

KISSINGER 'GUARDEDLY OPTIMISTIC'

WASHINGTON (WNS) -- Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger was described as "guardedly optimistic" that future progress could be made on an agreement between Israel and Egypt.

State Department spokesman Robert Anderson in giving that description said Kissinger would be returning to the Middle East next month because the "momentum" for further progress required talking directly with the Middle East leaders. Kissinger returned to Washington after visits to Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Britain, France and talks in Switzerland with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and the Shah of Iran. Kissinger and Gromyko concluded two days of talks in Geneva with a communique expressing American and Soviet determination to achieve a peaceful solution in the Middle East. Kissinger, noting that there had been "differences" in the positions of the two superpowers, said that no date had been set for reconvening the Geneva conference on the Middle East.

Meanwhile Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy said in Cairo that Egypt's attendance at the Geneva conference would be conditioned on replacement of all weapons lost in the Yom Kippur War and agreement that the Palestinian Liberation Organization would be invited to participate. Israeli officials said these conditions indicate that Egypt, like Israel, believes that a return to Geneva now would be premature. Fahmy said that the Soviet Union had resumed shipments of weapons to Egypt.

MORE SPECIFICS

NEXT KISSINGER TRIP

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger left the Middle East after what Israeli officials termed "exploratory" talks with Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Kissinger is expected

to get down to specifics when he returns for another visit to the region. Premier Yitzhak Rabin, in a television broadcast, confirmed this development.

Rabin said that Israel stuck to the Cabinet-approved proposal of a 30-50 kilometer pullback in the Sinai which excluded the Mitla and Gidi passes and the Abu Rodeis oil fields in exchange for meaningful political concessions. However, Rabin noted that his own proposal that Israel cede the passes and oil fields to Egypt in return for a formal renunciation by Egypt of a state of war with Israel had also been discussed.

Kissinger made it clear that Egypt does not yet accept Rabin's plan since it maintains that a written non-belligerency accord can only be considered in the context of a complete Israeli withdrawal. Israeli sources say that Israel will insist on a time lag between the signing and implementation of any accord.

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US SHOULD PROTEST ARAB BOYCOTT

NEW YORK (WNS) -- The United States should "speak up now" and publicly protest the serious threat to Israel posed by the Arab economic boycott, Sen. Lloyd M. Bentsen (D. Texas) told the 67th annual award dinner of B'nai Zion, the American fraternal Zionist organization.

Bentsen, who has announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency declared that, "never has Israel been more threatened

--politically, militarily and economically." He said the "widening economic boycott against Israel" is of great concern to him.



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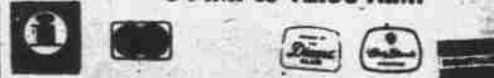
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