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religious freedom.

In his remarks on the Mideast, the Pope said he hoped a solution could be found. "While being prepared to recognize the value of any concrete step or attempt to be made to settle the conflict, I want to recall that it would have no value if it did not truly represent the 'first stone' of a general, overall peace in the area, a peace that, being necessarily based on equitable recognition of the rights of all, cannot fail to include consideration and just settlements of the Palestinian question," the Pope said.

He then said that "Connected with this question is that of the tranquility, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon within the formula that made it an example of peaceful and mutually fruitful coexistence between distinct communities, a formula that I hope will, in the common interest, be maintained with the adjustments required by the developments of the situation."

The Pope also called for a "special statute, under international guarantees" for Jerusalem. To "respect the particular nature of Jerusalem, the heritage sacred to the veneration

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of millions of believers of the three great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam."

Yehuda Blum, Israel's Ambassador to the UN who was among those shaking hands with the Pope after the speech, said that Israel welcomes the appeal the Pope made for peaceful solutions to international problems. "Israel, too, is committed to a just and peaceful settlement of the Palestinian problem," Blum said. He noted that Israel was working "to that end" in its negotiations with Egypt and the U.S.

"With regard to Jerusalem, the eternal capital, of Israel and the Jewish people, Israel has repeatedly given evidence that it is very conscious of the fact that Jerusalem is of deep spiritual significance also to the adherents of other faiths." Blum noted that "Under Israel's law and jurisdiction access to all of Jerusalem's holy places is guaranteed to members of all faiths, in the manner unprecedented in the city's history.

These holy places are now administered by the religious authorities of the faiths that hold them sacred. Meanwhile, Israel is expected to officially invite John Paul II to visit Israel. The invitation would be a renewal of one ex-

tended by Yosef Ciechanover, director general of the Foreign Ministry when he visited the Pope earlier this year. John Paul II would be the second Pope to visit Israel. Pope Paul VI visited Israel 15 years ago.

The Pontiff's UN speech also drew praise from Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. "The Pope has issued a finely balanced statement recognizing every factor of the Middle East moral equation," the Reform Judaism leader said. He said he was "especially gratified that the Pope had broken the long silence of Christianity on the agony of Lebanon." Schindler said the Pope's call for a "special statute" in Jerusalem will be carefully studied. "The Vatican's view on Jerusalem will surely take into account the fact that only since Jerusalem came under Israeli administration in 1967 have the members of all three faiths -- Christians, Moslems and Jews -- enjoyed full and complete freedom of worship in the City of David," he said.

COPENHAGEN (WNS) -- President Carter is one of the 56 candidates for this year's Nobel Prize for Peace for his role in the Israeli - Egyptian peace treaty, Norwegian Nobel Institute director Jakob Sverdrup announced.

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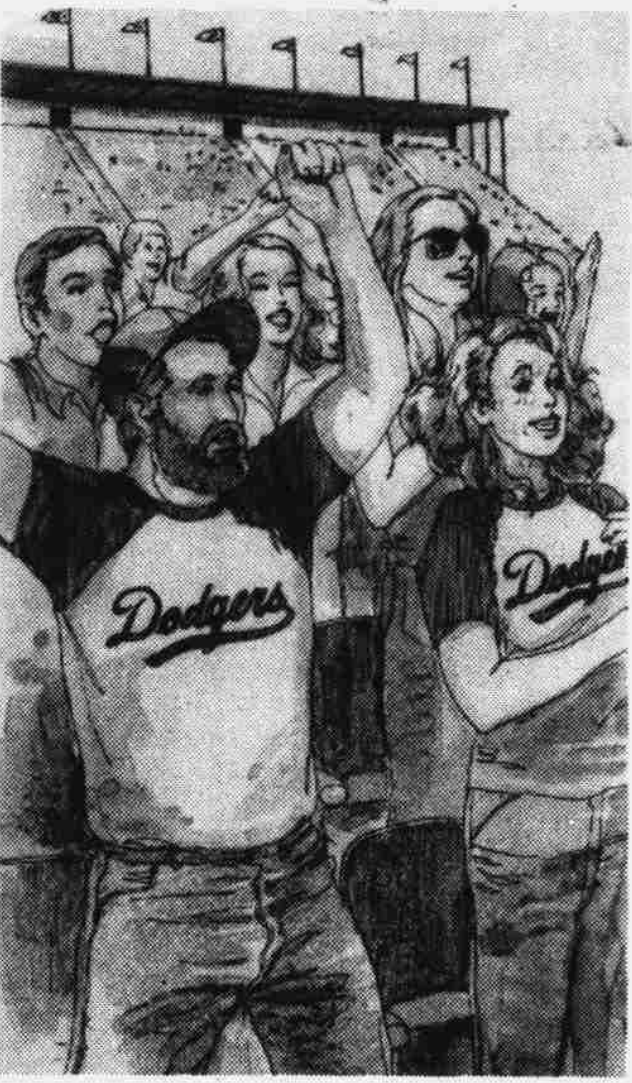
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