

## ISRAEL MUST DETERMINE FOREIGN POLICY

The Reagan Administration has lifted the embargo against delivery of warplanes to Israel following what the Administration termed as an intensive review of the bombing by Israel on Iraq's nuclear reactor in June and of terrorist headquarters in Beirut a month later. Just when the planes will be on their way to Israel is still unknown.

A recent problem with the computer systems of the F-16s has resulted in the grounding of all those planes in the United States. As a Pentagon official said, "If you can't fly them, you can't deliver them." Hopefully, the planes will soon be on their way, but for now the final line is that the planes have been released after a long overdue detention in the United States.

Taking a look at the incidents that provoked an unduly harsh response by the Administration, there was ultimately no new determination on the use of American-made weapons sold to Israel. As Premier Menachem Begin indicated, they are Israeli planes made in the U.S., but Israeli-owned nevertheless. And Israel dictates foreign policy in Jerusalem, not in Washington, just as U.S. foreign policy

is now shaped by Israeli actions.

The Administration, although publicly condemning the Iraqi attack by Israel, shared what most countries secretly shared: relief that Iraq will not build nuclear weapons for some time now. And the attack on terrorist headquarters in Beirut was done to defend the people of Israel and the U.S., would do likewise should a terrorist organization suddenly become a nearly full fledged military army in its backyard. The attacks were publicly condemned but understood clearly by policy makers in Washington. Israel looks out for herself first.

No doubt the Administration was put in a thorny situation by the attacks just after getting itself settled in office and trying to negotiate a Middle East policy to both help Israel and develop a partnership with the Arab moderate states. Now the embargo has been lifted and the warplanes will soon be on their way. And as in other squabbles with the United States in past years, Israeli-U.S. relations will move forward to a better understanding in their truly important alliance.

Premier Begin is scheduled to meet with

Reagan in Washington in early September. It will be then that any further questions will be ironed out, if need be, and Reagan will listen closely to Begin as he did to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat when here earlier this month. Begin will give the Administration an Israeli assessment of what characterizes foreign policy of the Israeli government, and will reiterate their position that the embargo was unjust and unjustifiable. The conclusions of those meetings will further help Reagan understand the Middle East problems and thus ultimately stay away from scare tactics like embargoes against the State of Israel.

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