

ISRAEL TAKES OFFENSIVE

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identally, President Reagan repeated his views on the Fahd proposal which calls for the withdrawal by Israel to the pre-1967 borders, the development of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with Jerusalem as its capital and also calls for "the right of countries in the region to live in peace."

At a press conference in Washington, the President, responding to reporters' questions declared, "I think the most realistic approach is the one that we are taking which is to attempt to bring peace in the Middle East, must be based on the Camp David accords and 242 - Resolution of the United Nations." But when asked if he could incorporate any part of the Fahd plan into the Camp David process, the President said there was "one" point.

"I know that there is some dispute what I'm going to say between the parties concerned but I believe, and I have stated previously that I believe that it's implicit in the offering of that plan -- recognition of Israel's right to exist as a nation," Reagan said. "And this has been one of the sticking points so far with the Arab world refusing to make that acknowledgment. This was why I have referred to it as a hopeful sign. That there was an offer of a plan, whether you agree with it or not, that indicated the willingness to negotiate, which it does imply." Reagan added that the plan also "calls for all of the states of the region living together in peace, and I think all endorse that."

Meanwhile, Begin, who spoke in Jerusalem at the opening of the Isratech - 1981, an industrial fair, insisted that Israel has already reached an absolute limit of its political concessions and there would be no more. He said that Israel has already given up vital strategic positions in the Sinai. On the eastern front, Begin declared, autonomy was the maximum concession Israel was willing to make. Begin vowed that Israel would not surrender to pressure from any source to negotiate on the eight point Saudi plan.

Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, speaking to foreign correspondents in Tel Aviv, appeared to

challenge the United States on a number of matters. He warned that Israel would give U.S. special envoy Philip Habib just one more chance to halt terrorist breaches of the cease-fire in Lebanon and to get Syria to remove the SAM-6 anti-aircraft missiles it has deployed in Lebanon since last May. Unless this is done by diplomatic means, Israel would be forced to take "other action," Sharon said. He did not specify what that might be.

The hawkish Defense Minister charged that there have been over 21 breaches of the cease-fire by Palestinian terrorists in south Lebanon since it went into effect last July 24. He said other terrorist attacks or attempted attacks on Israel originated in Jordan or were carried out against Jewish or Israeli institutions abroad, mainly in Western Europe. Sharon also repeated his charge of last month that U.S. military equipment supplied to Saudi Arabia was being transferred to Iraq "in contravention of a clear U.S. law barring such transfers." He said U.S. intelligence was aware of this breach but nevertheless, Israel had to draw attention to it.

At the same press conference, Sharon complained about "confused announcements" coming from Washington about the Fahd plan and the peace talks with Egypt. "The voice of Europe is not encouraging to us and it is not clear what is the real American policy," he said.

Meanwhile, while Begin warned the EEC that its participation in the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) to patrol Sinai after Israel's final withdrawal from the region in April 1982 must be based on the Camp David process not the EEC Venice Declaration of 1980, the EEC member nations continued consultations on how to incorporate the Venice Declaration to their participation. The 10-nation member group appeared optimistic at meetings in Paris that a compromise "will probably be found." It was reported that the suggested compromise would probably consist of a two part declaration, the first approving member states' participation in the MFO would refer to exclusively to the Camp David agreement and Resolution 242 would thus fulfill Begin's wishes. The second part would consist of a more general statement containing reference to the Venice

Declaration.

In a later development, the head of the Israeli delegation sent to Washington, Moshe Arens said the Saudi peace proposal was unacceptable because it was aimed at the "dismemberment of Israel." After an hour long meeting at the White House, Arens said the Saudi plan was not a "little step" forward as one newspaper headline quoted him as saying, but a "step sideward." He said the plan was a tactical switch by the Saudis which was in a way more dangerous to Israel because it gave Riyadh the appearance of being moderate.

In a related development, Yehuda Blum, Israel's Ambassador to the UN, told reporters that Israel expects the U.S. to veto the Fahd plan should it come before the Security Council. He cited statements by Reagan Administration officials affirming the American commitment to the Camp David accords and Resolution 242. Israel therefore can expect that the U.S. will reject the Saudi plan because it "is incompatible with Camp David and Resolution 242," Blum said.

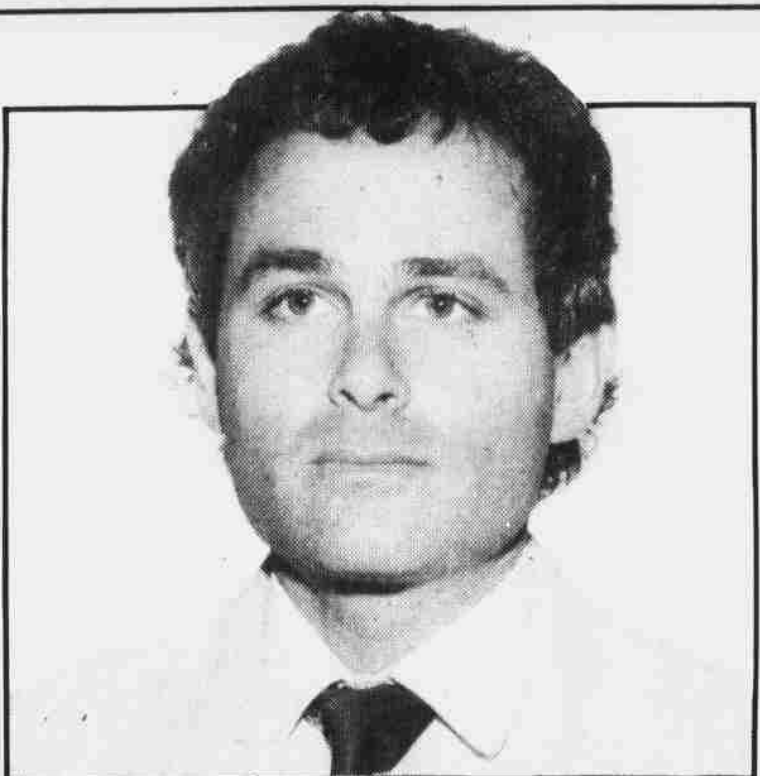
TWO ISRAELI AIR BASES OPEN

TEL AVIV (WNS) -- The two Israel Air Bases in the Negev being built by the United States to replace two being abandoned in Sinai as part of the final withdrawal from that area in compliance with the Israel-Egypt peace treaty, were formally declared operational, even though far from completion. Israel is to clear from Sinai by April, 1982.

The first Israel squadron flew into Udat airfield north of Eilat. The Ramon airfield near Mitzpe

Ramon will be taken over shortly. The new air fields, plus a third being built by Israeli contractors are to replace the two major air bases of Eitam and Etzion in Sinai.

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