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tions must collide. We respect Islam. Every day in our own land, millions of our own citizens answer the Moslem call to prayer. And we know the traditional values of Islam, devotion to faith and good works, to family and society, are in harmony with the best of American ideals. Therefore, we know our people, our faiths, our cultures can live in harmony with each other.

But in the Middle East, as elsewhere across the world, the United States does see a contest, a contest between forces that transcend civilization, a contest between tyranny and freedom, terror and security, bigotry and tolerance, isolation and openness. It is the age-old struggle between fear and hope.

This is the conflict that grips the Middle East today. On one side stand the forces of terror and extremism, who cloak themselves in the rhetoric of religion and nationalism but behave in ways that contradict the very teachings of their faith and mock their patriotism. These forces of reaction feed on disillusionment, on poverty, on despair. They stoke the fires of violence. They seek to destroy the progress of this peace. To them, I say, you cannot succeed. You will not succeed. You must not succeed, for you are the past, not the future.

The people of Jordan and all those throughout the Arab world who are working for peace are choosing progress over decline; choosing reason, not ruin; choosing to build up, not tear down; choosing tomorrow, not yesterday. The people of Jordan on this day, through King Hussein, have pledged themselves to a treaty based on a fundamental law of humanity, that what we have in common is more important than our differences.

This was the message of Moses' farewell address to the children of Israel as they gathered to cross the River Jordan when he said, "I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live." And it is the message the Prophet Mohammed brought to the peoples of other faiths when he said, "There is no argument between us and you. God shall bring us together, and unto him is the homecoming."

Today the people of Jordan and the people of Israel have reached across the Jordan River. They have chosen life. They have made a homecoming. And tonight we say, thanks be to God, *Ilham du Illah.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:32 p.m. in the Chamber at the Parliament. In his remarks, he referred to Ahmad Lowzi, President of the Senate, and S'ad Ha'il Srour, Speaker of the Lower House.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria in Damascus

October 27, 1994

Q. Gentlemen, do you think you will be able to agree on new steps toward peace today? President Asad?

President Asad. We hope so. If we don't have this desire we wouldn't have any incentive for such a meeting. And so the peace process needs efforts, and it always has its own difficulties. People think that with a magic word they might be able to achieve peace, but this is not possible.

President Clinton. Thank you. We're working hard.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 9:15 a.m. at the Presidential Palace. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With President Asad in Damascus

October 27, 1994

President Asad. President Clinton, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to welcome President Clinton in Damascus, the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, in the heart of the region which witnessed the dawn of human civilizations and the cradle of divine religions. This region whose peoples have long suffered, especially throughout the century, through the horrors of wars, the bitterness of conflict and bloodshed, hopes at last to enjoy peace and stability.

The visit of President Clinton at the head of the high-level American delegation to our country, and the positive and fruitful talks we had today constitute an important step towards the realization of this noble objective