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MILWAUKEE.

I know it will come as no surprise to you that I have chosen to speak to you tonight about the state of Israel, its importance to our own nation and world peace.

But in a sense when I speak of Israel, I speak as well of other concerns of B'nai B'rith and of the entire Jewish community in the United States. Israel is not only a nation--it is a symbol. During my campaign I have spoken of the values of family, work, neighborhood, peace and freedom. I made a commitment to see to it that those values would be at the heart of policy-making in a Reagan administration. Israel symbolizes those values. What is Israel if not the creation of families, working together to build a place to live and work and prosper in peace and freedom?

In defending Israel's right to exist, we defend the very values upon which our nation is built.

The long agony of Jews in the Soviet Union is, of course, never far from our minds and hearts. All these suffering people ask is that their families get the chance to work where they choose, in freedom and peace. They will not be forgotten by a Reagan administration.

But, I must tell you this:

No policy, no matter how heartfelt, no matter how deeply rooted in the humanitarian vision we share, can succeed if the

United States of America continues its descent into economic impotence and despair.

Neither the survival of Israel nor the ability of the United States to bring pressure to bear on the situation of dissidents against tyranny can become realistic policy choices if our American economy continues to deteriorate under the Carter policies of high unemployment, taxes and inflation.

The rhetoric of compassion and concern becomes just that, mere words, if not supported by the vision--and reality--of economic growth. The present administration does not seem to realize this. It seems to believe that if the right kind of words are chosen and repeated often enough, all will be well. Can those who share our humanitarian concerns ignore the connection between economic policy, national strength and the ability to do the work of friendship and justice and peace in our own nation and world?

The theme of this convention, "A Covenant with Tomorrow," speaks directly to the question of American interests and the well-being of Israel. There is no covenant with the future which is not firmly rooted in our covenant with the past. Since the rebirth of the State of Israel, there has been an iron-clad bond between that democracy and this one.

That bond is a moral imperative. But the history of relations between states demonstrates that while morality is most frequently given as a motive for actions, the true and abiding motive is self-interest. Well, the touchstone of our relationship with Israel is that a secure, strong Israel is in America's self-interest. Israel is a major strategic asset to America.

Israel is not a client, but a very reliable friend, which is not something that can always be said of the United States today under the Carter administration.

While we have since 1948 clung to the argument of a moral imperative to explain our commitment to Israel, no Administration has ever deluded itself that Israel was not of permanent strategic importance to America. Until, that is, the Carter administration, which has violated this covenant with the past. Can we now have confidence it will honor a covenant with tomorrow?

The interests of all the world are served by peace and stability in the Middle East. To weaken Israel is to destabilize the Middle East and risk the peace of the world, for the road to world peace runs through the Middle East.

How do we travel that road?

~~First~~, ~~We~~ cannot positively influence events at the perimeters of our power if power--including economic power--at the center is diminished.

The conduct of this nation's foreign policy in the last four years has been marked by inconsistency and incompetence.

We must have a principled, consistent foreign policy which our people can support, our friends understand, and our adversaries respect. Our policies must be based upon close consultation with our allies.

We require the defensive capability necessary to ensure the credibility of our foreign policy, and the security of our allies and ourselves. There can be no security for one without the other.

Today, under Jimmy Carter, our defensive capability has been so seriously eroded as to constitute not a deterrent but a temptation.

This is not a campaign issue, it is a matter of grave national concern; indeed so grave that the President considers it a liability to his personal political fortunes. He has tried to give the appearance of responding to it. But the half-hearted measures he proposes are clearly inadequate to the task.

We must restore the vital margin of safety which this administration has allowed to erode, maintaining a defense capability our adversaries will view as credible and that our allies can rely upon.

As an ally of the United States, Israel must have the means to remain strong and secure. Over the years, the United States has provided economic and defense assistance, and a Reagan Administration will maintain this traditional commitment.

In 1976, Candidate Jimmy Carter came before this convention and said: "I have called for closer ties with our traditional allies, and stronger ties with the State of Israel. I have stressed," he said, "the necessity for a strong defense -- tough and muscular, and adequate to maintain freedom under any conceivable circumstances."

One wonders, did the candidate listen to his own call? Today we have fewer real allies and, among those, we speak with diminished authority. Our relations with Israel are marked by doubt and distrust. Israel today is in grave danger, and so is freedom itself.

In 1976, Jimmy Carter declared that he would seek what he called a "comprehensive settlement" in the Middle East. What this might mean for Israel and how this might be achieved were questions neither asked nor answered.

The comprehensive agreement which Mr. Carter sought required, first, a reconvening of the Geneva Conference. Israel was amenable to this step. Her adversaries agreed conditionally. But, the conditions were that the Palestine Liberation Organization be represented and that Israel effectively agree in advance of negotiation to withdraw to the pre-1967 borders, which were in fact armistice lines resulting from the first effort to destroy the State of Israel. Israel rightly refused these conditions and was promptly accused of intransigence. Can we believe that Mr. Carter is not still in favor of dealing with the P.L.O. and desirous of forcing the terms of a settlement?

Mr. Carter invited the Soviet Union to join him in his effort to force Israel to accept the mockery of negotiations in Geneva. Before that, it had required a major effort to keep the Soviets out of the Middle East peace process. In October, 1977, Mr. Carter invited them back in free of charge, and they graciously accepted. The Carter administration presented ^{as} a major achievement the conclusion of a joint Soviet-American accord which would have given the Russians a stranglehold on negotiations, as well as a convenient calling card for inserting themselves more deeply into the Middle East.

This seriously disturbed President Sadat. The President of Egypt did not share Mr. Carter's appreciation of the Soviets, and he came to the conclusion which other world leaders, including Mr. Brezhnev, have now reached: Mr. Carter is incapable of distinguishing between his own short-term political

interests, and the nation's long-term foreign policy interests. Mr. Carter professed not to understand what all the fuss was about.

The result was that the United States Government, for the first time in the history of the rebirth of Israel, found itself on the outside looking in. President Sadat made his courageous trip to Jerusalem at the invitation of Prime Minister Begin, and a bilateral peace process began. Without, let me re-emphasize, the participation of Mr. Carter. The quick foreign policy success that Carter had hoped to achieve turned instead into another major foreign policy blunder.

~~We must not have any illusions about precisely what is at stake in the Middle East. The overriding issue is neither refugees or oil. These are grave and momentous problems. The fundamental issue which impedes every productive attempt at solutions to those problems is the effort of the Soviet Union to maintain turmoil there and under the cover of that turmoil to project itself further into the area.~~

~~For thirty years the Soviet Union has been exploiting every possible conflict in this region--and awakening a number which have been slumbering--in order to advance its power. It has taken foothold after foothold, and country after country, until today we find its outposts stretched from Afghanistan to Algeria, from Syria to Libya to Ethiopia and Angola. Throughout this period, the Soviet leaders have stirred up Arab hostility to Israel as a cruel weapon for provoking and prolonging war after war, and have abetted an endless cycle of terrorism, in order to bring Arab states under their own influence. The Arab-Israeli conflict could have ended in a just and lasting~~

peace a long time ago--in the early 1950s--had not the Soviet Union tempted Arab leaders to imagine that Soviet arms and Soviet political support would permit them to destroy Israel. The single most important obstacle to peace between Israel and her neighbors is the fact that continuing hostility there is fundamental to the objectives of Soviet expansionism.

Thus, ^W what we do or fail to do in the Middle East is of vital importance not only to the peoples of the region, but also to the security of our country, our Atlantic and Pacific allies, Africa, China, and the Asian subcontinent.

Because of the weak^a and confused leadership of Jimmy Carter, we are approaching a flashpoint in this tragic process, with Soviet power now deployed in a manner which directly threatens Iran, the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea; with Soviet forces and proxy forces building up again in the region; with Soviet fleets and air bases emplaced along the sea lanes on which we and our Allies and the entire free world depend.

In spite of this I am confident that if we act with vigor, vision and practical good sense, we can peacefully blunt this Soviet thrust. We can rely upon responsible Arab leaders in time to learn what Anwar Sadat learned, which is that no people can long endure the cost of Soviet patronage.

How we deal with Israel and her neighbors in this period will determine whether we rebuild the peace process or whether we continue to drift. But let it be clear that the cornerstone of our effort and of our interest is a secure Israel, and our mutual objective is peace.

While we can help the nations of that area~~s~~ move toward peace, we should not try to force a settlement upon them.

Our diplomacy must be sensitive to the legitimate concerns of all in the area. Before a negotiated peace can ever hope to command the loyalty of the whole region, it must be acceptable to Israelis and Arabs alike.

Most important, we must rebuild our lost reputation for trustworthiness. We must again become a nation that can be relied upon to live up to its commitments.

In 1976, candidate Jimmy Carter said: "I am concerned with the way in which our country, as well as the Soviet Union, Britain and France have poured arms into certain Arab countries-- five or six times more than Israel receives."

But it was Mr. Carter who agreed to sell 60 F-15 fighters to Saudi Arabia. To get the Congress to go along, he assured these aircraft would not have certain offensive capabilities. ~~Today,~~ ^{Now,} the Secretary of Defense tells us he cannot say whether this commitment to Congress will be honored ~~until after November 4.~~

It was Mr. Carter who agreed to sell 100 main battle tanks to Jordan.

It was Mr. Carter who agreed to provide U.S. licensed turbine engines for Iraqi warships.

Meanwhile, Israel is being increasingly isolated by international terrorism--terrorism by bullets and terrorism by U.N. resolutions, while Carter stands by and watches.

In 1976, candidate Carter said: "We have all been deeply disturbed by the drift of the United Nations and by the acrimony and cliquishness that seems to have taken hold."

~~Today what is happening in the U.N. is undermining the peace process, and the United States is noted there not for its leadership but for its limitless capacity to take abuse.~~

I was appalled to see the Carter administration abstain from voting on, rather than veto, the Resolution passed by the United Nations Security Council two weeks ago, total^{ly} disregarding the Democratic Platform promises of 1976 and 1980. As I stated then, that Resolution not only undermines progress toward peace by putting the United Nations on record against Israel and on one side of the sensitive issue of the status of Jerusalem; it also presumes to order other nations--including our Dutch ally--to move their embassies from Jerusalem.

I believe this sorry episode sheds some new light on an earlier action by Jimmy Carter concerning another U.N. resolution, voted on in March this year. On March 1st, the Carter administration failed to veto a mischievous U.N. Resolution condemning Israel's presence in Jerusalem, calling it an "occupation". That was the position of the Carter administration on Saturday. Two days ^{later,} ~~alter,~~ on a Monday, reacting to the public outcry, Jimmy Carter put the blame for this outrage on his Secretary of State and reversed the position of the administration.

The man who asks "trust me"^e, zigzags and flip-flops in ever more rapid gyrations, trying to court favor with everyone: Israel, the PLO, the voting bloc in the United Nations and the voters at home. On March 1st, it took the Carter administration three days to switch positions. On August 20th, it took only three minutes. Secretary of State Muskie condemned the U.S. Resolution on

Jerusalem in a long speech that was for the voters in this country. Minutes later, he abstained instead of vetoing the U.N. Resolution. That was for the PLO and their friends.

This is the Carter record on the Middle East. Arab leaders are persuaded that we don't say what we mean. Israel is persuaded that we don't mean what we say. How do we build productive relations with either side on such a basis?

Before we can act with authority abroad, we have to demonstrate our ability to make domestic policy without asking permission of other governments.

Mr. Carter sent an emissary to Saudi Arabia to ask for permission to store petroleum here in our own country--a strategic reserve vital to our national security and long demanded by Congress. The Saudis, predictably, said no. Mr. Carter halted the stockpiling.

Can we have relations with our friends in the Arab world if those relations are built on contempt for us?

Clear away the debris of the past four years, and the following issues remain to test the good faith of the Arab nations and of Israel, and to challenge our national will and diplomatic skill in helping them to shape a peace.

There is the unresolved question of territorial rights resulting from the 1967 war.

There is the status of Jerusalem which is part of the first question.

There is the matter of refugees.

There is the matter of the PLO, which I consider distinct from the matter of the refugees.

The question of territory, putting aside Jerusalem for the moment, must still be decided in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. We will tolerate no effort to supersede those Resolutions. We must weigh the future utility of the Camp David accords against that position.

There are basic ambiguities in the documents Camp David produced, both in the links between the Israeli-Egyptian peace, and in the provisions for an autonomous regime in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These ambiguities have now brought negotiations to a dangerous impasse.

Let us remember that an autonomous Palestinian Arab regime for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was an Israeli proposal-- a major concession on Israel's part in the interest of progress toward peace.

Negotiations between Israel and Jordan could result in long and creative steps toward resolving these problems. Israel and Jordan are the two Palestinian states envisioned and authorized by the United Nations. Jordan is now recognized as sovereign in some 80 percent of the old territory of Palestine. Israel and Jordan are the parties primarily authorized to settle the future of the unallocated territories, in accordance with the principles of the ^{UN}mandate and the provisions of Resolutions 242 and 338.

Thus, the autonomy plan called for in the Camp David Agreements must be interpreted in accordance with the two Security Council Resolutions, which remain the decisive and authoritative rules governing the situation. The Camp David

Agreements cannot and should not lead to fundamental changes in the security position, or to the withdrawals of Israeli troops, until Jordan and other neighbors make peace.

Jerusalem has been a source of man's spiritual inspiration since King David founded it. It's centrality to Jewish life is known to all.

Now it exists as a shared trust. The holy places of all faiths are protected and open to all. More than this, each is under the care and control of representatives of the respective faiths. Unlike the days prior to 1967, Jerusalem is now and will continue to be one city, undivided, with continuing free access for all. That is why I disagree with the cynical actions of the Carter administration in pledging to preserve the status of Jerusalem in its party platform and ~~their~~^{its} undercutting Israel and Jerusalem by abstaining on a key U.N. vote. I believe the problem of Jerusalem can be solved by men of good will as part of a permanent settlement. The immediate problem is to make it easier for men of good will to come to the peace table.

President Carter refuses to brand the PLO as a terrorist organization.

I have no hesitation in doing so.

We live in a world in which any band of thugs clever enough to get the word "liberation" into its name can thereupon murder school children and have its deeds considered glamorous and glorious. Terrorists are not guerillas, or commandos or freedom-fighters or anything else. They are terrorists and they should be identified as such. If others wish to deal with

them, establish diplomatic relations with them, let it be on their heads. And let them be willing to pay the price of appeasement.

The PLO is said to represent the Palestinian refugees. It represents no one but the leaders who established it as a means of organizing aggression against Israel. The PLO is kept under tight control in every state in the area except Lebanon, which it has effectively destroyed. As for those it purports to represent, when any Palestinian breathes a word about peace to Israel, he is an immediate target for assassination. The PLO has murdered more Palestinians than it has Israelis.

This nation made an agreement with Israel in 1975 concerning its relations with the PLO.

This administration has violated that agreement.

We are concerned not only with whether the PLO renounces its charter calling for the destruction of Israel, we are equally concerned with whether it is truly representative of the Palestinian people. If we can be satisfied on both counts, then we will not be dealing with the PLO as we know it, but a quite different organization, one truly representative of those Arab Palestinians dedicated to peace and not to the establishment of a Soviet satellite in the heart of the Middle East.

Finally, the question of Arab Palestinian refugees.

My analysis of this tragic situation begins with the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel, May 14, 1948. Let me read the relevant paragraph:

"We appeal--in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months--to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and to participate with us in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions."

Tragically, this appeal was rejected. People left their land and their homes confident Israel would be destroyed in a matter of days and they could return. Israel was not destroyed and the refugee problem is with us today.

^{One} ~~The~~ solution to this refugee problem ^{could be} ~~is~~ assimilation. ~~There would not even be sufficient room on the West Bank to accomodate all the refugees. Thus, the most logical place for them to be assimilated is~~ Jordan, designated by the U.N. as the Arab Palestinian state.

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The Psalms speak to our concerns, for they encompass all that we strive for. They are a vision of our ideals, of the goal to which we strive with constancy, dedication and faith. They embrace our hopes for a just, lasting peace in the Middle East and our hopes that the works of justice and mercy be done at home:

...May our garners be full, ~~and be full~~
affording every kind of store;...
May there be no breach in the walls,
no exile, no outcry in our streets.
Happy the people for whom things are thus;

It is given to us to see that this vision is never lost, its message never forgotten, that the work of peace and justice and freedom goes on, inspired by our values, guided by our faith and made permanent by our commitment.

(The following is for RR's text only -- not for printed version.)

Let us hope during these Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur that this next year will bring peace and justice to all the peoples of the Middle East; and to all of you I wish a Happy and Healthy New Year.

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