

conflict. The constructive first move comes hard for the parties to agonizing years of conflict. There is the same suspicion and apprehension dividing the parties. There is a reluctance to venture the first step toward reasonable accommodation, lest this be taken undue advantage of by the opposing party. Finally, in Lebanon as with regional issues, we have seen the tragic reliance on the use of military force rather than resort to peaceful negotiation to attain innately legitimate objectives.

Of all the impressions I brought back from my recent visit to Israel and its neighbours, the most fundamental is a reinforced conviction that peace through negotiation is essential and remains possible - a peace which gives Israel secure and recognized boundaries, and the Palestinians a homeland in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As Prime Minister Shamir eloquently observed in a toast he pronounced during my visit, "coexistence and peace are inevitable" given the realities of demography and geography in the Middle East.

In re-affirming that negotiation offers the only feasible route to the eventual peace and stability which all the peoples of the region so desperately need, I in no way nor do I want to under-estimate the magnitude of the difficulties to be overcome, the perceived problems and even dangers for each party in moving toward the negotiating table. I am well aware that for the parties involved, after the experience they have gone through, even a patently fragile and temporary condition of relative security may appear marginally preferable to volunteering the first move in a process where concessions from all sides will inevitably be required. It is all too clear, however, it must be clear to you and to me, that if the relentless spiral of violence and retribution is to be broken, real risks must be taken for peace. That such risks can lead to dramatically positive results has already been concretely demonstrated in the peace resolutely forged between Israel and Egypt. If other elements of conflict and tension in the Middle East can be progressively tackled with similar comparable courage and imagination, I don't think we need to despair of yet finding the constructive solutions which have so long eluded us, and at such cost to the peoples of the region.

From my talks on the peace between Egypt and Israel I concluded that neither country had fully realized expectations of that peace, but I don't think that either country would withdraw from that peace.