A Model...

Al-Wadi (Hadith al-Wadi), August 23, 1934

Events may crowd in upon one another, but the Egyptians have learned from Saad how to stand firm against them. Calamities may grow dark and heavy, but the Egyptians have learned from Saad how to free themselves from them.

Trials may follow one upon another without pause, but the Egyptians have learned from Saad how to laugh them off. Misfortunes may pile themselves one atop another, but the Egyptians have learned from Saad how to rise above them.

And the days themselves may turn now to jest and now to earnest, but the Egyptians have learned from Saad how to meet the days with the very same jest and earnest the days bring to them. The enemies of Egypt, those who scheme against her and plot against her, will find in Egypt nothing but what grieves them and weighs upon them, nothing but the ruin of whatever schemes they contrive, whatever plots they conceal, whatever harm they prepare — for the Egyptians have a teacher who knew how to reach their hearts, to settle within them, to fill them with strength, with intelligence, with steadfastness, with resolve. He knew how to reach their very souls, to hold sway over them, to guard them against weakness and frailty, to protect them from panic and fear, to raise them above despair and hopelessness.

And he knew, further, how to penetrate their consciences, filling them with life and strength, pouring over them purity and clarity, spreading through them that fine, insistent sense which forbids them ever to accept injustice, which raises them above ever submitting to abasement, which protects them from ever doubting the truth, which guards them from ever falling short in duty, which makes them too great ever to fail their own homeland. And he made death itself more welcome to them, dearer to them, than accepting any baseness, or accepting from their enemies and adversaries what the conscience of this noble people could never accept.

The days may scheme against Egypt, may plot against Egypt, may wage open or secret war upon Egypt — but ancient Egypt learned from her glorious history, and modern Egypt has learned from her great leader, how both can conquer time itself, how both can triumph over the

tyranny of tyrants and the injustice of the unjust.

Every misfortune that has befallen Egypt since Saad's death had already befallen her in Saad's own lifetime, and Saad knew how to meet misfortune, to bear it with patience, and to free himself from it — and he taught his Egyptian sons how to be moved by his example, to follow his path, and to take him for their guide.

If the colonizers have extended their dominion and grown excessive in their aggression against Egypt since Saad's death, they had already extended that dominion and grown excessive in that tyranny during Saad's own lifetime. And Saad knew how to guard against this extended dominion, how to turn back this excessive tyranny, and the Egyptians learned from him how to meet the injustice of the colonizers, and how to free themselves from the tyranny of tyrants.

If the unjust have spilled Egyptian blood since Saad's death, the unjust had already spilled Egyptian blood in Saad's own lifetime, and he taught them how free souls come to find such pure blood, shed in freedom's cause, a thing they can bear. If Egyptians have been struck by dispersal and exile, by dark prisons, they had already been struck by all of this in Saad's own lifetime, and Saad was the very first among them to be struck by all of it. And he taught them how to meet all of it with that same mocking, patient smile which ought to stand as the very symbol of eternal Egypt, and of Saad's own great spirit.

If Egyptians have suffered blows to their constitution since Saad's death, Egyptians had already suffered such blows to their constitution during Saad's own lifetime. And Saad taught them what it means to insist upon the truth, and how a noble man holds himself above pliancy where pliancy has no place, and above indifference where indifference ought never to be shown; and he taught them the nature of that resistance which the unjust take for weakness, though it is strength entire, which tyrants imagine to be surrender, though it is defiance entire, and which despots see as a path toward submission and compliance, though it is in truth the path to triumph and the road to victory.

And if the English have since Saad's death persisted in cunning and treachery, in promises at one moment and threats at another, in smiles at one turn and scowls at another, in evasion and maneuvering, they had already persisted in all of this against the Egyptians during Saad's own lifetime — and Saad taught them how to meet all of it believing in the truth, insisting upon it, earnest in pursuing it, deceived by no promise,

frightened by no threat, advancing along a straight path that neither bends nor twists, toward a clear and manifest goal, its banners held high, hidden from none but those who prefer themselves to their own nation, and place their own interests above the interests of their homeland.

Whatever good or ill Egypt endures, whatever sweet or bitter she tastes, in these very days after Saad's death, Egypt had already endured and already tasted in those earlier days when Saad still lived. And Egypt saw Saad himself enduring what she endures, tasting what she tastes, charting for her the path to triumph, laying out for her the road to victory, going before her into sacrifice whenever sacrifice was needed, and following after her in the gathering of its fruits whenever the gathering of fruits was granted to her. Saad knew how to hold the hearts of the Egyptians in his possession, and how to fill them with his own great person. And whatever strength Egypt found within herself in Saad's lifetime, she will always find within herself after Saad's death — for this righteous example, set by this great man, can never be weakened, can never be brought to nothing. Should the colonizers grow impatient with Egypt's refusal of colonization, with her resistance to whatever schemes they prepare for her; should the tyrants grow impatient with Egypt's rejection of tyranny, with her defiance of whatever plots are laid against her; and should either of them ask after the source of this refusal, this defiance, this resistance that knows neither weakness nor fatigue — let both of them know that the source of all this is the righteous example Saad set for the Egyptians. If the colonizers were able to make Saad accept colonization, they will be able to make the Egyptians accept it too. If the tyrants were able to humble Saad before tyranny, they will be able to humble the Egyptians before it too. If either was able to bring Saad to accept injustice, or subject him to humiliation, or take from him what no noble man would consent to — then they will achieve the very same from the Egyptians. But Saad's life stands before the colonizers, stands before the tyrants. And both know, with full certainty, that they turned against Saad every variety of enticement and intimidation, every kind of promise and threat they could bring to bear, and won from him nothing but that same mocking smile which ought to stand as the symbol of eternal Egypt and of the great Saad.

If the colonizers and the tyrants wish to make war upon the Egyptians' refusal of injustice, upon the Egyptians' rejection of abasement, upon the Egyptians' devotion to freedom, upon the Egyptians' love of honor and independence — then let them make war upon Saad,

for Saad is the source of all of this, within the souls of the Egyptians, within the hearts of every one of them.

And the colonizers and the tyrants know, with full certainty, that they made war upon Saad during his own lifetime and achieved nothing whatsoever against him; and they know, with full certainty, that waging war against the dead — especially when the dead are great — is a far harder and far more difficult struggle than waging war against the living. Yet still they have striven against Saad's spirit with all the strength their struggle could muster. They strove to make people forget him, and people only remembered him the more. They strove to turn hearts away from him, and hearts only loved him the more. They strove to set up before the people images and figures and phantoms and shapes in his place, and could not win from the people so much as a single glance toward all they had erected.

Here they are, waging war upon Saad in his very grave, denying him the resting place the nation itself intended for him — and what will they achieve, when they take this same tomb as a resting place for the eternal Pharaohs? Do they imagine they can turn people away from that great, pure tomb standing in the desert? Do they imagine they can convince people that this new tomb has become a private residence for its guests among the eternal Pharaohs? Here they are, waging war upon his statues, forbidding them the soil of Egypt and the air of Egypt, forbidding the eyes of the people to look upon them — will they achieve anything more than erecting these very statues, with their own hands, in the hearts of every Egyptian?

Here they are, waging war upon every trace Saad left behind, in every single thing — will they erase a single trace of him? Will they achieve anything more than driving the people toward it all the more forcefully, and filling the people's souls with it all the more completely?

They made war upon Saad living, and achieved nothing whatsoever against him; and here they are, making war upon Saad dead these seven years, achieving nothing whatsoever against him either. We do not believe they have given up hope, and we believe, for our part, that they have simply resigned themselves to the defeat that has overtaken them — but we are certain that they will arrive, tomorrow or the day after, at despair, however reluctantly. And if they prove powerless to conquer the eternal Saad, they will prove powerless to conquer eternal Egypt, and will look on, content or resentful, as the Egyptians follow the path Saad

charted for them, find their way by the light Saad set up for them, reach the goal Saad established for them, and win the freedom and independence Saad desired for them.

The love of Saad has become, in Egypt and in the East, a goodly tree, its root firmly fixed, its branch reaching to the sky, its shade spread over every soul, every heart, over the living generations and the generations yet to rise. There is no way to uproot this tree, nor to narrow its shade. If despair must come to someone, none will be driven to it but the unjust, for they attempt what brings no benefit in the attempting, and seek what admits of no attainment. And if hope must come to someone, none will enjoy it but the Egyptians, for they move in step with nature itself, keep pace with the very laws of life, and light their way by a lamp whose light can never be dimmed, whose eternal flame can never be extinguished.

The Egyptians remember Saad today just as they remember him every day, and they are honoring his memory this year just as they honored it in years past, and just as they will honor it in years to come. Let those who made war upon Saad, and still make war upon him, look and see where that war has brought them.

And let those who made war upon Egypt, and still make war upon her, know that this sinful war of theirs will end for them only in what they most despise, and for the Egyptians only in what they most desire.