The Second Annual Sadat Lecture for Peace The Honorable Jimmy Carter Oct. 25, 1998 College Park, Maryland

It is always nice to hear a good introduction, and particularly from someone who is so close and such a cherished as Jehan Sadat. In thinking about what I was going to say today, I decided not to write a text but just to reminisce about some of the things that have been important to me in dealing with this vitally important subject.

But I came today not because of entreaties, and not because of my respect for Jehan Sadat, not even because of my respect for this great university. I came for a different purpose and wanted to come last year. The first year I was in office, I met sixty-eight foreign leaders, some who came to the White House on formal occasions, and others when I visited the United Nations in New York. And in the next three years I met a number of others. This is my seventeenth year as a professor at Emory University. I have given a lot of lectures in that time and I have been asked a lot of questions. One of the most frequent questions is: Who is the greatest leader you have ever met in your life? And I have only had one answer: President Anwar Sadat of Egypt.

I first met Anwar Sadat just a few months after I became president. I had taught Sunday school for many years ---- I taught this morning before I left my home – and I had a deep religious interest in the Holy Land. I had learned as a candidate and as a new president the importance of the Middle East to me personally, to those who share

things he said would never happen in his lifetime. He said we might see Israeli ships going through the Suez Canal, but there would never be an exchange of ambassadors.

After he left I knew, and made a public statement saying, that a bright shining light came into my life with the visit of this singular man.

on the Civil War. And so Begin was a little embarrassing to me, not having learned about Gettysburg. But when we arrived at the point where Abraham Lincoln had made his address, Menachem Begin recited it word-for-word. A nice event that I will never forget.

Then we went back to work, not very successfully at first. Assistants were negotiating. I was primarily by myself with those two men and those whom they designated. One day we made the mistake of letting Moshe Dayan go and speak to Sadat. Ezer Weizman who was here last year was a friend of Sadat, as you know. Moshe Dayan, who did not know Sadat well, outlined to him a harsh summary of Israel' demands and said, ""We will not make any concessions!" I was in a meeting in my cabin with my secretary of state and defense secretary. And I was informed that Sadat had packed his bags and called for his helicopter to remove him from Camp David. I was distressed

the decision, yes or no. And you do not have any reason to vote." And to make a long story short, we concluded the agreement. And then later with an eight-five percent vote, the Knesset agreed to dismantle the settlement in Yamit. That was the high point.

After that things broke down again, and I could not get the Israelis to carry out the commitments that had been made. My interpretation of Sadat's interpretation was that Begin had agreed not to build any more settlements until the peace agreement was concluded. Begin, in my opinion, (he disputed this) violated that commitment and said he only agreed to wait three months. So the settlements began to be built again. I decided to go to Egypt and Israel in March of 1979. I called