

WASHINGTON DATELINE

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ISRAELITE'S WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT

Allan Cranston: The Senator From California

Middle East watchers know that relations between the United States and Israel seem to go in cycles; and, in recent months, have been at a low level. Through good and bad times alike, however, Senator Allan Cranston has been a steady champion of a strong bond between the two countries.

For that steadfast support of America-Israel friendship, Cranston was selected for Bnai Zion's 1983 America-Israel Friendship Award last week at the organization's 75th annual dinner.

Fifteen hundred persons assembled in New York's Hilton where Sidney Wiener, Bnai Zion president, presented the gold medal to Senator Cranston as they ushered in the diamond jubilee of Bnai Zion, America's oldest and largest Zionist fraternal organization.

In an interview in his Senate office, Cranston -- who became the first candidate to announce his Presidential aspirations for 1984 -- talked about the deteriorating relations between Israel and the U.S.; President Reagan's Mideast peace proposal; Soviet Jewry; human rights; our troops in Lebanon and the proposed sale of arms to Jordan.

A member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Cranston is leading the opposition in the Senate to the sale of the arms; and he has criticized the Reagan Administration for "trying to buy friends with weapons."

He is advocating a Senate resolution opposing the Reagan Administration's proposal to sell Jordan advanced 5 G fighter aircraft, mobile STINGER anti-aircraft missiles and laser-guided bombs. He said such weapons would endanger Israel's security and add to Middle East tensions.

Stressing that U. S. arms should go to "proven" friends and allies for our mutual security, he said: "If we sell weapons to Jordan, they should be limited to what Jordan legitimately needs to defend itself against its hostile Arab neighbors. And such sales should

be made only after Jordan ends its state of war with Israel. "Instead of selling more weapons of war to Israel's enemy, the Reagan Administration should be selling Jordan on joining Egypt and Israel in building a lasting peace."

Senator Cranston maintains the U.S. has a vital stake in peace in the Mideast because an Arab - Israel war "could well trigger a U.S.-USSR conflict and lead to the ultimate holocaust of nuclear catastrophe that could engulf and destroy everyone."

He added that the Reagan Administration "had unnecessarily inflamed Israel's fears and fanned Arab hopes" that it can drive a wedge between the U.S. and Israel.

"That hope -- if encouraged -- can create the sort of instability in the Mideast that could lead to a renewed outbreak of hostilities," he stressed. "President Reagan gave the Arabs cause to hope -- and the Israelis cause to worry -- when he broke a pledge the U.S. had made to Israel that we wouldn't sell the Saudis equipment that would enhance the offensive power of their F-16 fighter bombers. He broke another commitment to Israel by suspending delivery of contracted - for F-16's following Israel's preemptive defensive strike against Iraq's nuclear facility. He further exacerbated Israel's worries about America's reliability by extending the suspension when Israel bombed PLO headquarters in Beirut. And he compounded those concerns when he suspended the new mutual security accord after Prime Minister Begin announced that he was extending Israeli law to the Golan Heights.

"And now," Cranston added, "the Reagan Administration is endangering Israel's security by offering to sell new jet fighters and missiles to Jordan."

As for President Reagan's September 1st peace initiative, Cranston said the plan goes too far in that it prejudices the ultimate fate of the West Bank and Gaza when that should be

decided by negotiations between the two parties involved.

The Senator from California said that relations between the U.S. and Israel are important to us because Israel is a nation with which, from its very birth, we "established unseverable, emotional, historic, ideological and spiritual ties."

He conceded that relations between the two countries have become rather bumpy. "Recent disagreements between the U.S. and Israel arise more from a difference in the styles and perceptions of the governments of Prime Minister Begin and President Reagan than from a difference in the basic interests and fundamental objective of our two countries," he said. "We've had a collision of sorts, but I don't think that either side will be inflexible in its relationship. What we should be seeking to do is to strengthen our accord and to emphasize where we agree rather than where we differ. We should realize we cannot control every action by Israel despite our effort to be of assistance. And Israel should recognize that the U.S. cannot be expected to condone and support every action taken by Israel."

Cranston added: "In the past, there have been a number of strains in our relations, but we have a basic friendship -- what really amounts to an alliance. We have a shared interest. We both want a secure and prosperous Israel, with recognized defensible borders."

Emphasizing that Israel must feel secure, he said: "Only a nation, like a person, can feel he can safely negotiate and bargain, and even make reciprocal concessions if that nation or that person feels safe and is secure. Security is a basic need. A frightened person, like a frightened nation, is unflexible and unyielding. So both Israel and the Arabs need to be reassured as to their individual security.

"Israel needs to feel it can always -- and under all conditions -- depend on military and economic aid from the U.S. The Arabs need the assurance that Israel's military strength will be used only in self defense and to protect the integrity and survival of Israel."

Cranston visited the Middle East in 1979 where he met with Prime Minister Menachem Begin in Israel; President Anwar el Sadat in Egypt and King Hussein in Jordan.

Last September, Cranston had reservations about sending American forces back to Lebanon, and stated that the U.S. is widely known as Israel's strongest supporter and not perceived by the Arabs as neutral. "This situation puts American troops in greater potential danger than those of other nations," he remarked.

He also noted that he would support "any reasonable plan" to provide aid to Lebanon so that its government can regain control over its own territory free of all foreign troops -- including American.

Calling U.S. aid to Lebanon an "investment in peace," Cranston said that we must do what we can to help the war-torn nation of Lebanon restore its territorial integrity and to resume its traditional pro-Western, pro-democratic role in the Arab world. He also said that negotiations should be pressed forward for a phased withdrawal of Syrian, Israeli and Palestinian forces from Lebanon, adding: "As soon as Le-

(Continued on Page 16)

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BAR MITZVAH AT TEMPLE BETH SHOLOM

Joel Altman, son of Lt. Col. & Mrs. Herbert Altman, was called to the Torah and became a Bar Mitzvah during services at Temple Beth Sholom, 1600 E. Oakey Blvd., on Saturday morning, March 12, 1983.

Rabbi Kalman Appel, spiritual leader of the Temple, officiated. Cantor Simon Bergman chanted the liturgy.

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