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SOUTH LAWN DEPARTURE STATEMENT FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

3/7/79

I leave today on a new mission in the service of the
oldest of human ^{dreams} ~~hopes~~ -- the ^{dream} ~~hope~~ of peace.

Nowhere is ^{the} ~~that~~ hope ^{for peace} more fervent, more alive, than in
the Middle East; nowhere is the path to its realization ~~harder,~~
^{more difficult;}
nowhere might the price of failure be more terrible.

Peace remains the goal of President Sadat and Prime
^{of Egypt & Israel.}
~~Minister~~ Begin, and of the great peoples ~~they represent.~~ I know
^{these}
that they share my determination to see ~~the~~ negotiations ~~between~~
~~them~~ bear fruit.

The Middle East has suffered too much and too long from
war and the fear of war. Arabs and Israelis alike must now
understand that bloodshed and deprivation and death can never
settle their differences, can never be the path to renewal and hope.

For the first time in a generation, peace in the Middle East ^{has come within} ~~is within~~ reach. President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, and Prime Minister Begin's warm reception opened the way.

At Camp David, we then worked together to forge a political framework in which their differences can be resolved.

^{Our} ~~The~~ negotiations ~~we have held, at Camp David and since,~~ are based on the idea that peace can only be achieved when ~~the~~ ^{we meet the} legitimate needs of all who are affected by the conflict, ~~are~~ met. Real peace will not come with a single treaty -- important as that would be. But a treaty between Egypt and Israel is an indispensable step toward the broader, ^{comprehensive} peace we all seek.

Negotiation is a long and tedious process. But there are times when making peace demands more courage than making war. I believe that President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin possess that special kind of courage -- and that they possess

as well the vision and statesmanship to redeem the great hope they have helped ^{to} create.

So it is with hope that I depart, hope tempered by realism. As a friend of Egypt and Israel, we will do our best to help them achieve the peace they have paid for in blood many times over. In doing this -- in seeking to lay the basis for a stable and peaceful Middle East -- we will also be serving our own deepest national interests, and the interests of all the people of the world.

I know that in this endeavor, I take with me the prayers and the good wishes of the American people. In the difficult work that lies ahead, I will draw strength and sustenance from your support.

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