

**WASHINGTON DATELINE**

By Trude B. Feldman

ISRAELITE'S WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT

**Nixon Elaborates**

President Nixon, during an impromptu press conference over the weekend, prepared reporters for Secretary of State Roger's statement on the Administration's Mideast policy. He said the statement would refer particularly to two requests by the Israeli government - one for economic assistance, and the other for military assistance.

Mr. Nixon then indicated the basic factor that led to his decision, and also the factors that will guide him as he makes future decisions on the Mideast situation.

As far as the military portion of the decision is concerned, the President described it as "essentially an interim decision."

Then he cited the Administration's four goals in the Mideast: (1) to have a cease fire (2) to reduce the flow of arms into the area (3) to achieve a political settlement (4) to accomplish to the greatest extent possible, a balance between the forces in that area which will contribute to peace from a military standpoint and not to disturb that balance.

"The decision is one based on our present appraisal of the balance of power in the Mideast," the President asserted. "In recent days there have been disturbing reports that the Soviet Union, by deliveries of new missiles, SA-3's, through the UAR and through the insertion of military personnel, may be taking actions which could change that balance. It is too early to say whether that is the case. We are watching the situation closely."

The president added that if the U.S.S.R. - by its military assistance programs to Israel's neighbors - does essentially change the balance, then the U.S. would take action to deal with that situation.

"It's our hope that in our negotiations with the Soviet Union, bilaterally, and in the Four-Power talks, we can convince all the major powers to stop escalating the arms race in the Mideast, to work together for a cease fire, and to achieve, of course, a political settlement," Nixon stated. "Apart from the recent reports, there have been some developments in the Mideast in our bilateral discussions with the Soviet Union that have been modestly encouraging, and we trust that that trend, rather than this latest trend, will be the one that will prevail."

However, he said, that Roger's statement was based

on the decision which was "made on our analysis of the present balance in the Mideast, which we believe should be maintained in the interest of peace and of a settlement."

Asked if he had any indication that France would be cooperative in their sale of planes to the Mideast, Mr. Nixon replied by stating that there is a long lead time on the delivery of French planes to Libya.

"Also, while I would not presume to speak for France, that government is not taking a position that its delivery of planes to Libya is for the purpose of trans-shipment basically to the United Arab Republic. France is a participant in the Four-Power talks," he said.

Nixon told newsmen that he discussed the matter in considerable detail with President Pompidou on his recent visit, and he does believe that France recognizes, as does the U.S.A., that any shipment of arms to the Mideast which imperils the balance of power increases the danger of war.

"I think that France, in its shipments over the next few years, will be guided by that principle, as we are guided by that principle in making our determinations of what arms we should ship," President Nixon stressed.

Insofar as the military portion of the decision is concerned, Mr. Nixon said that portion is based upon the factual situation as the U.S. sees it at this time, and that will be constantly reappraised as that factual situation changes.

"That is why I refer to it as essentially an interim decision rather than one that looks forward over a period of

two to four years," he said, "because the fact situation does change."

Nixon said that the decision on the military side would be based in large part on the best present assessment of the balance of power in the Middle East.

Asked if he had included in that calculation the recent reports of additional weapons and personnel from the Soviet Union, the President answered that those reports came in during the week - "after we had made our decisions," but that he, however, had evaluated the reports.

"Those reports, as of the present time - and considering our present evaluation - do not indicate a significant shift in the balance," he added. "The U.S. intends to continue to watch the Mideast situation to see whether further shipments of arms or personnel to the Mideast does tip the balance in a way that it would be necessary for us to provide some assistance - additional assistance to Israel - so that they would not be in an inferior position."

The President explained that once that balance shifts perceptibly to one side or the other, then the danger of war greatly increases.

"Until you have a political settlement, we have to realize that we have in the Mideast peoples whose enmities go back over centuries, and we have to realize that when one gets an enormous advantage over another, or a significant advantage, the danger of war coming escalates," he pointed out. "That is why our policy has to be to try to maintain a balance, so that neither is encouraged to embark on an aggressive course."

**RABIN TO JWB: MIDEAST PEACE A RUSSIAN DISASTER**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin of Israel told delegates to the convention of the National Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) at the Washington Hilton Hotel that "the military strength of Israel is the best preventive against another war."

At the present time, "Israel can defend itself against the total strength of the Arab world," Mr. Rabin told the JWB delegates. "It will be able to do so for the foreseeable future, as long as we have the means to defend ourselves. But without arms, the prospects for peace are dim."


The Ambassador accused the Soviet Union of "fishing in troubled waters" by supplying Egypt not only with the latest sophisticated weaponry but also with an increased number of Soviet experts. "We are facing another phase in Russian readiness to help their clients," the Ambassador said.

"Since the Six-Day War, the Soviet Union has supplied three Arab countries with arms in the amount of about three and a half billion dollars. Until two weeks ago, there were at least 5,000 Russian instructors, technicians and advisors in these three countries - 3,000 in Egypt, 1,500 in Syria and 500 in Iraq.

"For the Soviets, tension is a pre-condition for them to cooperate with the Arab countries. If peace is achieved, both the Arab world and Israel will divert their efforts to the real economic social and educational needs of the Middle East. When this happens, the Soviet Union will have very little to offer the Arabs in comparison to the Western world. For the RUSSIANS peace is a real disaster.

"On the other hand, I don't believe that the Soviet Union for the time being is interested in all-out local war. This is because Soviet

leaders know that for now, the Arab countries are incapable of destroying Israel by the use of force. Therefore, as long as Israel is strong enough to defend herself, the Soviet Union will be for a policy of no peace and no war."



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