

State



Weighted down

This Zinnia in the Texas A&M University Floral Test Garden bows with the weight of the rain that fell Tuesday.

Staff photo by Brian Tate

US leaders praise Sadat's character

United Press International "Courageous", "stalwart", and "wise" were among the words U.S. leaders used to describe Egyptian President Anwar Sadat while also voicing hope the fallen leader's Middle East peace crusade will ultimately triumph. "America has lost a close friend, the world has lost a great statesman; mankind has lost a champion of peace," said President Reagan.

"He helped improve a world tormented by malice and pettiness," he said. "Most important, he was a humanitarian unafraid to make peace."

Former President Carter, who hosted the Camp David peace talks between Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in 1978, said Sadat was "the greatest world leader I have ever known."

Carter called Sadat "bold, courageous and very knowledgeable about strategic interrelationships among those Middle East coun-

tries; even those who publicly disagree with him, privately give him their support and admiration."

U.S. Ambassador to Egypt Alfred Atherton said, "The world will surely miss President Sadat's vision, wisdom and humanity."

Both Houses of Congress Tuesday unanimously approved resolutions commemorating Sadat and expressing condolences to the Egyptian people.

"I know what they are feeling and I share their sorrow," Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., said in reference to the assassinations of his brothers President John F. Kennedy and Sen. Robert Kennedy.

"The greatest tribute we can pay to him (Sadat) now is to finish his work."

Senate Republican leader Howard Baker of Tennessee called Sadat "one of the great leaders of our time . . . Surely no man has risked more than he in the quest for peace."

Said Baker, "President Sadat's dream of peace shall never die."

Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd of West Virginia said the world "owes President Sadat a deep debt of gratitude" for his peace efforts.

Sen. John Tower, R-Texas, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said the future in the Middle East "is very much an unknown factor now that Sadat had been removed from the scene."

House speaker Thomas O'Neill, D-Mass., said Sadat "was a unique leader who truly turned the tide of history through his own considerable talent and efforts. All Americans mourn his loss."

Former United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young, a lieutenant to slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., said, "President Sadat's dream of peace in the Middle East will probably be advanced by this cruel and brutal act."

AWACS sales confused

United Press International WASHINGTON — President Reagan's embattled AWACS package for Saudi Arabia was caught in the crossfire of Tuesday's assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Whether it helped or hurt wasn't clear. Sadat was killed in an attack while reviewing troops on the outskirts of Cairo. One opponent to the sale of the radar planes said the death of Sadat pushed the entire question of Middle East policy "back to square one." But a conservative senator said the assassination had changed his mind and he now supports the \$8.5 billion AWACS sale.

The Senate is the main battleground for the controversy, which has pivoted around Israeli opposition to the sale and questions about whether the sensitive American Technology would be safe in the hands of the Saudi monarchy.

Sen. Larry Pressler, R-S.D., an opponent of the sale, said Sadat's death will lessen its chances for approval because the assassination "will reinforce to the American public the instability of certain Arab governments."

Both houses of Congress must reject the proposal in order to block the sale. Substantial pro-Israeli opposition in the House seems to make its veto there likely.

Several congressmen, including Rep. Stephen Solarz, D-N.Y., called for Reagan to withdraw the proposal temporarily to allow for

an assessment of the post-Sadat Middle East.

Rep. William Broomfield, of Michigan, the ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and an opponent of the sale, said, "If the news of Sadat's death is correct, you don't have to worry about AWACS . . . because then we'll be back to square one in the Middle East conflict."

One immediate result of Sadat's death was a 24-hour delay of a scheduled House Foreign Affairs Committee vote on a resolution to disapprove the sale. The committee is expected to oppose the package when it votes today.

The number of senators formally committed to vote against the sale dropped from 50 to 49 — two less than the needed majority — when Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, announced that Sadat's death

changed his mind.

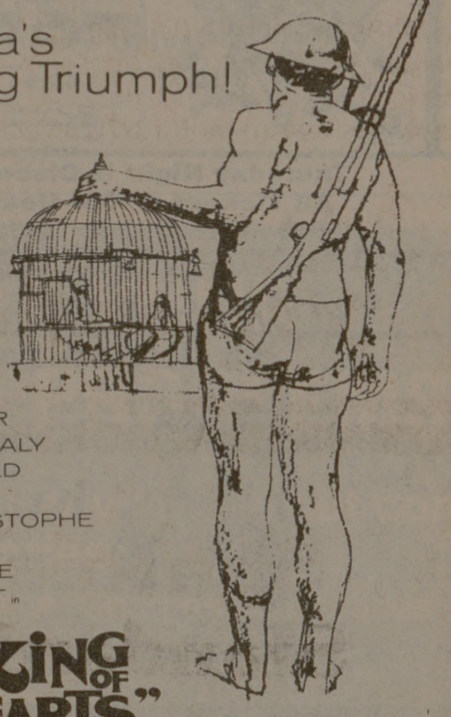
"If there's ever a time to support the president of the United States, this is the time," Hatch said after a White House meeting. "It's very important to support AWACS at this time."

But Assistant Senate Democratic leader Alan Cranston of California noted that the Hatch defection was balanced by the newly announced opposition of Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska.

Cranston said he still expected the Senate would reject the sale, but conceded he was "not as certain" in the aftermath of the assassination.

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