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negotiations directly or indirectly with the Arab terrorist organization whose declared aim is the destruction of Israel and its people and who intentionally turn their arms, supplied to them in large quantities by the Soviet Union Libya and Syria, against the Jewish population." The statement added "Likewise the government of Israel does not authorize anybody to conduct negotiations with the aforementioned organizations. The government will continue to defend the citizens of Israel. This is its right and its duty."

Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who announced Reagan's decision to suspend indefinitely delivery of F-16s, said the President's decision was made in "the context of the escalating cycle of violence" which made it "inappropriate" to ship lethal weapons to the area at this time. No preconditions were set for resumption of delivering the F-16s. Haig and other Administration officials insisted repeated that the suspension was not related to "any specific acts" by Israel of Habib's efforts to obtain a cease - fire. Haig, who was in Ottawa with Reagan, said in an interview July 20 on ABC-TV's "Nightline" program that Reagan's decision was based on "objective realities." He added that "Israel is a long-standing friend and ally, our relations will continue on that long - standing and historic friendship."

But that historic friendship came under question when Clark, one of Reagan's closest friends, told reporters in Washington that the Administration felt "disappointment and some embarrassment" when Begin ordered the air raid on Beirut shortly after consulting with State Department Counsellor Robert McFarlane. Clark noted that Begin was making it difficult for the Administration to aid Israel. The President, he said, was "doing his utmost" to "keep our historic commitment to Israel" but added he hoped Israel would realize that American interests included good relations with the Arabs.

Weinberger, interviewed on ABC-TV's "Good

Morning America," was even more blunt. He charged that Begin's policy toward Lebanon "cannot really be described as moderate at this point" and justified Reagan's decision on the F-16s. He claimed that Habib "came very close to securing a very reasonable set of peace terms," with respect to having Syria remove its missiles from Lebanon "just about the time the Iraqi reactor was bombed."

Continuing, Weinberger claimed that Habib was making "very good progress," assisted by Saudi Arabia and "other countries of the moderate Arab nations" regarding the missile situation, "and then Beirut was bombed. So, each of these things had set the whole course of security and peace back quite a ways." Reagan himself, however, sought to moderate the tense situation developing between the U.S. and Israel by telling reporters in Washington that Israel was being victimized by the bombings and shellings from Lebanon.

Nevertheless, government circles in Israel were aghast at the volume of volubility of anti-Israel and anti - Begin statements emanating from Washington. Israeli officials were especially critical of Weinberger's claim that Habib had twice been close to a resolution of the Syrian missile crisis and had eachtime been derailed by Israel's military actions. As far as Israel knew, the officials said, Habib had made hardly any progress and he had never reported to Israel that he was on the verge of affecting a settlement. On the contrary, the officials noted, he had always returned to Israel bearing bad tidings and it was Israel's repeated self - restraint that had prevented a military escalation of the situation.

Ephraim Evron, Israel's Ambassador to the U.S., emphasized this point to reporters in Washington when he told them that Israel "didn't start" the current violence across the Lebanese border. "What we want is to have a situation restored to what it is supposed to be -- no killings of our citizens, no bombings of our settlements, no harassment of our country." He stressed that Israel supports Habib's efforts

to affect a cease - fire. He emphasized that the Lebanese government has permitted the PLO to operate along the Israeli - Lebanese border and it is that government's "responsibility" to restore calm to the border.

Evron acknowledged that "there is a problem" in U.S. - Israel relations but that the "basis relationship" is such that it will be "overcome." Addressing a meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in New York, the envoy emphasized that the basic relationship between Israel and the U.S. remains intact, that there is no "crisis" between the two nations but only "a difference of opinion between close friends." He said that "after the dust settles" and the situation with regard to Israel's motives in its recent actions in Lebanon becomes clearer, there will be "more understanding" on the issue between the two countries.

This appeared to be borne out when the State Department said, "We feel that they (the Israelis) are as committed to a cessation of hostilities, of violence (across the Lebanese border) as we are." Department spokesman Dean Fischer, who made the statement to reporters, stressed that the Administration did not consider Begin as an "obstacle" to peace. "Our efforts are focussed on the achievement of a cessation of violence on both sides of the border," Fischer said. "At this sensitive juncture, we are not going to talk about things that are behind us. Instead, we are concentrating on a reduction of the level of violence."

In addressing the Presidents Conference, its chairman, Howard Squadron injected reports in the American media that there is a "division" in the Jewish community over Begin's policy in Lebanon. He said the Jewish community will continue to support Israel. A statement adopted unanimously by the Conference and sent to the White House in the form of a telegram, called the suspension of the F-16s deliveries "a one-sided punishment" whose result is "to endanger Israel's security and compromise America's own interest in the Mideast."

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CROSS BURNING STIRS CANADA

MONTREAL (WNS) -- The attorney general's special deputy in British Columbia is investigating the first public cross burning in that province since the 1930's it was reported. It took place on a remote beach near Mission, B.C., attended by about 50 Klan members who offered "a prayer of thanks to God" for making them white and of "superior intellect."

The Canadian Jewish Congress Pacific Region has regularly called attention of the authorities to KKK activities on Canada's west coast. The cross - burners were reportedly led by a 20 - year - old woman who identified herself as Ann Farmer and claimed to be the "Grand Chaplain" of the Klan. She said she was the girl friend of a former British Columbia Klan leader known as George who is now in prison facing charges for leading a gang of mercenaries in an attempted coup on the island of Dominica in the West Indies.

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