

## Why Israel Deserves More U.S. Aid

By Robert E. Segal

As Congress swings into action for its 99th session, what chance do the expanding Arab-American propaganda groups have to throw a wrench into Israel's efforts to obtain a jump from \$2.6 billion to \$4 billion in grants from Washington?

An indication of how the congressional battle over giving more support to Israel will heat up is being revealed by anti-Israel arguments bound to accelerate over the air and in the press as outfits like the National Association of Arab-Americans, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, and the Association of Arab-American University Graduates intensify their campaigns to win support for "the Arab Cause" and to denigrate the State of Israel.

Adding steam to these efforts will be such critics of Israel as George Ball, former assistant secretary of state; Paul Findley, former Illinois congressman; James G. Abourezk, former U.S. senator from South Dakota; John C. West, former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia; and perhaps Bill Fulbright, former U.S. senator from Arkansas. These, together with scores of leaders of Arab student groups on college campuses and several pro-Arab American clergymen, no doubt will be heard from.

All the more reason then for supplying the hard facts regarding Israel's needs in a period of 1%-a-day inflation increase to be put to use when the propaganda pot begins to boil.

Between the late 1940s, when Israel, in the throes of birth, was making herculean efforts to withstand fierce attacks from Arab neighbors,

until the early 1970s, aid from Washington ran a little over only \$60 million a year. Since that time, Israel has suffered severe losses in lives (600 in Lebanon alone) and the heavy burden of meeting the high cost of keeping militarily equipped. The loss of oil sustained when Israel, as promised, withdrew from Sinai, offers an example of new burdens that had to be assumed.

And why should the U.S. be especially helpful to Israel now?

First, when overall foreign policy of the U.S. is considered realistically, it is obvious that Washington gives top priority to the threat of that carnivorous bear, the USSR. Moscow seeks to gain power the world over, but especially in the Warsaw Pact nations and the Middle East. Which U.S. allies, then, can be of strongest support in these areas? The obvious answer is the NATO countries and that tried and proven democratic partner -- Israel.

Now to what degree do we support these partners-in-arms? The U.S. annually spends somewhere between \$122 and \$129 billion on NATO, an average of \$8 billion for each of the NATO nations. This last figure is much more than Israel has ever asked for or ever received. Indeed, in recent years, U.S. military and economic aid to Israel has averaged about \$2 billion a year. Hence, even those who offer a bag full of arguments against hiking financial aid to Israel will need to keep in mind they are, in effect, strengthening Soviet chances to burrow into the Middle East to the delight of Israel's Arab foes and to the sorrow of U.S. military strategists.

Secondly, Israel has been tremendously helpful to Washington through the supply of key

intelligence information, including advance warning on terrorist plans affecting the U.S. and through providing facts about sophisticated Soviet military equipment taken during Israel's conflicts with Syria and the PLO. It is in part from Israel's heartbreaking experience of losses in Lebanon that the U.S. has learned how costly and dangerous it was for American fighters in Lebanon.

Finally, it should be apparent by now that the chimerical hunt for Arab moderates is hopeless, that the best chance to achieve Middle East peace is through continued alliance with and support of Israel, the only nation there willing to strive for fair and enduring solutions.

The U.S. has been a staunch supporter of Israel in United Nations debates in the course of which Israel is constantly harangued, insulted, threatened, and vilified. Support there must be matched with continuing and increased economic and military assistance from Washington.

### First Stage Of IDF Withdrawal Is Near Completion

TEL AVIV (WNS) — IDF from Lebanon progresses. Military sources said that the withdrawal of equipment from the Awali River line, until now the forward position of the Israel Defense Force in south Lebanon, has been virtually completed as the first stage of the three-stage withdrawal of the

According to the sources, all heavy equipment and moveable installations have been pulled back to the new line on the Litani River. Army engineers are preparing to blow up fixed installations which neither the Lebanese army nor the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) have offered to buy.

The engineers are also destroying the underground bunkers built by the Palestine Liberation Organization before 1982 when the PLO was in virtual control of south Lebanon.

An IDF officer told Israel Radio, "it does not really matter now whether we hand over to the Lebanese Army or to UNIFIL because there is nothing left to hand over." The first stage of the withdrawal is expected to be completed by February 18.

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