

REAGAN MUST CONSOLE JEWS

WASH. (WNS) -- President Reagan will have to produce "tangible" action should he be successful in allaying fears in the American Jewish community in the wake of the debate over the sale of five AWACS radar planes to Saudi Arabia and a perceived Administration tilt to Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Fahd's "peace plan" for the Mideast.

This view was expressed by Howard Squadron, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations after two meetings Reagan had with separate Jewish groups at the White House. Squadron said he was "satisfied" that the President was "sincere" in wishing to allay the fear in the Jewish community. Specifically, Squadron said Reagan reiterated his support for the Camp David peace process but said he told the President there should be a more active U.S. role in the autonomy negotiations. Reagan also expressed concern over the emergence of anti-Semitism during the AWACS debate, Squadron said, but the Jewish leader said the President should express his concern not just to Jews but to a more general group.

Squadron led a delegation of more than 20 representatives of the Presidents Conference to the meeting with Reagan. The group first met with Vice President George Bush, White House Counsellor Edwin Meese, National Security Advisor Richard Allen and Elizabeth Dole, a special advisor to the President for public liason, before they were joined by Reagan.

It was learned that a great deal of time with Reagan and the Jewish groups was spent on the topic of the eight point proposal for peace in the Mideast issued by Saudi Arabia. While Reagan reiterated his support for the Camp David process, according to Squadron, the President told the group that the Fahd plan showed "some hope" and demonstrated a "less belligerent attitude" than earlier Saudi positions toward Israel. Reagan said he thought this type of hope ought to be pursued.

Squadron told reporters at a press conference after the final meeting took place that evening.

Squadron noted that both Meese and the President reconfirmed the statement Reagan made to the President's Conference on Sept. 15, 1980 when Reagan was a candidate for the presidency. Squadron said this included support for a united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty opposition to a Palestinian state and the refusal by the U.S. to deal with the Palestine Liberation Organization until it ended its terrorism and accepted United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 and Israel's right to exist.

On the issue of anti-Semitism, the Jewish leaders expressed their concern over the suggestions during the AWACS debate of "disloyalty" by those who opposed the sale. Squadron said that Reagan declared that none of these expressions came from him or from anyone else in the Administration. However, Squadron said one of the President's aides said that one staff member had been "rebuked." Squadron said he did not remember which aide said this and that the reason for the rebuke or what the rebuke entailed was not mentioned.

STEPS TO FREEDOM



NEW YORK'S MAYOR EDWARD KOCH DEDICATES THE ANATOLY SHARANSKY STEPS AT THE ISAIAH PEACE WALL OPPOSITE THE UNITED NATIONS, AS PRISONER UNIFORMED YOUTHS HOLDING SOVIET JEWRY "FREEDOM FLAGS" STAND ON THE SPIRAL STAIRWAY. THE STEPS RESULTED FROM A YEAR-LONG EFFORT BY THE STUDENT STRUGGLE FOR SOVIET JEWRY ON BEHALF OF THE 33 YEAR-OLD MATHEMATICIAN SUFFERING IN THE SOLITARY CONFINEMENT CELLS OF THE NOTORIOUS PERM LABOR CAMP.

GOOD SIGNALS FROM ARGENTINA

The recent release of four Jews who have been held in Argentina prisons without charges being brought against them provide added hope that the Argentine government is accelerating its prisoner release program. Those liberated after being held for years without charges include Deborah Benshoam, now 20, imprisoned at 16; Raul Oscar Nudel, a science student jailed in 1974; Pablo Kilmovsky, a mathematician incarcerated for three years, and Jorge Gustavo Salischiker, a lithographer, held for two years after completion of his sentence.

These prisoners have been the focus of international attention following the world wide distribution of an Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith pamphlet, "Why are These People in Argentine Jails? Where are the Disappeared?"

Abraham Foxman, the ADL's associate national director and head of the ADL's Interna-

tional Affairs Department said that these released prisoners may indicate that Argentine authorities are "registering some achievements in moving towards the restoration of constitutional rights." But he stressed, that it remains imperative to continue public pressure until all those held without charges are either set free or formally charged and tried.

Furthermore, the ADL received from Argentine government officials a list of 6,070 individuals released from P.E.N. (Detention on order of the National Executive Power) since March 1974. Foxman said that despite this record and recent releases, more than 800 uncharged prisoners remain incarcerated while the number of disappeared is estimated at over 15,000.

The ADL report of the release of Benshoam, Kilmovsky, Nudel and Salischiker provide us with added hope that the 800 who still remain imprisoned in the Argentine penal system will be handled in the proper manner by the Argentine authorities. ADL efforts are noteworthy for their substantial gains and their efforts should be supported and continued.

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