

BEGIN, REAGAN MEET IN WASHINGTON



PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN MEETS WITH PRIME MINISTER MENACHEM BEGIN IN SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP.

WASH. (WNS) -- President Reagan met with Premier Menachem Begin for the first time and their talks ranged from the Administration's proposal to sell AWACS reconnaissance planes to Saudi Arabia to regional strategic cooperation. Other topics included Soviet expansionism, U. S. economic and military cooperation, and the long-stalled negotiations for autonomy on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The meetings were described as "friendly and enthusiastic" by one side. Even before Begin arrived for the ceremonial welcome on the White House lawn, the Administration was stressing that the U.S. regards Israel as an "ally" and in the words of Secretary of State Alexander Haig, wants to "put meat on the bones" of the strategic relationship with Israel.

Reagan, greeting his guest, said Begin could "rest assured that the security of Israel is a principal objective of the Administration and that we regard Israel as an ally in our search for regional stability" in the Middle East. But for all of those words, the Administration ap-

peared to shy away from any concrete commitment such as a formal military alliance with Israel. There were reports earlier in the week

that the U.S. would provide Israel with an additional \$600 million in military credits for the fiscal years 1983 and 1984, that it would give Israel a spy satellite or time on a U. S. satellite. But Administration officials discouraged speculation. They denied, however, that the U.S. was discussing enhancement of the strategic relationship as an effort to mute Israel's opposition to the AWACS sale. That issue stood out as the chief area of disagreement between Begin and his host.

Officials said Begin did not ask Reagan to withdraw the sale but made a strong case against it from Israel's point of view. The President, according to aides present at the meetings, made it clear that his decision on

the AWACS was final and tried to explain to the Israelis that America's broader interests in the Middle East required that the AWACS deal be implemented. He expressed confidence that Congress would not reject it.

There was mention of joint U.S. - Israeli military exercises-- such as the U.S. and Egypt conducted last year. However, there was no mention of U.S. naval and air bases or other facilities on Israeli territory or the stockpiling of American military equipment in Israel for use in an emergency. While Israel has been seeking closer military ties with Washington, the Administration's perception appeared to be that such measures undertaken before Israel is

at peace with all of its neighbors would infuriate the Arab states and block the strategic consensus in the region aimed at the Soviet Union which is the cornerstone of U.S. policy in the Middle East.

Ministry Director David Kimche at a meeting here. At the same time talks began in El Arish between Israeli and Egyptian experts in streamlining the transportation of goods by land across the Sinai border.

A party of 50 Egyptian officials and diplomats is due to arrive in Israel Sept. 13 for talks for aviation ties, on sea links, telecommunications links, trade and on tourism.

The two governments have agreed on an intensive schedule of meetings, alternating between Jerusalem and Cairo, on these various aspects of normalization. Israeli officials sense a new urgency and spirit of concrete cooperation on the Egyptian side.

EGYPT WANTS PEACE TO CONTINUE

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- Egypt's Ambassador to Israel, Saad Mortada has assured Israel that the current political tensions and arrests in that country of some 1,500 people accused of contributing to the Moslem - Christian violence will not prevent or delay plans to step up normalization between the two countries. Mortada conveyed this message to Foreign

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