

Middle East - V.P. Mondale's Speech-SF, 6/17/77

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REMARKS OF
VICE PRESIDENT WALTER F. MONDALE

WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

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June 1977

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF., June 17-- Here is the text of Vice President Walter F. Mondale's speech to the World Affairs Council of Northern California:

In the last several months, I've undertaken two extended foreign trips on behalf of the President to Europe and Japan. The more I travel, and the more nations I visit, the more I come to believe that the peoples of the world are not really so different ... that all of us dream the same dreams for our children ... and that the real key to peace and cooperation in the world lies in better understanding between people. Diplomats and heads of state and elected officials must play a role, but we should never underestimate the power of ideas and education and greater understanding to break down the barriers of suspicion and fear that too often separate the nations of the world.

Your programs in the school system, on television, the lectures and seminars you hold, your conference for model UN students are all an important part of that effort. And I'm particularly pleased to see that you're joining together with a number of groups involved in international relations in a new World Affairs Center here in San Francisco and I wish you every success in that venture. And so the contributions of an organization such as yours towards increased understanding in the world are really crucial, not only to the foreign policy efforts of this nation, but to the search for peace.

With the words of his Inaugural Address, President Carter identified at the very outset of his Administration the guiding spirit of this nation's foreign policy:

"Our nation can be strong abroad only if it is strong at home, and we know that the best way to enhance freedom in other lands is to demonstrate here that our democratic system is worthy of emulation. To be true to ourselves, we must be true to others."

And, he elaborated on the basic premises of our relations with other nations in his speech at Notre Dame this May:

- Our policy must be rooted in our people's basic commitment to human rights.
- Our policy must be based on close cooperation with the Western industrial democracies. With them we share basic values; with them also we share a recognition that global problems cannot be solved without close cooperation among us. This was the message the President had me take to Europe and Japan in the first week of the Administration, and this was the spirit which guided the President and his colleagues at the London summit last month.
- Our policy must seek to improve relations with the Soviet Union and China. It must do so in a balanced and reciprocal way, while we maintain a strong defense.
- Our policy must recognize that the cleavage between North and South is as important as between East and West. We must reach out to the world's developing nations, seeking to narrow the gap between rich and poor.

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-- Finally, our policy must provide incentives for all nations to rise above ideology or narrow conceptions of self-interest and work together to resolve regional conflicts and to meet global problems that confront all people.

As an Administration, we are only five months old. However, these months have been a period of intense activity. We are committed to shaping effective policies that truly reflect America's values and objectives -- and we are committed to implementing policies with other nations so as to shape a more peaceful and stable world.

One of our first tasks has been to ensure that our foreign policy reflects the commitment to basic human rights that we as Americans share. That commitment to the inherent dignity of the individual is at the heart of the American tradition. From it flows the democratic liberties that we cherish -- such as the right to worship freely, freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, and due process of law. Those are the basic strengths of our nation.

We have survived as a free nation because we have remained committed to the defense of fundamental moral values we cherish as a people. And unless our foreign policy reflects those values it will not earn the support of the American people. Without that support, no foreign policy, no matter how brilliantly conceived, can succeed.

I believe we have restored that commitment to human rights. I am proud that the United States today stands among those who uphold human rights and human dignity in the world. I am proud that no foreign leader today has any doubt that the United States condemns torture, political imprisonment and repression by any government, anywhere in the world. We believe that basic human rights transcend ideology. We believe all nations, regardless of political system, must respect those rights.

Just as respect for human rights is central to our foreign policy values, so progress toward a just and lasting Middle East settlement is essential to the prospect of a more peaceful world. The President has asked me to describe what we are trying to do to achieve peace in the Middle East. We want the American people to have the fullest possible understanding of our approach, for your support is crucial to its success.

President Carter has now met with the leaders of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The President met with Prime Minister Rabin of Israel and we hope that we will soon meet with the new Prime Minister.

With the exception of the meeting with President Asad which was held in Geneva, I have participated in all of them and have sensed these leaders' great desire for peace, and their longing for the benefits that peace can bring to nations too long mobilized for war. Yet at the same time, we also found deep fears and suspicion which must be overcome if peace is to be achieved in that strategic and troubled region of the world.

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A genuine and lasting peace in the Middle East is of essential interest to all Americans. Conflict there carries the threat of a global confrontation, and runs the risk of nuclear war. As we have seen, war in the Middle East has profound economic consequences. It can, and has, damaged the economies of the entire world. It has been a tragedy for the nations of the region. Even short of war, continued confrontation encourages radicalization and instability.

Genuine peace is needed by all parties to the conflict. The Arab nations need peace.

Israel, above all, has a profound interest in peace. There is no question about that. For almost three decades, Israel has borne the burden of constant war. More than half its entire budget is dedicated to defense. Its citizens bear the highest average tax burden in the world -- more than 60% of their income goes for taxes.

And yet, at the same time, this valiant nation has managed to create a miracle in the desert. With ingenuity, hard work and skill, it has created a land that could be a model for economic development and for political liberty to be emulated throughout the Middle East. Democracy has thrived in Israel despite the kind of adversity that has crushed freedom in other lands.

And yet, what of the future? Is it a future in which Israel's three million people try by force of arms alone to hold out against the hostility and growing power of the Arab world? Or can a process of reconciliation be started -- a process in which peace protects Israel's security, a peace in which the urge for revenge and recrimination is replaced by mutual recognition and respect?

America has a special responsibility and a special opportunity to help bring about this kind of peace. This comes about first of all because of our unique and profound relationship with the state of Israel since its creation more than a generation ago. Our sense of shared values and purposes means that, for Americans, the question of Israel's survival is not a political question but rather stands as a moral imperative of our foreign policy.

And yet, our special relationship with Israel has not been directed against any other country. We have been able to enjoy the friendship of much of the Arab world where we and our close allies have important interests.

It is precisely because of our close ties with both Israel and her Arab neighbors that we are uniquely placed to promote the search for peace, to work for an improved understanding of each side's legitimate concerns, and to help them work out what we hope will be a basis for negotiation leading to a final peace in the Middle East.

When this Administration entered office on January 20, we found that the situation in the Middle East called for a new approach. The step-by-step diplomacy of our predecessors had defused the immediate tensions produced by the war in 1973. But it was also evident that it would be increasingly difficult to achieve small diplomatic concessions when the ultimate shape of a peace agreement remained obscure. At the same time, it was unlikely that an agreement on a lasting peace could be achieved at one stroke.

UN Security Council Resolution 242, which is supported by all the parties, provides a basis for the negotiations which are required if there is to be a settlement. But Resolution 242 does not by itself provide all that is required. We, therefore, decided to work with the parties concerned to outline the overall framework for an enduring peace. Our concept was to use this framework as the basis for a phased negotiation and implementation of specific steps toward peace.

A major impediment to this approach lay in the fact that the positions of all sides were frozen. The words and phrases used by the parties had become encrusted with the fallout of countless diplomatic battles.

We have tried to regain momentum in this process. We have encouraged Arabs and Israelis to begin thinking again seriously about the elements of peace and not to remain committed to particular words and formulations.

To this end, the President has tried to describe our understanding of what the key elements of an overall framework for an agreement might be:

- A commitment to a genuine and lasting peace demonstrated by concrete acts to normalize relations among the countries of the area.
- The establishment of borders for Israel which are recognized by all and which can be kept secure.
- A fair solution to the problem of the Palestinians.

The President has set forth these elements not to dictate a peace or to impose our views but to stimulate fresh thought.

President Carter has gone further than any of his predecessors to stress with Arab leaders the essential point that peace must mean more than merely an end to hostilities, stating as he did in Clinton, Massachusetts last March:

"...the first prerequisite of a lasting peace is the recognition of Israel by her neighbors: Israel's right to exist; Israel's right to exist permanently; Israel's right to exist in peace. That means that over a period of months or years that the borders between Israel and Syria, Israel and Lebanon, Israel and Jordan, Israel and Egypt must be opened up to travel, to tourism, to cultural exchange, to trade, so that no matter who the leaders might be in those countries the people themselves will have formed a mutual understanding and comprehension and a sense of a common purpose to avoid the repetitious wars and deaths that have affected that region so long. That is the first prerequisite of peace."

We have found that the Arab leaders did not insist that this kind of peace is something that only future generations could consider. Some leaders, such as King Hussein, during his visit to Washington, have made clear their commitment to a "just and lasting peace -- one which would enable all the people in the Middle East to divert their energies and resources to build and attain a better future."

So we believe that we have made some progress in getting Arab leaders to recognize Israel's right to exist and to recognize -- however reluctantly -- that this commitment is essential to a genuine peace. That peace must be structured in such a way that it can survive even if some leaders were to nurture aims to destroy Israel. Still, we have a long way to go: the Arabs have been insistent that Israel withdraw from the territories it occupied in the 1967 war. We have made clear our view that Israel should not be asked to withdraw unless it can secure in return real peace from its neighbors.

The question of withdrawal is, in essence, the question of borders. For peace to be enduring, borders must be inviolable. Nations must feel secure behind their borders. Borders must be recognized by all.

A crucial dilemma has been how to provide borders that are both secure and acceptable to all. It is understandable that Israel, having fought a war in every decade since its birth, wants borders that can be defended as easily as possible. But no borders will be secure if neighboring countries do not accept them.

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The problem is that borders that might afford Israel the maximum security in military terms would not be accepted as legitimate by Israel's neighbors. Borders that Israel's neighbors would recognize, Israel has not been willing to accept as forming an adequate line of defense.

For this reason, the President has tried to separate the two issues. On the one hand, there must be recognized borders. But, in addition, there could be separate lines of defense or other measures that could enhance Israel's security. The arrangements in the Sinai and in the Golan Heights provide models of how Israel's security might be enhanced until confidence in a lasting peace can be fully developed.

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We would urge all the parties to think realistically about security arrangements to reduce the fear of surprise attack, to make acts of aggression difficult if not impossible, and to limit the military forces that would confront one another in sensitive areas.

This approach recognizes the fact that there is a profound asymmetry in what the two sides in the Middle East are seeking. On the one hand, a principal Arab concern is to regain lost territory. On the other, Israel wishes peace, and recognition. Territory is tangible, and once ceded difficult to regain short of war. Peace, on the other hand, can be ephemeral. Peaceful intentions can change overnight, unless a solid foundation of cooperation and a firm pattern of reinforcing relationships can be established to ensure that all have a stake in continuing tranquility.

We believe that separating the imperatives of security from the requirement of recognized borders is an important advance toward reconciling the differences between the two sides. It is in this way that Israel could return to approximately the borders that existed prior to the war of 1967, albeit with minor modifications as negotiated among the parties, and yet retain security lines or other arrangements that would ensure Israel's safety as full confidence developed in a comprehensive peace. Thus, with borders explicitly recognized and buttressed by security measures, and with the process of peace unfolding, Israel's security would be greater than it is today.

A further major issue is that of the future of the Palestinian people. It has been the source of continuing tragedy in the Middle East. There are two prerequisites for a lasting peace in this regard. First, there must be a demonstrated willingness on the part of the Palestinians to live in peace alongside Israel. Second, the Palestinians must be given a stake in peace so that they will turn away from the violence of the past and toward a future in which they can express their legitimate political aspirations peacefully.

Thus, if the Palestinians are willing to exist in peace and are prepared to demonstrate that willingness, by recognizing Israel's right to exist in peace, the President has made clear that, in the context of a peace settlement we believe the Palestinians should be given a chance to shed their status as homeless refugees and to partake fully of the benefits of peace in the Middle East, including the possibility of some arrangement for a Palestinian homeland or entity -- preferably in association with Jordan.

How this would be accomplished and the exact character of such an entity is, of course, something that would have to be decided by the parties themselves in the course of negotiation. However, the President has suggested that the viability of this concept and the security of the region might be enhanced if this involved an association with Jordan. But I emphasize that the specifics are for the parties themselves to decide.

This leads me to a further crucial aspect of our approach -- the necessity of direct negotiations among the parties concerned. We cannot conceive of genuine peace existing between countries who will not talk to one another. If they are prepared for peace, the first proof is a willingness to negotiate their differences.

This is why we believe it is so important to proceed with the holding of a Geneva Conference this year. That conference provides the forum for these nations to begin the working out of these problems together directly face-to-face. We have a continuing objective to convene such a conference before the end of this year.

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Underlying this entire effort to promote the process of negotiation is our determination to maintain the military security of Israel. There must be no question in anyone's mind that the United States will do what is necessary to ensure the adequacy of Israel's military posture and its capacity for self-defense.

We recognize that America has a special responsibility in this regard. In fact, in promulgating our overall policy to curb the international traffic in arms, the President specifically directed the government that we will honor our historic responsibilities to assure the security of the state of Israel. Let there be no doubt about this commitment by this Administration.

We do not intend to use our military aid as pressure on Israel. If we have differences over military aid -- and we may have some -- it will be on military grounds or economic grounds, but not political grounds. If we have differences over diplomatic strategy -- and that could happen -- we will work this out on a political level. We will not alter our commitment to Israel's military security.

Let me conclude by saying that we hope the concepts I have been discussing there today -- concepts which the President has advanced at talks with Israeli and Arab leaders -- will stimulate them to develop ideas of their own. We realize that peace cannot be imposed from the outside and we do not intend to present the parties with a plan or a timetable or a map. Peace can only come from a genuine recognition by all parties that their interests are served by reconciliation and not by war, by faith in the future rather than bitterness over the past.

America can try to help establish the basis of trust necessary for peace. We can try to improve the atmosphere for communication. We can offer ideas, but we cannot, in the end, determine whether peace or war is the fate of the Middle East. That can only be decided by Israel and her Arab neighbors.

We believe that both sides want peace. As the President has said, "this may be the most propitious time for a genuine settlement since the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict almost 30 years ago. To let this opportunity pass could mean a disaster not only for the Middle East, but perhaps for the international political and economic order as well."

As we go forward in our mediating role, we will have to expect from time to time to have differences with both sides. But these will be differences as to tactics. Our overall objectives will be those that we believe are now shared by all sides: a permanent and enduring peace in the Middle East.

This is obviously a difficult task and there is always the possibility of failure. But it is an historic responsibility that requires the fullest possible support of the American people.

I believe we have this support. And as we go through the difficult days ahead, this support will sustain us. It will provide the strength we need to encourage all parties to put aside their fears and put trust in their hopes for a genuine and lasting Middle East peace.

John Kennedy once described the formula for peace not only in the Middle East but throughout the world, and I would like to close with his words.

"If we all can persevere, if we in every land and every office can look beyond our own shores and ambitions, then surely the age will dawn in which the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved."

FILE

REMARKS OF

VICE PRESIDENT WALTER F. MONDALE

WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

JUNE 17, 1977

Introduction

Thank you, Clark Maser (President of the World Affairs Council) for that kind introduction. It's a pleasure to join Mayor George Moscone, and the officers and members of the World Affairs Council of Northern California.

In the last several months, I've undertaken two extended foreign trips on behalf of the President to Europe and Japan. The more I travel, and the more nations I visit, the more I come to believe that the peoples of the world are not really so different...that all of us dream the same dreams for our children...and that the real key to peace and cooperation in the world lies in better understanding between people. Diplomats and heads of state and elected officials must play a role, but we should never underestimate the power of ideas and education and greater understanding to break down the barriers of suspicion and fear that too often separate the nations of the world.

Your programs in the school system, on television, the lectures and seminars you hold, your conference for model UN students are all an important part of that effort. And I'm particularly pleased to see that you're joining together with a number of groups involved in international relations in a new World Affairs Center here in San Francisco and I wish you every success in that venture. And so the contributions of an organization such as yours towards increased understanding in the world are really crucial, not only to the foreign policy efforts of this nation, but to the search for peace.

With the words of his Inaugural Address, President Carter identified at the very outset of his Administration the guiding spirit of this nation's foreign policy:

"Our nation can be strong abroad only if it is strong at home, and we know that the best way to enhance freedom in other lands is to demonstrate here that our democratic system is worthy of emulation. To be true to ourselves, we must be true to others."

And, he elaborated on the basic premises of our relations with other nations in his speech at Notre Dame this May:

- Our policy must be rooted in our people's basic commitment to human rights.
- Our policy must be based on close cooperation with the Western industrial democracies. With them we share basic values; with them also we share a recognition that global problems cannot be solved without close cooperation among us. This was the message the President had me take to Europe and Japan in the first week of the Administration, and this was the spirit which guided the President and his colleagues at the London summit last month.
- Our policy must seek to improve relations with the Soviet Union and China. It must do so in a balanced and reciprocal way, while we maintain a strong defense.

- Our policy must recognize that the cleavage between North and South is as important as between East and West. We must reach out to the world's developing nations, seeking to narrow the gap between rich and poor.
- Finally, our policy must provide incentives for all nations to rise above ideology or narrow conceptions of self-interest and work together to resolve regional conflicts and to meet global problems that confront all people.

As an Administration, we are only five months old, However, these months have been a period of intense activity. We are committed to shaping effective policies that truly reflect America's values and objectives -- and we are committed to implementing policies with other nations so as to shape a more peaceful and stable world.

Respect for Human Rights

One of our first tasks has been to ensure that our foreign policy reflects the commitment to basic human rights that we as Americans share. That commitment to the inherent dignity of the individual is at the heart of the American tradition. From it flows the democratic liberties that we cherish -- such as the right to worship freely, freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, and due process of law. Those are the basic strengths of our nation.

We have survived as a free nation because we have remained committed to the defense of fundamental moral values we cherish as a people. And unless our foreign policy reflects those values it will not earn the support of the American people. Without that support, no foreign policy, no matter how brilliantly conceived, can succeed.

I believe we have restored that commitment to human rights. I am proud that the United States today stands among those who uphold human rights and human dignity in the world. I am proud that no foreign leader today has any doubt that the United States condemns torture, political imprisonment and repression by any government, anywhere in the world. We believe that basic human rights transcend ideology. We believe all nations, regardless of political system, must respect those rights.

The Middle East

Just as respect for human rights is central to our foreign policy values, so progress toward a just and lasting Middle East settlement is essential to the prospect of a more peaceful world. The President has asked me here today to describe what we are trying to do to achieve peace in the Middle East. We want the American people to have the fullest possible understanding of our approach, for your support is crucial to its success.

President Carter has now met with the leaders of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The President met with Prime Minister Rabin of Israel and we hope that we will soon meet with the new Prime Minister -- Mr. Begin.

With the exception of the meeting with President Asad which was held in Geneva, I have participated in all of them and have sensed these leaders' great desire for peace, and their longing for the benefits that peace can bring to nations too long mobilized for war. Yet at the same time, we also found deep fears and suspicion which will have to be overcome if peace is to be achieved in that strategic and troubled region of the world.

The Need for Peace

A genuine and lasting peace in the Middle East is an essential interest to all Americans. Conflict there carries the threat of a global confrontation, and runs the risk of nuclear war. As we have seen, war in the Middle East can have profound economic consequences. Even short of war, it continues confrontation and encourages radicalization and instability. It can, and has, transformed the economies of the entire world. It has been a tragedy for the nations of the region.

Genuine peace is needed by all the parties to the conflict.

Israel, above all, has a profound interest in peace. There is no question about that. For almost three decades, Israel has borne the burden of constant war. More than half its entire budget is dedicated to defense. Its citizens bear the highest average tax burden in the world -- more than 60% of their income goes for taxes.

And yet, at the same time, this valiant nation has managed to create a miracle in the desert. With ingenuity, hard work and skill, it has created a land that could be a model for economic development and for political liberty to be emulated throughout the Middle East. Democracy has thrived in Israel despite the kind of adversity that has crushed freedom in other lands.

And yet, what of the future? Is it a future in which Israel's valiant three million people try by force of arms alone to hold out against the implacable hostility and growing power of more than 150 million Arabs? Or can a process of reconciliation be started -- a process in which peace rather than the threat of war protects Israel's security, a peace in which the urge for revenge and recrimination is replaced by mutual recognition and respect.

America's Role

America has a special responsibility and a special opportunity to bring about this kind of peace. This comes about first of all because of our unique and profound relationship with the state of Israel since its creation more than a generation ago. Our sense of shared values and purposes means that, for Americans, the question of Israel's survival is not a political question but rather stands as a moral imperative of our foreign policy.

And yet, our special relationship with Israel has not been directed against any other country. We have been able to enjoy the friendship of much of the Arab world where we and our close allies have important interests.

It is precisely because of our close ties with both Israel and her Arab neighbors that we are uniquely placed to promote the search for peace, to work for an improved understanding of each side's legitimate concerns, and to help them work out what we hope will be a basis for negotiation leading to a final peace in the Middle East.

The U.S. Approach

When this Administration entered office on January 20, we found that the situation in the Middle East called for a new approach. The step-by-step diplomacy of our

predecessors had defused the immediate tensions produced by the war in 1973. But it was also evident that it would be increasingly difficult to achieve small diplomatic concessions when the ultimate shape of a peace agreement remained obscure. At the same time, it was unlikely that an agreement on a lasting peace could be achieved at one stroke.

We, therefore, decided to work with the parties concerned to outline the overall framework for an enduring peace. Our concept was to use this framework as the basis for a phased negotiation and implementation of specific steps toward peace.

A major impediment to this approach lay in the fact that the positions of both sides were frozen. The words and phrases used by both sides had become encrusted with the fallout of countless diplomatic battles.

We have tried to regain momentum in this process. We have encouraged Arabs and Israelis to begin thinking again seriously about the elements of peace and not to remain committed to particular words and formulations.

To this end, the President has tried to describe our understanding of what the key elements of an overall framework for an agreement might be;

- the establishment of borders for Israel which are recognized by all and which can be kept secure,
 - a fair solution to the problem of the Palestinians.
- The President has set forth these elements not to dictate a peace or to impose our views but to stimulate fresh thought.

The Definition of Peace

President Carter has gone further than any of his predecessors to stress with Arab leaders the essential point that peace must mean more than merely an end to hostilities, stating as he did in Clinton, Massachusetts, last March:

"...the first prerequisite of a lasting peace is the recognition of Israel by her neighbors; Israel's right to exist; Israel's right to exist permanently, Israel's right to exist in peace. That means that over a period of months or years that the borders between Israel and Syria, Israel and Lebanon, Israel and Jordan, Israel and Egypt must be opened up to travel, to tourism, to cultural exchange, to trade, so that no matter who the leaders might be in those countries the people themselves will have formed a mutual understanding and

comprehension and a sense of a common purpose to avoid the repetitious wars and deaths that have affected that region so long. That is the first prerequisite of peace."

We have found that the Arab leaders did not reject this concept out of hand. Nor did they insist that this kind of peace is something that only future generations could consider. Some leaders, such as King Hussein, during his visit to Washington, have made clear their commitment to a "just and lasting peace -- one which would enable all the people in the Middle East to divert their energies and resources to build and attain a better future."

So we believe that we have made some progress in getting Arab leaders to recognize Israel's right to exist and to recognize -- however reluctantly -- that this commitment is essential to a genuine peace. Still, we have a long way to go; the Arabs have been insistent that Israel withdraw from the territories it occupied in the 1967 war. We have made clear our view that Israel should not be asked to withdraw unless it can secure in return real peace from its neighbors.

Borders

The question of withdrawal is, in essence, the question of borders. For peace to be enduring, borders must be

inviolable. Nations must feel secure behind their borders. Borders must be recognized by all.

A crucial dilemma has been how to provide borders that are both secure and acceptable to all. It is understandable that Israel, having fought a war in every decade since its birth, wants borders that can be defended as easily as possible. But no border will be secure if other countries do not accept them.

The paradox is that borders that might afford Israel the maximum security in military terms would not be accepted as legitimate by Israel's neighbors. Borders that Israel's neighbors would recognize, Israel has not been willing to accept as forming an adequate line of defense.

For this reason, the President has tried to separate the two issues. On the one hand, there must be recognized borders. But, in addition, there could be separate lines of defense or other arrangements that could enhance Israel's security. The existing arrangements in the Sinai and in the Golan Heights may provide an example of the kind of measures that will help ensure Israel's security until confidence in a lasting peace can be fully developed.

We would urge all the parties to think realistically about security arrangements to reduce the fear of surprise attack, to make acts of aggression difficult if not impossible, to limit the military forces that would confront one another in sensitive areas.

This approach recognizes the fact that there is a profound asymmetry in what the two sides in the Middle East are seeking. On the one hand, the Arabs are concerned regaining lost territory. On the other, Israel wishes peace, and recognition. Territory is tangible, and once ceded difficult to regain short of war. Peace, on the other hand, can be ephemeral. Peaceful intentions can change overnight, unless a solid foundation of cooperation and a firm pattern of reinforcing relationships can be established to ensure that all have a stake in continuing tranquility.

We believe that separating the imperatives of security from the requirement of recognized borders is an important advance toward reconciling the differences between the two sides. It is in this way that Israel could return to approximately the borders that existed prior to the war of 1967, albeit with minor modifications as negotiated among the parties, and yet retain lines of defense that would ensure Israel's security even more firmly than they do today --

they would be buttressed by comprehensive peace. Thus, with borders explicitly recognized and secured by advance defense lines, and with the process of peace unfolding, Israel's security would be greater than it is today.

The Palestinian Issue

A further major issue is that of the future of the Palestinian people. It has been the source of continuing tragedy in the Middle East. There are two prerequisites for a lasting peace in this regard. First, there must be a demonstrated willingness on the part of the Palestinians to live in peace alongside Israel. Second, the Palestinians must be given a stake in peace in turning away from terror to express their political aspirations.

Thus, if the Palestinians are willing to exist in peace and are prepared to demonstrate that willingness, the President has made clear that, in the context of a peace settlement, we believe the Palestinians should be given a chance to shed their status as homeless refugees and to partake fully of the benefits of peace in the Middle East, including the possibility of some sort of geographic or political entity of their own.

How this would be accomplished and the exact character of such an entity is, of course, something that would have

to be decided by the parties themselves in the course of negotiation. For example, President Carter has suggested that the viability of this concept and the security of the region would be enhanced if this involved an association with Jordan. But I emphasize that the specifics are for the parties themselves to decide.

Face-to-Face Negotiations in Geneva

This leads me to a further crucial aspect of our approach -- the essentiality of direct negotiations among the parties concerned. One cannot conceive of genuine peace existing between countries who will not talk to one another. If they are prepared for peace, the first proof is a willingness to negotiate their differences.

This is why we believe it is so important to proceed with the holding of a Geneva Conference this year. That conference provides the forum for these nations to begin the working out of these problems together directly face-to-face. We have a continuing objective to convene such a conference before the end of this year.

Support for Israel's Security

Underlying this entire effort to promote the process of negotiation is our determination to maintain the military security of Israel. There must be no question in anyone's mind that the United States will do what is necessary to

ensure the adequacy of Israel's military posture and its capacity for self-defense.

We recognize that America has a special responsibility in this regard. In fact, in promulgating our overall policy to curb the international traffic in arms, the President specifically directed the government that we will honor our historic responsibilities to assure the security of the state of Israel.

We do not intend to use our military aid as pressure on Israel. If we have differences over military aid -- and we have had some -- it will be on military or economic, but not political grounds. If we have differences over diplomatic strategy -- and that could happen -- we will work this out on a political level. We will not alter our commitment to Israel's military security.

To this end, and as part of our continuing program of military assistance and cooperation, the President has just approved the sale of 700 armored personnel carriers for the Israeli defense force and 200 TOW anti-tank guided missile launchers. There are, in additions, a number of other possible areas of cooperation which the United States will consider undertaking in order to assure the unquestioned survival and security of Israel.

Resolution 242, which has the support of all the parties, provides a basis for the negotiations which are required if there is to be a settlement. But Resolution 242 does not by itself provide all that is required. We hope the concepts we have advanced -- concepts which are consistent with 242 -- will stimulate the parties to develop ideas of their own. We realize that peace cannot be imposed from outside and we do not intend to present the parties with a plan or a timetable or a map. Peace can only come from a genuine recognition by all parties that their interests are served by reconciliation and not by war, by faith in the future rather than bitterness over the past.

America can try to help establish the basis of trust necessary for peace. We can try to improve the atmosphere for communication. We can offer ideas, but we cannot, in the end, determine whether peace or war is the fate of the Middle East. That can only be decided by Israel and her Arab neighbors.

We believe that both sides want peace. As the President has said, "this may be the most propitious time for a genuine settlement since the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict almost 30 years ago. To let this opportunity pass could mean a disaster not only for the Middle East, but perhaps for the international political and economic order as well."

As we go forward in our mediating role, we will have to expect from time to time to have differences with both sides. But these will be differences as to tactics. Our overall objectives will be those that we believe are now shared by all sides: a permanent and enduring peace in the Middle East.

This is not an enviable task; it is one that is fraught with the possibility of failure. It is an historic responsibility that requires the fullest possible support of the American people.

I believe we have this support. And as we go through the difficult days ahead, this support will sustain us. It will provide the strength we need to encourage all parties to put aside their fears and put trust in their hopes for a genuine and lasting Middle East peace.

I think John Kennedy once described the formula for peace not only in the Middle East but throughout the world, and I would like to close with his words.

"If we all can persevere, if we in every land and every office can look beyond our own shores and ambitions, then surely the age will dawn in which the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved."

Thank you.