

# WASHINGTON DATELINE

BY TRUDE B. FELDMAN

## ISRAELITE'S WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT

President Gerald R. Ford said that he and General Secretary Brezhnev did discuss -- at some length -- their different views on the settlement of Middle East problems.

"There are some differences, but they aren't as major as it would appear," he added. "We indicated that, in our judgment, it was important for continuous progress to be made, perhaps with negotiations between Israel and one or more of the Arab nations."

"We also agreed that, at a certain point, a Geneva Conference might be the final answer. So, as we discussed what appeared to be different views at the outset, I think we came to an agreement that it was in the interest of the nations of the Mid-East, the interest of the world at large, that both parties make a maximum effort to keep negotiations going."

"We think our step-by-step approach is the right one for the time being, but we don't preclude the possibility of a Geneva Conference."

Mr. Ford was attempting a reply to the second question at his fifth Press Conference since becoming President of the United States. Asked by Frank Cormier, ASSOCIATED PRESS's White House correspondent, the question was: There are reports that you and Mr. Brezhnev made some progress in maybe fashioning a complementary approach to negotiations in the Middle East. More specifically, perhaps the Soviets would agree to try to persuade the

Palestine Liberation Organization to acknowledge that Israel has a right to exist and we then might try to persuade Israel to talk to the PLO. Is there any truth to this?

Not satisfied with the President's response to Cormier's question, Robert S. Boyd, Washington Bureau Chief of KNIGHT NEWS-PAPERS asked:

"Did you and Mr. Brezhnev discuss some kind of a trade-off whereby Israel would deal with the PLO and the PLO would recognize Israel's right to exist as a state?"

"We didn't get into that detail," the President answered. "Israel has indicated that it would not negotiate with the PLO, and we have no way of forcing them to do so."

He added that the discussion between Mr. Brezhnev and himself, as far as the Mideast was concerned, was to "state our position and their position and as we discussed it, I think we came to a higher degree of agreement in that our position was understood by them and the prospects of a Geneva agreement was understood by us."

Meanwhile, it was disclosed that Brezhnev and Ford -- in their recent summit, near Vladivostok, also talked about emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union.

Dr. Henry Kissinger described Brezhnev as "having conveyed 'indirect assurances' to Mr. Ford that Soviet emigration will be freer. In an appearance before the Senate Finance Committee, the Secretary of State said that a

"satisfactory compromise" was reached on an "extraordinarily sensitive set of issues."

But he warned that any attempt now -- publicly -- to nail this thing down in the form of a legal obligation for the Soviet Union to guarantee exact numbers of emigrants would immediately be repudiated by them as interference in their internal affairs.

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