

GOLDA'S TALKS "GOOD IN SPIRIT"

WASHINGTON (WNS) --Israel's Premier Golda Meir received assurances that the U.S. would not permit the balance of power to change to Israel's disadvantage in the Middle East and that Israel would continue to receive economic aid to maintain that balance. The assurances came after Mrs. Meir met for five hours in separate meetings with President Nixon at the White House and with Secretary of State William P. Rogers in the State Department. However, it was not known if the

shipment of Phantom jets to Israel would be resumed. Government spokesmen revealed that it had been agreed that the talks would be confidential and that no diplomatic action on the Middle East could be "resumed or undertaken" until after the end of the UN General Assembly debate on the Middle East which began on Dec. 3.

Mrs. Meir's two-hour discussion with President Nixon was described by White House spokesman Ronald Ziegler, who said, "A useful and satisfactory discussion was held on Israel's long-term needs for modernizing and maintaining the capacity of Israel's defense forces in the context of our ongoing policy of maintaining the military balance." The President stated, Ziegler continued, that Israel must maintain a long-term defense and the U.S. must assist in that process. "However, simply maintaining the military balance in itself would not bring peace and negotiations are needed."

Earlier in the day, following a three-hour meeting with Rogers, Mrs. Meir emerged smiling, but refused to

say what topic had been discussed. Asked if differences were narrowed or resolved at the meeting, a State Department source said "it is difficult to answer that with either of these words but the atmosphere was good." Questioned on the delivery of Phantoms to Israel, the source stated "both governments are agreed that we should not, as governments, be put in a position of confronting one another on this matter of aircraft. Any statement, action or editorial from any quarter that poses the issue of relations between the U.S. and Israel in the narrow context of these aircraft does an injustice to the actual state of our relations."

Diplomatic sources here said Mrs. Meir's talks were "good in spirit" but indicated that further problems and discussions remain.

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