peace Initiative;** It seems that Sadat was aware of the international political situation, the competition and conflict between the two superpowers at that time principalship each the USSR and USA, and the prevalence of the cold war between them. He tried to woo the United States with attempts to create contact channels with it. He also tried to urge the USSR to give him all that he wanted, especially weapons.

On the other hand, Sadat tried hard to prove his existence and personality in power at the domestic level. That was the opportunity for those opposing partners who could not oppose him in public on the confiscation issue. Now they had the opportunity to oppose him in the peace initiative which he announced in Parliament on February 4, 1971. Sadat was to make a statement in Parliament on February 4 announcing the renewal of cease-fire

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and explaining the general political and military situation. Before he made his statement, there was a discussion between him and Sha'arawy Gomaa, Mahmoud Riyad and Samy Sharaf over the initiative which Sadat intended to announce through his statement. They tried to dissuade him from announcing the initiative, but in vain. They dealing the section express of initiative of the statement with the omissions and modifications, especially the paragraphs which attacked the Arabs who did not help with the preparation for the war, and the President tried to explain *to* them, but in vain(27).

Sadat announced his first; peace initiative in which he confirmed Egypt's commitments to its responsibilities to liberate all the Arab lands occupied in June. 1967, and to make all sacrifices in order to achieve that goal. He announced that Egypt accepted the UN secretary general\* call for a thirty-day cease-fire in the war or attrition against Israel, provided that there was real progress towards troops from the east bank of the Suez Canal in preparation of opening it for international navigation and returning;; the legitimate right of the Palestinian people(28).

After the announcement of the □□□□□□□□□□ Sadat's opposing partners came to realize that their fears and doubts regarding his foreign contacts and his single handed reign began to be evidence and publicly. They gathered in the President's hall in Parliament after the President left and expressed their rebellion loudly. Ali Sabry said, "I had no hand and I'm not to be held responsible." Another one said that Sadat defended about this initiative in the face of the demonstrations which would sweep the country(29).

Some see that November 4 Initiative came in the context of the official and unofficial contacts to explore the horizons of the relations with the



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United States of America and to show the willingness of Egyptian leaders to engage in a peaceful settlement with Israel(30). Mohamed Hassanein Heikal sees that Sadat's opposing partners had nothing to do for him or for the country. All that they could do was to present cloudy and vague conceptions and increased dependence on the Soviet Union which was not willing to bear any additional responsibilities regarding Egypt or the Middle East(31). That initiative brought about only more breakup between Sadat and his partners. It also gave the practical impression of the shift of the Egyptian policy to west countries, something which made the Soviet Union feel worried about its relations with Egypt and its interests in the region.

### **3.The Triple Union Project:** The third issue which triggered

conflict within the ruling elite was the Triple Union Project between Egypt, Syria and Libya. That project was not a new one. It was renewed by President Sadat, in terms of initiation, timing, preparation and production, in political cunning with various dimensions and goals, to get out of the siege which he imagined himself in internally and externally and to make the confrontation between him and his political rivals overt, something which would enable him to justify his attitudes and decisions against them.

The union project was written in June, 1970 during Abdel- Nasser's visit to Libya in that month(32). President Sadat took advantage of that written project and called both President Hafez Al-Asad of Syria and President Moamar Al-Ghazafy of Libya. He had agreed with them on a meeting to be held in Tripoli on April 16, 1971, i.e. before the time set by the Egyptian National Security Council to start military operations against Israel in the last week of April. In the first hours of April 17 the three presidents signed the " Union of the United Arab Republics" Agreement.

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Sadat's political opponents soon objected to that trend which he took towards union on the grounds that once the new union country, there would be new political organizations, entities and institutions that would conform with what had been agreed upon. In other words, there would be forthcoming elections for both the Socialist Union and Parliament, and those elections might result in a change in the political structure in Egypt, which was then in their favor in terms of trend and majority. Hence their opposition to the Triple Union Project besides their opposition to Sadat himself on the grounds that he took decisions alone without consulting the constitutional institutions in the country and without taking their opinion and even without informing them. Sadat, in turn, realized that the union is not to be seen in the short or long run. His real goal was to beleaguer those who had *tried* to tie his hands and legs, as he described it, and to besiege him. with political and constitutional institutions that were effective only in as much as the cover they provided for power and authority facts(33).

'The Union Agreement provided that each of the three countries of the union keep its president, government, parliament, army and all other institutions. In addition, it provided that a presidential council . parliament and a constitutional court be established for the three republics'(34). When that agreement was presented to the Executive Committee of the Socialist Union, Sadat found himself on the minority's side, as he had got only three out of eight votes. That result surprised him, and he decided to escalate the confrontation with those opponents. So, he ordered that the meeting be ended and that discussions before the Central Committee of the Socialist Union be resumed later.

Those who opposed President Sadat, in turn, saw that the Triple Union Project was their opportunity to blow the conflict with Sadat, exploiting

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their positions and their greatness in large numbers in the constitutional institutions of the country, especially the Socialist Union institutions, and taking advantage of the people's sad memories about the failure of the unity between Egypt and Syria in 1961, in order to dominate and curb Sadat's power which grew much more stronger than they thought, something which made them get worried about their expectation to reach leadership positions (35), or at least keep the authorities they already had.

Although the point had to do taking opinion on one of Egypt's foreign affairs, it, as Sadat said, revealed "a great conspiracy against him personally as well as against the country"(36). To resolve that confrontation, they agreed to form a committee to consider the agreement and have the suggestions of the members headed by Abdel-Mohsen Abulnour, the secretary of the Socialist Union. The committee suggested making some fundamental modifications(37). Therefore, the Central Committee met on April 29, 1971, and the modified project was presented to it. The Central Committee approved it at once, and on the same day the cabinet approved it. On the same day, too, Parliament held a meeting at 5:30 p.m. to give its opinion on the union project and approved it(38). The Constitution of the Union of the Arab Republics was prepared and was presented to the public on a public referendum. The public agreed to it with a great majority of votes(39). Thus, the Triple Union came to light, but it had its effects on the ruling elite in Egypt.

### **Fourth- The Confrontation between Sadat and his Opponents:**

#### **1-The Deposition of All Sabry:**

After problems between Sadat and his opposing partners accumulated, especially as regards fundamental issues such as confiscations, and their attitude towards the peace initiative which he announced on February 4,

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1971 and their opposition to the Triple Union Project matters headed for confrontation. Sadat decided on getting rid of the opposition leaders so that the ruling elite might have one agreed-upon policy and not dispute over important national issues or issues which concerned the management of citizens' ordinary affairs.

Celebration of Labor's Day in May, 1971 came, and if had been decided to be held in Helwan, south of Cairo. Both Sadat, and his opponents got ready for that celebration, each *in* his own way. The rupture of relations between them *heightened* and rumors increased, The Socialist Union leaders did not make efforts to mobilize the usual number of laborers for that occasion every year. Those leaders also refused to receive or welcome Sadat, and a large number of laborers, who attended the celebration, shouted expressing their hostility to wards America and imperialism and lifted pictures of Gamal Abdel Nasser and signs carrying excerpts of his speeches on them, ignoring Sadat completely (40).

Sadat started his speech in the celebration by standing for a minute mourning Abdel-Nasser in memory of him. He reviewed the preparation for the battle with the Israeli enemy by the necessity of internal building and the necessity of building the armed forces. He explained Egypt's foreign and Arab relations and presented his vision of building the modern state based on science and faith. As regards his confrontation with his opponents, he got out a separate paper and read what was a declaration of the start of the overt conflict with his opponents. He said, "No individual or group has the right to claim to have power independently of this people or to have a position through which they can impose their opinions on the people, or hide behind slogans or maneuvers through which they can form power centers whereby they impose their guardianship of the people after

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this people and Gamal eliminated all power centers so that the people alone may be able to act with free will(41).

On the next day Sadat passed a decree deposing Ali Sabry as a vice-presidency and assistant president for aviation affairs. On the other hand, Ali Sabry was a member of the Supreme Committee of the Socialist Union, and his dismissal from that committee was within the competence of that committee itself(42).

On May 3, on which the news of his deposition was published, Ali Sabry submitted his resignation of Supreme Committee to Abdel-Mohsen Abulnour, the secretary general of the Socialist Union, explaining some circumstances accompanying the difference in views between him and the President of the Republic(43).

Consequently, the President called the members of the Supreme Committee for a meeting in his house. He said to them, "You may notice that two of you are absent: Ali Sabry and Diaa Dawoud. I did not invite them because the meeting is in my house. If it had been held in an official place, I would have invited them(44).

### **2-US Secretary of State's Visit to Cairo:**

The direct and indirect communication lines which Sadat built with the United States resulted in a visit by William Rogers, the US Secretary of State, to Cairo on May 6, 1971. The decree of deposing Ali Sabry, who was a friend of the Soviet Union, was a due greeting, albeit unintentional in itself, to the US Secretary of State, indicating that the leaders in Egypt welcomed his arrival and wished to cooperate with him as regards the Middle East crisis, thus shifting from the Soviet Union to the United States.

Sadat was eager to meet the US Secretary of State and listen to his ideas

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and suggestions. He got prepared for that meeting by sending several letters to both Pompidou, the French President, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and the Iranian Shah, in preparation of that visit.

During President Sadat's, meeting with William Rogers, a slight movement was made by the watch which the latter was wearing on his wrist. Rogers said to Sadat, "Someone is trying to record what is going on between us." With that magnetic device installed in his watch, he could feel that there was an amplifier hidden in the Egyptian President's office. Thus, Sadat knew that he was being watched by people working in his office(45).

Accordingly, President Sadat's talks with Rogers took place between them alone, almost privately, and no one could know their minute details. All that was sweated was that Rogers came with vague promises and a lot of good words, and all that he confessed was that Egypt "can do no more that it has done for the sake of peace"(46). That visit did not end up with a positive result.

The party opposing Sadat and supporting the Soviet Union took advantage of that failure in Roger's task, and began to question the policy adopted by Sadat towards the west. They expressed their convictions that the main goal of the United States was to strike the liberal and Nasserist elements, the socialist development and Egypt's relation with the Arab world and international socialist powers, especially the Soviet Union, so that Egypt might be isolated and lose its leading role in the

region; and that the United States waved the peaceful solution because of its impact on the armed forces as it would weaken the fighting spirit among their members, while Israel would continue to support its existence in the occupied Arab land, change its topography and demography and increase its fighting capacities(47).

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What Sadat's opponents expressed was not unknown to him. He spoke about it in a meeting which had with a number of writers and journalists in October, 1971. He said, "America aims clearly at eliminating Soviet existence from the Middle East, isolating Egypt and getting rid of the regime"(48).

In short, the US Secretary of State's visit to Cairo came to show the extent and depth of President Sadat's conflict and discord with his opponents whom he knew, and with people in his office whom he did not know and who installed amplifiers in that office. That visit also came to confirm the increasing distance between the Soviet Union and Egyptian leaders who began to turn towards the west, especially the United States. Moreover, that visit came to prove to President Sadat that the goals of the United States in the region was a long-term strategy which was based on making Israel its strong ally the was militarily superior to all Arab countries, and that its peaceful attempts to solve the Middle East crisis were just to serve its strategic goals and various interests in the region and put all affairs and crises under its control away from the intervention and influence of the Soviet Union. Thus, Egypt would get involved in the international political battlefield and become the center of attraction and interest for the superpowers as the basis of all international policies in the region, and the political trend was adopted by Egyptian leaders would become the object of great international survey and analysis to assess Egypt's domestic and foreign political steps and their impact on the interests of those superpowers which had interests in the region.

**1-Mass Resignations:** Sadat's deposition of Ali Sabry was not an ordinary event that might pass easily. Rather, it was a decision which he took to declare confrontation with his opponents, a decision that would be

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followed by other decisions to set up the scene and restructure the system. The other side, too, had its considerations and decisions. Sadat summoned Sha'rawy Gomaa in his capacity as the organization secretary of the Socialist Union and said to him, "I have decided to liquidate the Socialist Union as a whole and hold new elections from bottom to top"(49).

In the evening of May 11, 1971, an officer named Taha Zaki holding a tape came to President Sadat. He said that it was very important and asked the President to listen to it. The tape contained a phone call between Mahmoud El-Sa'dany, a journalist, and Farid Abdel-Karim, a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Union. They were discussing the circumstances and problems surrounding the above-mentioned committee, especially in the context of the discussions accompanying the Triple Union Project. Farid Abdel-Karim asked if it was possible for Sadat to resort to the radio station. Mahmoud El-Sa'dany replied, "Who will let him do so?"(50). From that phone call, it was understood that what was meant was to prevent the President from reaching the radio station and talking to the public or besiege him or even assassinate him. The public prosecution made an investigation into all those circumstances and ended up with keeping(51). Since the security of the radio station was the responsibility of the Minister of the Interior, President Sadat asked Samy Sharaf to go to Sha'rawy Gomaa, the Minister of the Interior, to tell him to resign because the President did not want to depose him like Ali Sabry as a special favor to him(52).

The President summoned General Mamdouh Salem, the governor of Alexandria, to be the Minister of the Interior, and asked him not to use the central security forces and put the tapes room in the Ministry of the Interior into custody, because the tape submitted by the security officer was



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returned to its place so that its disappearance might not be found out. He also ordered him to arrest Hassan Talaat, the director of the State's Security Investigation(53).

The newscast broadcasted the news of Sha'rawy Gomaa's resignation at 8:30 on May 13. Consequently, Sadat's opponents decided to move in public and announce what they had prepared in the hope that the situation of the country would worsen. They sent Mr. Ashraf Marwan, the son-of-law of the late President Ghamal Abdel-Nasser, to Sadat, a few minutes before airing the 11 o'clock newscast in the evening of the same day to hand over to him the resignation of both lieutenant general Mohamed Fawzy, the Minister of Defense, Samy Sharaf, the Minister of Presidency Affairs, Mohamed Fa'eq, the Minister of Information, Helmy El-Said, the Minister of Electricity, and Sa'ad El-Din Zayed, the Minister of Housing and Utilities, and to tell him that all those resignations would be announced after a few minutes in the 11 o'clock newscast. On the newscast also announced the resignations of a number of the members of the Supreme Executive Committee, Labia Shakier, the president of Parliament, and Diyaa El-Din Dawoud, the secretary of the Socialist Union, without writing their resignations(54).

After receiving these resignations from Ashraf Marawan and hearing the news on the radio, the President asked Fawzy Abdel-Hafez, his secretary, to tell the radio station to announce that the President accepted the resignations after announcing them all at once. The president ordered that those who had resigned be detained in their own houses and passed a decree promoting lieutenant general Mohamed Ahmed Sadek, chief of general staff, to the position of general and appointing him as Defense Minister(55). Those who saw Sadat at that night say that he was self-

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possessed and was behaving in a uniquely clear-headed manner. He accepted the resignations simply, as if every thing indicated that he had the trust of all forces in the country, on top of which were the republican guard forces and the army (56).

**4-Relation with the Soviet Union:** On May 25, 1971 a Soviet delegation headed by Nicolai Badgourney, the president of the Soviet Union, and having as members Andre Gromico, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and a group of military experts and legal consultants, arrived in Cairo. Nicolai Badgoumey had a complete text on a friendship and cooperation agreement with Egypt, which confirmed the Soviet leaders' seriousness and interest in the new developments in Egypt and their impacts on the international policy in the region.

During the talks, Badgourney did not hide the Kremlin's fears of the political change occurring in Cairo from Sadat. In this regard, he said, "We do not feel reassured about our political and military investments in Egypt which sends our friends to prison. Therefore, we need official guarantees to justify the assistance we provide for you"(57). President Sadat was willing to reassure the Soviets as much as he could to prove to them that he, and not the others, was a friend of the Soviet Union. He concluded a fifteen-year friendship and coalition agreement with them, which sought to widen and deepen the overall cooperation relations in all fields: political, military, economic and social(58). This indicates how far the Soviet leaders were worried about the as the development of events in Egypt and its trends as well as about the disappearance of those whom the system considered to be friends of the Soviets.

On his part, President Sadat stated that our friendship with the Soviet Union was a friendship of principle, not a temporary one(59). He also

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passed a presidential decree approving that agreement(60). On the other hand, the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet Council unanimously approved the friendship and coalition treaty with Egypt(61).

### Fifth- Decrees and Procedures of **Restructuring** the Regime:

1-Cancellation of Surveillance of Freedoms: On May 13, 1971 President Sadat decreed that all police surveillance of citizens' freedom be stopped immediately and that no wiretapping be exercised without a judicial order. He also decreed that a special, committee be formed to investigate into matters related to public freedoms. That committee sprang from the National Security Committee mentioned in the March 30, 1968 statement. He asked the Minister of Justice to charge the public prosecution with interrogate some people whose actions showed that they were working against the interest and security of the public, something which affected the interior front which, because of war, must be intact and confident and back up the armed forces which was fighting the honor and dignity battle(62).

2-**The Meeting of Parliament:** Sadat was in need of an organizational and public base from which to gain support and assistance in the confrontation with his opponents in order to get rid of them and restructure the regime based on new principles and laws. His most important and strongest organizational and public base was Parliament which Sadat presided over for two successive periods during which he formed a wide circle of friends and proponents from members of Parliament. The majority of them were also leading members of the Socialist Union(63).

Thus, President Sadat resorted to Parliament in the heights of his confrontation and conflict with his opponents. In the evening of May 13, 1970 he summoned Engineer Sayed Marie. The latter says, "The President

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assigned to me a task which I had to accomplish in Parliament on the next day, owing to my continuous relations with many of the members of Parliament. That task was to deprive the President of Parliament and the few members who were driven by power centers of Parliament membership"(64). Sayed Marie's testimony indicates that Sadat had already prepared himself tightly to get rid of his opponents before they got rid of him. So, he accepted the resignations submitted by some of them, and now he had to confront the rest and get rid of them following proper procedures.

Parliament held an emergent session on May 14, 1971 to deprive eighteen members, including the president and two vice- presidents of their membership. Members of Parliament agreed to deprive them of Parliament membership with a majority of 263 votes and announced the vacancy of their seats(65). On the same day, President Sadat had delivered a comprehensive speech to the people before Parliament meeting. In that speech he talked about the restructuring of the Socialist Union through elections and about a new constitution for the country to be issued in the name of the Arab Republic of Egypt. He passed his decree No. 780 regarding the formation of the new cabinet headed by Dr. Mahmoud Fawzy(66), Then May 15 came to witness the stability of the conditions in favor of President Sadat who made that day a symbol and a feast day for that corrective movement.

### **Sixth- Building the Modern State:**

**1. Setting the Permanent Constitution:** Since the outbreak of the **July 23, 1952** Revolution, Egypt had lived under a revolutionary legitimacy which can be said to conform with the nature of the new revolutionary regime or the domestic conditions of the country. Therefore, the general policies of the countries of the region and the regime depended on the constitutional announcements made to resolve public issues and problems, restructure some or all of the State's institutions and change the form, concept and method of the entire political system, such as the constitutional announcement made on June 18, 1953 regarding the cancellation of monarchy and **the** declaration of the republican regime(67).

In the session of Parliament on May 20, 1971, and through a comprehensive speech, President Sadat presented his view of the building of the modern State, He focused on the necessity of setting the permanent constitution, the Arab nationalism of Egypt, his keenness on protecting supporting and deepening socialist gains. He also stressed that socialism represented legitimacy for relations in society, although' he gave the private sector and private property' the opportunity to have their developmental role in society, giving them adequate guarantees in an implicit reference to business community and capital fears of nationalization decrees. This point is considered an initial indication of President. Sadat's orientation towards economic. then, political liberalism. This was confirmed by providing for it in the constitution which is the father of all laws sadat stressed the necessity of establishing the State of institutions and of clearly determining the responsibilities of each of them, whether they were legislative, executive or judicial He also stressed public direct and continuous control of those institutions. Moreover, Sadat focused on the social dimension in

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the new constitution in terms of securing a pension for every disabled

citizen and his/her under-age children after death. He also stressed that trade unions and Parliament should have to play in developing society and monitoring the general plan of political structure and economic and social development, and that the Constitution should provide adequate guarantees for Parliament so that it might be dissolved only when necessary and through a public referendum(68).

More than three months later, the Preparatory Committee and its sub-committees finished work on setting the Constitution, which benefited by previous experiences, studied the facts of reality, and visualized possibilities of future development to give a distinguished political and organizational form to the Egyptian regime. A public referendum on that Constitution was conducted on September 11, 1970, and the people approved it with a majority of votes that amounted to 99.98% (69).

It can be generally noticed about that Constitution that it balanced the essential elements and rights of society and those of the individual, inspired by one of the pillars of the liberal system in caring for the individual. It seems that this was a result of the expertise of those who made the Constitution and their awareness of the transgressions against personal freedoms prior to the Constitution(70). On the other hand, the Constitution determined the competences and responsibilities of the president of the republic, the government and Parliament in a way that combined presidential and Parliamentary systems, although it slightly tended towards the Parliamentary system(71).

Some see that the mixed system takes the advantages of both the presidential and Parliamentary systems, with a desire to strengthening the power of the president of the republic as the head of the executive authority

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so that he might be able, by virtue of the constitutional competences he had, to face the circumstances and challenges which often faced the country and to avoid some deficiencies of the Parliamentary system which existed pursuant to the 1923 Constitution(72). Therefore, that Constitution gave the President many executive and legislative authorities(73).

### **2-Restructuring the Socialist Union:** About the restructuring

of the Socialist Union, President Sadat, in his speech which he gave on May 20, 1971, stressed that the coalition of working public forces in the Socialist Union is the suitable and satisfactory form of political organization. On the same day he passed a decree regarding the restructuring of the Socialist Union through free direct election to be formed of the main units in villages, districts and the Public National Conference(74).

In restructuring the Socialist Union, care was taken to act on enlightened opinions and democratic principles without violating the principles on which the Socialist Union was built and its achievements in the previous stage. For the sake of development, the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Conference of the Union, in its emergent session held in February, 1972, passed an important decision on developing the Union as a leading public tool of the coalition of working public forces intellectually, politically and organizationally(75).

President Sadat's speech about democracy as a way to reach the public had its effect on the public who responded to all his political and organizational trends. However, some thinkers believe that the process of restructuring the Socialist Union was intended to restrict its role in political practice. The most remarkable evidence of this was stopping at the formation of only the Central Committee. No members were elected for the Supreme Executive Committee. This means direct communication between

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the top political leaders represented by the President of the Republic and the President of the Social Union and the representatives of the members of the Public National Conference in the Central Committee(76).

**Seven- Abstract:** The present research can be summarized in the following points:

1. Egypt witnessed a crisis in the regime in 1971. The heroes of that crisis were two wing. The first was headed by the President of the Republic and adopted and represented the rightist thought of July 23 Revolution or rather the late President Gamal Abdel-Nasser's thought. The second was headed by the vice-president and a number of the members of the ruling elite in the regime who adopted and represented the leftist thought of July 23 Revolution or rather President Abdel-Nasser's thought, too.

2. The signs of the discard between those two wings appeared at several Levels: domestic (represented in some laws and procedures necessary to managing citizens' daily life), regional (represented in the modification of the frameworks, methods and substance of dealing with some Arab forces, especially the radical ones), and international (represented in thinking of the possibility of dealing with western capitalist countries besides dependence on the Soviet Union).

3. The great charisma of the late President Abdel-Nasser which established his popularity inside and outside the country imposed some sort of vagueness on the policies and behavior of President Sadat in the first year of his rule, as he began to depart from the political orientations of Nasser's Age while trying to draw on the popularity and legitimacy of that regime.

4. The takeover of the presidency by the rightist camp headed by



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President Sadat represented a knockout to the leftist powers of Abdel-Nasser, making them shades of what was light and clouds of what was flooding rain. A leader in the Egyptian political system has a superior position which makes him the core of this system, the center of gravity in it, and often the only and single source of legitimacy.

5. The weakness of constitutional institutions, the imbalance between the three authorities (the legislative, the executive, and the judicial), and the ineffectiveness of political organization had its effect on triggering conflict within the ruling elite in the Egyptian regime and their failure to reach accord to lead the country. The rightist powers with their socialist democratic thoughts grew stronger while the leftist powers with their totalitarian socialist way weakened.

6. President Sadat achieved great success in his struggle with the leftist powers whom he called "power centers", using maneuvers, exceptional procedures, and constitutional authorities. He managed to drive them out of power and put them in prisons although they used to manage the most important elements of power and violence in the system, namely the army, the police, media, intelligence, and the Socialist Union.

7. It is clear that the May 15, 1971 Movement went in two clear directions: one destroyed all the negative aspects of the stage which led Egypt to the 1967 circumstances and events and their resulting bitterness, and the other was a constructive one aiming at strengthening positive aspects and, therefore, was a vital requirement at the intellectual and material levels.

8. After overcoming his opposing partners, President Sadat appeared as a man who sought to restructure the regime on democratic principals which augmented the role of constitutional institutions, elevated the supremacy of

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law, prevent transgressions against freedoms and others, and made the political, constitutional, scientific and social institutions in the country undertake their responsibilities and competences clearly and maintain a close cooperative relation without the intervention of any of them in the competences of the others. Thus, the Constitution was the first law for all authorities, and hence the restructuring of the Socialist Union, the only political organization in the country.

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