

---

MIDDLE EAST

---

# Sadat tries to halt Iranization of Egypt

by Judith Wyer

State Department officials who administer the Global 2000 population-reduction policy, say that if Egyptian President Anwar Sadat does not take immediate measures to reduce Egypt's population growth rate, that country will be destabilized and Sadat will likely be overthrown.

Sadat refuses to endorse population control, partly because he knows it would be read by many Egyptians as genocide. Sadat's major concern is staying in power, and at this point he will not give his opponents any further excuse to challenge him.

Officials of the State Department's Agency for International Development (AID) and Population Affairs Office, who declined to be identified, are bitterly condemning Sadat for his refusal to adopt the Global 2000 perspective. One such source stated: "If Sadat doesn't toughen up on the population issue, he will face severe chaos. . . . The infrastructure in Cairo can't handle many more people and Egypt will not be able to feed the growing mass of Egyptians that comprise what we call the Egyptian population bomb, which one of these days will go off."

Such a forecast constitutes a warning that the same British intelligence and financial elite which installed the butcher Khomeini is now preparing to give Egypt the same treatment for the same reason.

## The Iran parallel

Like the late Shah, Sadat is beginning to defy such Malthusianism with an economic development plan aimed at improving Egypt's standard of living. The venom being thrown at Sadat to reduce Egypt's population is only a cover for a demand that Sadat break with an economic development program, which, like that of the Shah's, is based on a bold nuclear energy program. Like Pahlavi's Iran, Egypt is one of the most populous nations in the Mideast with a large skilled labor force of scientists and technicians that are essential to future industrialization.

Sadat also shares a critical flaw with the late Shah. Though Sadat proposes raising the living standards of

the majority of Egyptians who live in poverty, he has never developed a plan of action and education for solving this ancient problem. During Sadat's tenure, class and income differences widened as a middle class emerged. It is precisely the impoverished masses that have been whipped up to challenge Sadat by his opposition.

Sadat's need for an unprecedented purge of religious and secular opposition groups last month was the first signal that the most serious challenge in Sadat's 11-year-old rule was being mounted. Like the motley coalition of terrorists and fundamentalists that came to power with Khomeini, this menagerie of Egyptian radicals shares the common zero-growth ideology that material progress is the root of Egypt's problems.

According to a former official of the Ford administration who just returned from Egypt, the numerous sects of the Muslim Brotherhood are demanding a return to the Nasser era when the middle classes were minuscule, and organizing the lower classes with the slogan, "It is better that all of Egypt is poor."

The dramatic upturn in the rate of Egypt's population since 1973 is, in fact, attributable to the slow but steady improvement in Egypt's economy. With the return of the Sinai oilfields from Israel, and the widening of the Suez Canal to accommodate more toll-paying traffic, Egypt has begun to net a substantial increase in badly needed foreign exchange. As a result, Sadat is moving aggressively to transform that new income into an infrastructure for future development. In the last six months, Egypt has signed nuclear purchase agreements with the United States, France, Germany, and Britain to buy eight nuclear plants. Sadat envisions these plants to be used for desalination to support expanded agriculture to feed Egypt's growing numbers.

A State Department official with the Office of Population Affairs bemoaned agricultural plans. "Sadat has this fantasy where he thinks he can make the desert bloom and solve Egypt's food problem." He complained that last year the Futures Group's RAPID Project—one of the leading implementers of Global 2000—presented its gloom and doom scenarios to Sadat of the consequences of unchecked Egyptian population growth. Though Sadat and his wife Jihan reportedly agreed with RAPID's warnings, Sadat has not translated the meeting into action. "He has neither publicly supported population control nor mobilized his government to that end," complained the source.

Should Sadat's recent clampdown prove to have been effective in undermining his opposition, then there is another option for putting Sadat out of business which an official with the Pathfinder Fund, another supporter of Global 2000, recently revealed. "If Sadat doesn't do something about population," he warned, "then someone may just put a bullet in his head."