

**Review
of
the
Year**

**UNITED STATES
OTHER COUNTRIES**

Civic and Political

Intergroup Relations

IN "THE EXPOSED AMERICAN JEW," written in *Commentary* in June 1975, Nathan Glazer took note of the factors that were bringing American Jews into the public eye. Chief among them was the following: "American Jews must ask a very big thing of their country: they must ask the United States to support Israel and do whatever is in its power to see that Israel survives." In 1981 this issue moved to the center of the political arena, as the Reagan administration sought to sell AWACS (air warning) planes and other advanced weaponry to Saudi Arabia. For Jews, the AWACS struggle marked a serious break with the popular Republican president, whom they had given an unprecedented 39 per cent of their vote the year before, in part because of their dissatisfaction with the handling of the Middle East situation by President Carter. The Jewish community locked horns with the administration and the military-industrial complex, and, for the first time since World War II, there were attacks on Jews at the highest governmental levels.

The AWACS Fight

Pressures on American Jews in 1981 were foreshadowed even before the AWACS fight. The Israeli bombing of an Iraqi nuclear reactor in June, followed by the bombing of PLO facilities in Beirut in July, stimulated a strong anti-Israel reaction, particularly in the media. In the summer issue of the influential journal *Foreign Affairs*, Senator Charles Mathias (R., Md.) was critical of the "Israel lobby," whose members, he declared, sometimes acted for "reasons not always related either to personal conviction or careful reflection on the national interest." Simultaneously, Representative Paul McCloskey (R., Calif.) told a group of retired naval officers, "We have got to overcome the tendency of the Jewish community in America to control the actions of Congress and force the president and the Congress not to be even-handed in the Middle East."

In the fall the Reagan administration moved to implement the AWACS deal. Recognizing that it stood no chance of winning in the House of Representatives, the administration placed pressure mainly on the Senate, where 51 members, led by Robert Packwood (R., Ore.), had signed a resolution announcing opposition to the

sale. According to a major investigative article in the *New Republic* (Feb. 17, 1982), President Reagan's decision and his advisors to lay the prestige of the administration on the line in the AWACS deal may have been influenced by an unprecedented lobbying campaign launched by American business organizations and oil companies.

Jews soon came under attack from the administration as the single, most powerful interest group seeking to bar a sale that the White House defined as beneficial to American interests. Secretary of State Alexander Haig spoke of "an independent foreign policy" not held hostage to "external veto," while an unnamed national security council aide was widely quoted as challenging American Jews to choose "between Begin and Reagan." In a news conference on October 1, President Reagan declared, "It is not the business of other nations to make American foreign policy." Asked if this meant that Israel should "keep her hands off" American national security matters, he said, "Well, or anyone else." Former president Richard Nixon stated that "if it were not for the intense opposition" of Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel and "parts of the American Jewish community," the AWACS sale would go through. All in all, there were innuendos from high places that it was improper, disloyal, or, at the very least, counter-productive for Jews to speak out forcefully way on so controversial an issue.

As the AWACS debate peaked, reports came out of Washington that the issue had stimulated considerable antisemitic feelings. Senator Mark Hatfield (R., Ore.) declared several days before the vote that his office mail indicated a "resurgence of antisemitism," while Senator David F. Durenberger (R., Minn.) said, "I have never experienced anything like this, in terms of basic prejudice." Senator Walter S. Cohen (R., Ma.), an original signer of the Packwood resolution, received considerable public attention when he switched his vote at the last moment, saying it would be better for Jews to lose than to suffer the consequences of winning. An Anti-Defamation League survey of mail received by senators shortly after the vote showed that seven per cent was antisemitic and 32 per cent critical of Israel for alleged "interference" in the controversy. The American Jewish Committee later reported, however, that the extent of anti-Jewish feeling had been exaggerated. Moreover, many congressional assistants indicated that the sale of AWACS was not an important issue to their constituents.

President Reagan's narrow victory when the vote came in the Senate on October 28 was almost anti-climactic for the Jewish community in the light of the intense public discussion of its role. Jewish officials were deeply concerned. "It would be a very long step backward for us to start looking over our shoulders out of fear that our participation in debate is going to bring antisemitism out of the woodwork," Nathan Perlmutter, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, declared a day after the vote. In fact, virtually all segments of the Jewish community remained strongly opposed to the AWACS deal. This was highlighted when a group of influential Republican Jews publicly spoke out against the sale. Their willingness to do so led Rabbi Irving Greenberg to declare, in a column in a number of

Anglo-Jewish publications, that the Jewish community had come of age. The defeat, nevertheless, marked the second time—the first was in 1978 when Jews opposed the sale by President Carter of F-15's to Saudi Arabia—that Jews strenuously opposed an administration matter involving Israel and had lost.

As the year drew to a close, members of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations and major Republican Jewish leaders met with President Reagan to assess the damage done to the administration's relations with the Jewish community and to urge him to publicly denounce antisemitism and defend the right to dissent. Reagan indicated that he would. Asked by CBS News about antisemitism growing out of the AWACS fight, Senate majority leader Howard Baker said, "I think the leadership on both sides of the aisle and the White House and throughout the country would realize that such a devastating consequence is just simply unacceptable."

Antisemitism

For the third consecutive year, the number of reported antisemitic incidents in the United States more than doubled. According to a survey released by the Anti-Defamation League, there were 974 cases of assault against property and 350 attacks against individual Jews or Jewish institutions in 1981. Once again, New York, California, New Jersey, and Massachusetts reported the most vandalism incidents. In Philadelphia at least 20 incidents occurred in the last six months of the year, among them a bomb threat against a Jewish business, a cross burning on a synagogue lawn, tire slashings, and swastika daubings. Police patrols were increased at all six synagogues in Fairlawn, New Jersey, in November, following the spraying of swastikas and antisemitic slogans on two of them. However, police and Jewish community relations officials tended to see most of these episodes as acts of youthful defiance rather than the work of organized hate groups.

Responses to the increase in antisemitic activities took a number of forms. The New York State legislature enacted two measures providing parental penalties for youths who defiled or damaged houses of worship and increasing penalties for discrimination or harassment because of race, creed, color, or national origin. New Jersey passed a measure making racial or ethnic terror a state crime of the third degree, punishable by fines and prison sentences. Jewish community relations agencies stepped up their efforts to persuade schools to teach about prejudice and discrimination in general and about the horrors of the Holocaust in particular. *Newsweek* reported that the Jewish Defense League was offering ten-week training courses in Southern California, Michigan, and upstate New York to meet the threat of antisemitic groups like the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan.

Despite mounting pressures on Jews, highlighted by the AWACS fight, a survey conducted by the opinion research company of Yankelovich, Skelly, and White for the American Jewish Committee, released on July 28, reported that antisemitism in the United States had declined significantly over a 17-year period. Some 34 per

cent of Americans could be categorized as antisemitic today, as against 45 per cent in 1964. The survey found, however, that the percentage of non-Jewish respondents who believed that Jews held too much power in the United States rose to 23 per cent, as against 13 per cent in 1964. Moreover, the percentage of non-Jews who believed Jews were more loyal to Israel than to America climbed to 48 per cent, from 39 per cent in 1964. According to a Gallup poll conducted in late November (after the AWACS debate), 53 per cent of the public expressed the belief that Israel wielded "too much influence" in American foreign policy, but only 10.5 per cent felt this way about American Jews. Higher percentages of the public believed that Saudi Arabia, the oil companies, and labor unions possessed too much influence. All in all, there was little reason to believe that the AWACS debate had changed popular perceptions of Jews. It was possible, however, that the insinuations about Jews made during the AWACS fight at the highest levels of government might make it easier to repeat them if and when some new crisis involving Israel or Jews developed.

Extremism

Earlier predictions of an increase in extremist activity proved accurate as the Ku Klux Klan and similar groups stepped up their actions. A six-month investigation by the American Jewish Committee revealed that a significant number of militant Klan activists had broken away from the main groups and, joined by Nazis, were planning more drastic actions than the standard cross burnings and rallies. Two Klan members and a neo-Nazi were convicted in November of an attempt to bomb Nashville's largest Reform congregation, as well as a transmission tower of a television station supposedly owned by Jews. Several Jewish businessmen in Nashville were also threatened with violence. In Catonsville, Maryland, a Klansman was convicted of conspiring to bomb the residence of a local NAACP official. A federal jury found six avowed Nazis guilty of conspiracy to blow up sections of Greensboro, North Carolina.

Women, hitherto relegated to a passive position in the Klan, were assuming a key role in the new militancy. One Klan member taken into custody in Nashville was a 50-year-old woman. A woman was also in the forefront of the Alabama Klan schismatics.

In an attempt to counteract Klan efforts to recruit members and exploit racial tensions in the public schools, the National Education Association planned to distribute a new curriculum guide about the white supremacist group to its 1.7 million teachers. While agreeing about the need for such materials, the Anti-Defamation League executive committee publicly took issue with portions of the guide "for indicting American society as innately racist." Children should be taught that the Klan is "an aberration" rather than "the tip of the iceberg of entrenched racism in America," the Anti-Defamation League argued. The Anti-Defamation League also filed an *amicus curiae* brief with the U.S. district court in Houston backing the constitutionality of a Texas law that banned the Klan from operating paramilitary training camps.

The extremist, antisemitic Liberty Lobby continued to remain in the news. Its weekly tabloid, *The Spotlight*, held a gala at the National Press Club in Washington in late 1980 to celebrate the claimed achievement of a circulation goal of 300,000. The *New Republic* charged in September 1981 that the credibility of Liberty Lobby had been enhanced by the casual way in which Capitol Hill legislators cited *The Spotlight* and appeared on Liberty Lobby radio and television broadcasts. The group's former lawyer, Warren Richardson, was nominated by President Reagan as assistant secretary for legislation in the U.S. department of health and human services. However, Richardson withdrew his name from consideration when he was sharply attacked by Jewish groups.

The New Right

Pressures generated by the New Right and Christian Right troubled many Jews. Groups such as the Moral Majority, generally associated with Bible Belt sections of the country, began to move East. The Reverend Jerry Falwell, head of Moral Majority, declared early in the year that he would focus his attention on 17 states, including New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, which were "not yet mature and developed." (The head of Moral Majority's fledgling New York State chapter, the Reverend Dan C. Fore, shocked many people when he was quoted on February 5 as saying, "I love the Jewish people deeply. . . . Jews have a God-given ability to make money." Later in the year Fore resigned, apparently under pressure from the national organization.) The president of the Religious Roundtable announced that his organization hoped to establish branches in all 50 states.

There were indications that the Reagan administration, which had received strong support from New Right and Christian Right groups in the 1980 election, was seeking to put some distance between itself and them. In January the new chairman of the Republican National Committee warned those on the right not to exaggerate their role or try to tell the president what to do in office. President Reagan and the Republican leadership focused their attention on reviving the badly deteriorating economy and attempted to subordinate such issues as abortion and prayer in the public schools. However, the New Right groups and their congressional allies continued to press forward. Spearheaded by Senators John East (R., N.C.) and Jesse Helms (R., N.C.) and Representative Henry Hyde (R., Ill.), legislation was introduced defining a fertilized human egg as "a person" entitled to the full protection of the 14th Amendment's "due process" clause. Anti-abortion forces were buoyed when, at a March 6 press conference, President Reagan stated that it was necessary to determine "when and what is a human being." Three Republican senators introduced a family protection act with the aim of achieving a number of Christian Rights goals; among other things, the legislation required that parents of pregnant teenagers be notified before contraceptive and abortion information could be provided by government-financed agencies.

In June the Coalition for Better Television, a group of more than 100 right-wing organizations, including Moral Majority, launched a campaign to monitor television

programs and boycott advertisers who sponsored shows that were deemed offensive. Falwell declared that his organization would spend at least \$2 million to promote the campaign. In response, NBC's president, Fred Silverman, described the boycott tactic as "a sneak attack on the foundation of democracy." Simultaneously, Procter and Gamble revealed that it had withdrawn sponsorship from 50 television programs because they depicted sex and violence in a gratuitous manner. Late in June, following a meeting between New Right leaders and a number of companies, including Smith Kline and Warner Lambert, the Coalition for Better Television cancelled its projected boycott. The group stated that it had reason to believe that sexual themes and violence would be reduced in the network's new fall line-up.

The movement to couple the teaching of evolution in the public schools with the Bible-backed theory of creationism continued, as Louisiana joined Arkansas in enacting legislation requiring this. Early in the year, a California superior court judge ruled that the state's policy on the teaching of evolution did not violate the rights of fundamentalists who believed in the biblical version of creation. Out of respect for the latter, however, he ordered the state to underscore to local schools the official policy forbidding dogmatism in the treatment of the origins of life. At year's end, the Arkansas chapter of the ACLU was challenging creationism in the courts. The effect of the movement was also felt in the publishing industry; many textbooks were revised, reducing the space given to evolution, and presenting the subject in more tentative terms.

There were indications that parents groups across the country, using sophisticated lobbying techniques and backed by organizations like Moral Majority, the Eagle Forum, and the Christian Broadcasting Networks, were banding together to remove certain books from libraries, replace school textbooks, and eliminate sex education courses. The number of censorship cases took a five-fold leap during the first months of the Reagan administration. In June the Republican party leadership conceded that it had failed to keep anti-busing and other social legislation out of Congress while it focused on the president's economic recovery program. At year's end there were more than 20 bills pending to limit the jurisdiction of the federal courts in such areas as school desegregation, prayer in the public schools, and abortion.

Jews and the New Right

Most Jewish groups were critical of the activities of the New Right. Testifying at public hearings before a Senate subcommittee on the proposed human life bill, Rabbi Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, argued that the view that fetal life is human life "is a view unique, primarily though not exclusively, to the Catholic Church." The ACLU challenge of Arkansas' creationism law was initiated by a dozen ministers and two rabbinical groups; the American Jewish Committee joined the suit as a plaintiff. In June the National Council of Jewish Women criticized Congress for restricting federal abortion funds to only those situations in which the life of the woman was threatened. A Los Angeles court

ruled in November, in a case brought by the Anti-Defamation League on behalf of two Jewish businessmen, that the publisher of the Christian Yellow Pages business directory could not limit advertising to those willing to declare that they are "born-again Christians."

While there was concern in the Jewish community about many of the New Right's positions, there was also recognition that many elements within the movement were supportive of Israel. Prime Minister Begin phoned Jerry Falwell, seeking his support, following the sharp, negative reaction to Israel's attack on the nuclear reactor in Iraq. Falwell visited Israel in September, and announced his uncompromising support for the embattled Jewish state. As the debate over the sale of AWACS reached its climax, however, there was some indication that the Christian Right and many of the senators associated with it had backed away from their announced opposition to the sale. In December the Anti-Defamation League sponsored a trip to Israel by the Reverend Bailey Smith, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention, who had stirred a storm of protest the year before with his statement that "God almighty does not hear the prayer of a Jew." While in Israel, Smith said that he had been "wrong" in singling out the Jewish people for not accepting Jesus. Anti-Defamation League officials attributed Smith's remark about Jewish prayer to his narrow experience, rather than to any malice toward Jews.

Blacks and Jews

The Reagan administration's economic program, which featured cuts in social services aimed at relieving the problems of the poor and racial minorities, caused concern among Jews. The American Jewish Congress published a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* headlined "America Must Not Quit on Social Justice." Rabbi Alexander Schindler, head of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, stated that "the war against poverty has become a war against the poor." At its annual meeting in May, the American Jewish Committee expressed concern about the cuts.

Black-Jewish tensions continued, although largely beneath the surface. In March the *New York Times* reported friction between the two groups in the Democratic party in Detroit, Miami, and the District of Columbia. On March 18 Washington mayor Marian Barry, Jr. declared, in response to a series of child murders in Atlanta, that if the black children of that city "had been Jewish, the federal government would have moved faster" to provide aid. Jewish groups protested, but Barry refused to apologize; privately he sought to assuage their concerns. Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP, announced at a September news conference that he was "very alarmed by the closeness of the relationship between Israel and South Africa."

The running battle between Mayor Koch and the black leadership of New York City continued. In the mayoral primary, which Koch won handily, blacks voted 2 to 1 against him. At a Democratic party conference in Baltimore, Koch spoke out

against racial quotas, engendering a sharp attack by black congressman Charles Rangel (D., N.Y.).

There were some signs of blacks and Jews uniting out of concern about President Reagan's economic program, his attempts to modify existing civil rights programs, the growth of the New Right, and antisemitic and Klan activities. Sixteen of the seventeen members of the Black Caucus in the House of Representatives voted against the sale of AWACS. In September the leaders of the NAACP and of Reform Judaism met in Washington, and called for joint activities to support extension of the Voting Rights Act and strong affirmative action programs.

Quotas

As the new administration in Washington sought to determine its civil rights stance, the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, and Anti-Defamation League appealed in April for a national policy reaffirming the U.S. commitment to "genuine equal opportunity for all" and "legitimate affirmative action in every field" without "the many abuses and excesses" that had developed from distortions of the affirmative action principle. In March the Anti-Defamation League criticized the Reagan administration for adopting a new civil service scheme that would allegedly give preferential treatment to blacks and Hispanics. Earlier in the year, amid considerable controversy, the *Harvard Law Review* adopted a plan to consider a student's race, ethnic background, or sex in filling some editorial positions. The plan replaced an earlier one which established a strict quota for minorities and women in an effort to diversify the journal's make-up.

Church-State Relations

In March the supreme court left intact a ruling barring a "motorist's prayer" that appeared on state maps in North Carolina. On November 16 the Senate voted to endorse programs of voluntary prayer and meditation in the public schools by barring the justice department from using federal funds to interfere with this matter. At one point in the debate, Senator Ernest Hollings (D., S.C.) referred to Senator Howard Metzenbaum (D., Ohio) as "the Senator from B'nai B'rith." Hollings later apologized.

At year's end the supreme court ruled that the University of Missouri must allow student religious groups to meet for worship and religious study. Both the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA) and the American Jewish Congress, which had submitted friend-of-the-court briefs in the case, expressed concern that Christian missionary groups would be strengthened by the ruling. A week later the supreme court left intact a lower court ruling that voluntary prayer had no place in public high schools. In refusing to hear an appeal in the Albany, N.Y. case, the justices did not explain their routine dismissal, but it seemed likely that the court continued to make a distinction between public schools and colleges or universities, where religious views could be freely aired.

A split within the Jewish community was evident during two days of hearings before a subcommittee of the Senate finance committee on the proposal to provide tuition tax credits for private education. The major American Jewish organizations continued to oppose aid to parochial schools, but Orthodox groups demonstrated their growing militancy, as more parents were sending their children to Jewish day schools. Rabbi Moshe Sherer, president of Agudath Israel of America, noted that there were 101,000 students in Jewish day schools in the United States. In a set-back for proponents of tax credits, District of Columbia voters overwhelmingly rejected a \$1,200 per pupil education tax credit proposal that had received national attention.

Cults

Jewish organizations continued their attempts to counter the cult phenomenon and its in-roads among Jewish youth. In Baltimore two Jewish groups obtained funding from the Jacob and Hilda Katz Blaustein Foundation to establish Project Friend, intended to provide counseling and information about cults. B'nai B'rith's commission on adult Jewish education received a grant to hold seminars on cults around the country.

California enacted legislation, believed to be the first in the nation, allowing former cult members to sue those cults for financial deprivation while they were involved as members. The New York chapters of the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress, however, opposed on constitutional grounds two "cult bills" proposing the appointment of temporary guardians for "adults over 16" who might have been influenced by religious cults.

MURRAY FRIEDMAN

The United States, Israel, and the Middle East

IN 1981 RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL were marked by sharp fluctuations. The new year and the new administration in Washington began auspiciously with declarations by President Ronald Reagan that he considered Israel not simply a friend but a "force in the Middle East that actually is of benefit to us." During a visit to Washington in September, Prime Minister Menachem Begin proclaimed that the traditional friendship between the United States and Israel had reached the level of a strategic alliance. The areas of defense cooperation were to be formalized in a memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation.

Yet the ink had scarcely dried on the agreement, signed at the end of November by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, when the United States announced that it was suspending implementation of the agreement. This was a demonstrative sign of Washington's pique at Begin's action in rushing through the Knesset a measure to apply Israeli "law, jurisdiction, and administration" to the Golan Heights, in effect unilaterally annexing the territory Israel had captured from Syria in the 1967 Six Day War. Twice before during the year, the Reagan administration had temporarily suspended scheduled military aircraft shipments to Israel; once when the Israelis attacked an Iraqi nuclear installation outside Baghdad and a second time when they bombed high-rise buildings in the heart of Beirut containing the operational headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Washington and Jerusalem clashed most sharply over the Reagan administration's plan to sell Saudi Arabia some \$8.5 billion worth of highly sophisticated airborne warning and control system surveillance planes (AWACS) and highly advanced missiles, fuel tanks, and other equipment to enhance the military capability of the 60 F-15's the United States had originally agreed to sell the Saudis in 1978.

The controversy over the Saudi weapons sale illustrated two paradoxes. First, despite sharp differences between the Reagan and Carter administrations in their overall foreign policy outlooks, when it came to practical responses to the situation in the Persian Gulf/Arabian Peninsula, the Reagan administration followed its predecessor's practice of courting Saudi favor through the sale of American weapons and equipment. Second, the Reagan administration's emphasis on Saudi Arabia also helps explain why so much friction developed between Begin and Reagan, despite the seemingly far greater ideological rapport between the two men than between Begin and Carter.

Reagan Administration's Views on the Middle East

In a press interview on February 2, Reagan was asked whether he had "any sympathy toward the Palestinians or any moral feeling toward them and their aspirations?" The president replied, "That's got to be a part of any settlement," but then listed the obstacles to a solution: "There is the outspoken utterance that Israel doesn't have a right to exist; there is the terrorism that is being practiced by the PLO." He added, "I never thought the PLO had ever been elected by the Palestinians," and reiterated that before there could be any Palestinian participation in the peace process there had to be "the acceptance of Israel as a nation." Asked whether he approved of the reported acceleration of Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank, Reagan replied, "I disagreed when the previous administration referred to them as illegal; they're not illegal." However, he added that "this rush to do it . . . is ill-advised because if we're going to continue with the spirit of Camp David to try and arrive at a peace, maybe this, at this time, is unnecessarily provocative."

The Israelis concluded from President Reagan's remarks and other indications that, in contrast to the Carter administration, the Reagan administration would not quickly embark on a major initiative of its own to tackle the thorny Palestinian issue or to press toward a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. There were both practical and philosophical reasons for this caution. With regard to the former, the first priority of the new administration was to deal with the country's pressing domestic economic problems. In any case, it would take several months before the new administration team became familiar with the intricacies of Middle East diplomacy. Finally, the elections scheduled in Israel for the end of June seemed to offer the possibility that the Likud government of Prime Minister Begin would be replaced by the Labor Alignment, which would have more flexible views regarding the nature of autonomy, the rationale for settlements, and the prospects for a territorial compromise with Jordan on the West Bank.

On a philosophical level, the Reagan administration viewed foreign policy as a struggle by the free world against Soviet expansionism. Emphasis was placed on building America's military strength so as to counter the threat posed by growing Soviet conventional and nuclear capabilities. Moreover, President Reagan and Secretary of State Alexander Haig underscored the need to combat international terrorism, which they saw as largely organized and directed by Moscow with the aim of destabilizing and ultimately overthrowing pro-Western and democratic societies. Given the PLO's Soviet ties, then, it could be expected that there would be a significant shift away from the Palestinians in the official attitude in Washington.

It appeared to the Israelis that the Reagan administration, which recognized Israel's value as a strategic ally, would also be more understanding than the Carter administration might have been of a vigorous Israeli campaign to disrupt and even uproot PLO terrorism from its operational bases in Lebanon. The Israeli view was strengthened by the remarks of National Security Affairs Advisor Richard Allen, who told an ABC-TV interviewer on April 2, "There is no question that we must

identify the PLO as a terrorist organization—until it provides convincing evidence to the contrary.” Allen compared Israel’s policy of pre-emptive strikes against PLO bases in southern Lebanon to the internationally accepted principle of “hot pursuit.” He did not hesitate to express his personal judgment that “there is ample justification” for Israel’s action in reaching to the source of PLO terrorism, since such action constitutes “hot pursuit.”

It soon became apparent, however, that under the Reagan administration there was no single vicar of foreign policy. Secretary Haig’s contention that he was “in charge” was belied by a number of facts. The president placed Vice President George Bush in charge of crisis management and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger made policy pronouncements and undertook initiatives on his own. Moreover, within the national security council, Richard Allen lacked the formal authority of a Kissinger or a Brzezinski, having less regular access to the president than such White House advisors as James Baker, Michael Deaver, and Edwin Meese. Given the president’s own lack of expertise in foreign affairs and his emphasis on domestic issues, the generally pro-Israel sympathies of Haig and Allen were often diluted in the formulation of U.S. policy by the concerns of other advisors, whose previous business connections made them more sensitive to the interests of the Arab oil producers.

Haig’s Efforts to Promote a “Strategic Consensus”

The Israelis soon discovered that they were mistaken in assuming that Washington would give them operational *carte blanche* in the Middle East. The Reagan administration never accepted Jerusalem’s thesis that Israel was the only reliable American ally in the region. Indeed, the very emphasis on the Soviet global threat, which had heightened the administration’s appreciation of Israel’s value as a strategic ally, also prompted the Reagan administration to labor mightily to develop what Secretary of State Haig termed “a consensus of strategic concerns throughout the region among Arab and Jew” in order to be sure that “the overriding dangers of Soviet inroads into this area are not overlooked.” In his testimony before the House foreign affairs committee on March 18 and before the Senate foreign relations committee the following day, Haig said that while the Reagan administration had not rejected the idea of reviving Arab-Israel peace talks, he planned to give top priority to regional security questions during his forthcoming visit to Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

Haig quickly learned during his trip in April that even those countries, such as Egypt and Israel, which were deeply concerned about the threat of Soviet expansionism, were not eager to have permanent U.S. military bases on their soil. Israel had proposed that the major military airfields in Sinai (Eitam and Etzion) that it was relinquishing as part of the withdrawal, be turned over for use by the U.S. rapid deployment force to serve as the nucleus for a permanent American presence in the region. The Egyptians rejected this idea. However, when President Anwar Sadat

met with President Reagan in Washington in August, he agreed to sign a contract to permit the emergency American use of the Egyptian strategic military base at Ras Banas on the Red Sea, if the United States paid the cost of the extensive renovation that was required. Israel offered to make its naval facilities at Haifa available to the U.S. sixth fleet as needed, but Jerusalem did not wish to have any U.S. forces based within Israel, so as not to depart from the principle that Israel would defend itself solely with its own men.

In the Persian Gulf/Arabian Peninsula, Haig was even less successful in selling his strategic cooperation concept. In Jordan, King Hussein told Haig that Israel's intransigence toward the Palestinians was the chief issue in the Middle East, since it had "opened the door to turbulence [and] instability." Yet only a few days earlier, on March 21, Hussein had accused Syrian president Hafez al-Assad of involving the Middle East in East-West rivalries and had charged Damascus with betrayal of the Arabs by supporting Iran in its continuing war with Iraq. In May Hussein went to Moscow on an arms-purchasing mission and supported a Soviet proposal for an international conference on the Arab-Israel conflict, with the participation of the Soviet Union, the United States, the Arabs (including the PLO), and Israel.

After Haig completed his visit to Saudi Arabia on April 8, Saudi foreign minister Saud al-Faisal reiterated his view that Israel was "the main cause of instability" in the Middle East. The Saudis were reportedly pressuring the sheikhdom of Oman to deny permanent bases to the U.S. rapid deployment force. On April 25 the Soviet Union and Kuwait issued a joint statement opposing the establishment of military bases in the Gulf area. On June 6 United Arab Emirates president Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahiyah said that the U.S. rapid deployment force, not the USSR, constituted the chief threat to the Gulf.

Israel's Destruction of Iraqi Nuclear Plant

On June 7 Israeli planes bombed and destroyed the Osirak atomic reactor near Baghdad, which Israel claimed was about to go critical, enabling Iraq to manufacture nuclear weapons. The Reagan administration's reaction to the raid ranged from strong condemnation to passive acquiescence. The day after the attack, Dean Fischer, spokesman for the state department, said, "The United States government condemns the reported Israeli air strike on the Iraqi nuclear facility, the unprecedented character of which cannot but seriously add to the already tense situation in the area." At the same time, the *New York Times* reported that state department and intelligence officials believed "that Iraq had acquired enough enriched uranium and sensitive technology to make one nuclear weapon by the end of this year, and several bombs by the mid-1980's." At a press conference on June 16, President Reagan said, "I do think that one has to recognize that Israel had reason for concern in view of the past history of Iraq, which . . . does not even recognize the existence of Israel as a country." Israel, he added, "might have sincerely believed its action was defensive in nature." Prime Minister Begin told the Knesset that United States

officials had provided Israel with a document expressing American concern that Iraq was preparing to use the French-built Osirak reactor to manufacture nuclear weapons. The document, based on American intelligence reports, had reportedly been given to Begin in January by U.S. ambassador Samuel Lewis. In Washington, the state department confirmed that information on the Iraqi nuclear program had been exchanged at various times with Israel and other Middle East countries, but the department would not comment specifically on the document Ambassador Lewis had allegedly given Begin.

Because of the close ties between the United States and Israel and the use of American-supplied planes, the United States was vulnerable to charges of collusion in the attack. The Soviet Union and the Arab states were quick to contend that the United States knew of the plans for the raid and had supported it. A prime United States concern was that the Israeli raid would discredit the peacemaking mission of Philip Habib, the United States envoy in the Middle East, who at the time was trying to mediate between Israel and Syria over the presence of Soviet-made SAM missiles manned by Syrian forces in Lebanon. Another concern was that the raid would complicate United States-Saudi relations just when the AWACS deal was heading for a vote in the Senate. The United States also feared a possible Iraqi move toward the Soviets, which would end the gradual bettering of Iraqi-United States relations which had begun early in 1980.

On June 19 the UN security council unanimously condemned the Israeli air attack and called on Israel to refrain from such acts or threats in the future. The council also stated that Iraq was entitled to reparations from Israel. American Jewish organizations criticized the United States for joining in the vote. Maynard Wishner, president of the American Jewish Committee, stated that "the resolution again demonstrates the United Nations' double standard applied against Israel. Iraq recently invaded a neighboring sovereign state (Iran) and today occupies much of its territory, but the United Nations has yet to breathe a word of condemnation." Howard Squadron, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said, "It is distressing to find this country appearing to uphold a claim of injury by Iraq, a nation that has persistently proclaimed itself to be at war with Israel and that has continuously committed itself to the destruction of Israel."

In a column in the *New York Times* on June 10, James Reston expressed concern over the broad implications of Israel's actions. He contended that Prime Minister Begin "has produced a storm of protest in a world that fears he may have set a precedent for all nations to act on their own to bomb their opponents at will—and this has worried even the friends of Israel, and added to that country's isolation in the world community." However, Arthur Goldberg, former supreme court justice and United States ambassador to the United Nations, defended the Israeli raid. He pointed out that Iraq had maintained a declared state of war against Israel since 1948. Israel, therefore, was allowed under international law to destroy any facility—industrial as well as military—which aided its opponent. Goldberg recalled that

during World War II the United States had bombed German power plants and factories.

On July 11 Secretary of State Haig notified Congress that Israel may have violated a mutual defense assistance agreement of 1952, and asked the Senate foreign relations committee to examine this possibility. The committee was asked to determine whether Israel's act was one of self-defense or aggression. Under the 1952 agreement, Israel had promised to use arms sold by the U.S. only for "legitimate self-defense" and pledged that it would "not undertake any act of aggression against any other state." The United States arms export control act required that no military credits or sales be provided to a country in "substantial violation" of an arms supply agreement. The scheduled shipment of four United States F-16 fighter planes to Israel was halted while Congress debated whether Israel had violated the agreement. In the end, neither Congress nor the administration ever formally concluded that Israel's raid definitely constituted a violation.

Israel Bombs PLO Headquarters in Beirut

On July 17, the day the U.S. was scheduled to resume the supply of F-16's delayed because of the Osirak raid, Israel bombed the PLO headquarters in downtown Beirut. The act met with severe criticism internationally because of the high number of civilian casualties. Prime Minister Begin justified the raid as an act of self-defense against Palestinian terrorist groups responsible for many civilian deaths in northern Israel. Kuwait, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and Iran condemned both Israel and the United States—the former for doing the bombing and the latter for supplying the weaponry. Egypt and Saudi Arabia focused only on Israel, denying Israel's claim of self-defense. Egypt warned that Israel was threatening Cairo's peacemaking efforts; Egyptian deputy UN delegate Nabil Elaraby declared on July 21, "The new edifice of peace which Egypt is faithfully striving to construct in the Middle East is being undermined with the continuation of such policies and bloodshed."

The Reagan administration's immediate reaction to the raid was to again postpone indefinitely the shipment to Israel of F-16's, as well as F-15's scheduled for delivery in August, due to what it termed the "escalating level of violence" in the Middle East. Two high Reagan administration officials criticized Prime Minister Begin, suggesting that Israel's recent military actions had damaged American diplomatic efforts in the Middle East. Secretary of Defense Weinberger said that Begin's policies "cannot really be described as moderate at this point, and it is essential that there be some moderation." Deputy Secretary of State William Clark said that Prime Minister Begin "is making it difficult for us to help Israel. Our commitments are not to Mr. Begin, but to the nation he represents." He added that Begin had caused "disappointment and maybe some embarrassment" in bombing targets in Beirut on the heels of a visit to Israel by state department counselor Robert McFarlane. Secretary of State Haig sought to temper the severity of the U.S. reaction by stressing, in an appearance on ABC-TV's *Nightline* on July 20, that despite the

indefinite delay in the shipment of ten F-16 military planes to Israel, the United States had in no way altered its conviction that Israel was a staunch ally and a strategic asset which America had a continuing moral obligation to support. The practical impact of the United States criticism was limited, and the shipment of the planes was resumed in August.

According to a national NBC poll conducted on August 11 and 12, in which some 1,600 persons were asked whether Israel's recent military actions had raised or lowered their opinion of Prime Minister Begin, 51 per cent of the respondents indicated a lowered opinion of him, 14 per cent a raised opinion, 21 per cent said it made no difference, and 14 per cent were not sure. Asked about the level of United States military aid to Israel, 38 per cent thought it too much, 42 per cent the right amount, 7 per cent not enough, and 14 per cent were not sure. These figures had not changed much from previous polls; in December 1979, for example, an NBC poll found that 38 per cent thought the United States gave too much aid, 38 per cent the right amount, 5 per cent not enough aid, and 19 per cent were not sure.

A poll conducted by *Newsweek* in August indicated that "a majority (69 per cent) of United States Jews think that Israel was justified in bombing Palestine Liberation Organization bases." However, many Jews faulted Prime Minister Begin for showing little remorse for the civilian casualties. A majority (53 per cent) of the Jewish sample agreed with the view that "Begin's policies are hurting support for Israel in the United States." Jews feared in particular that repetition of actions such as the Beirut raid would antagonize Congress and the administration, making it more difficult to maintain United States assistance to Israel.

U.S.-Israeli Strategic Cooperation

When Secretary of State Haig welcomed Prime Minister Begin on his arrival in Washington in September for his first meeting with President Reagan, he assured him that the administration regarded recent events as "behind us." According to Begin, neither the Baghdad nor Beirut raids were mentioned at the White House talks. However, the prime minister spent much of his time with Congressional leaders, the media, and Jewish leadership in justifying Israel's actions. Begin acknowledged that the Beirut raid had aroused a great deal of concern even within the American Jewish community. At a meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations on September 12, he expressed regret that civilians had been killed, and emphasized that the Beirut "counterattack" was a unique event and did not mean that Israel had abandoned its policy of avoiding civilian targets. Begin was convinced that without the Beirut raid the PLO would not have agreed to the ceasefire that U.S. envoy Philip Habib had negotiated through Lebanese intermediaries.

Begin hailed his meeting with President Reagan as "a turning point" in relations between Israel and the United States. He noted that for a number of years there had

been discussions between Israeli and American defense experts, but that they had never resulted in a formal agreement on strategic cooperation. Now, however, President Reagan had accepted the idea. On September 11, Secretary of Defense Weinberger and Minister of Defense Sharon announced the formation of joint groups to discuss strategic problems and means of countering Soviet aggression in the Middle East, and to prepare a formal document dealing with the matter.

The AWACS Sale

Knowing of the traditional reluctance of American diplomats and defense planners to offend the Arabs by having the United States publicly identify with Israel, Prime Minister Begin counselled Washington to tell the Arabs that the proposed American-Israeli strategic cooperation had nothing to do with the Arab-Israel conflict and was intended solely to strengthen common defense against the international Communist danger. The problem was that the administration proceeded to use the same logic to justify the proposed AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia, arguing that it was necessary to protect the Saudis from the growing threat of Soviet and radical expansionism, and that the sale would not undermine Israel's security or the American commitment to maintain Israel's qualitative military edge.

The Begin government faced a dilemma. It did not wish to jeopardize the movement toward a strategic partnership with the Reagan administration or to appear to be interfering in American domestic politics. Yet, Israel was deeply concerned over the proposed military sales to Saudi Arabia. When reports first reached Jerusalem in February that President Reagan was planning to support the Carter administration's decision to furnish enhancement equipment for the F-15's the Saudis had contracted for in 1978, the Begin government had asked the United States to modify the Carter package, e.g., to eliminate the multiple ejection bomb racks, and requested that they give Israel additional F-15's to compensate for the increased Arab strength. Once it became clear, however, that the Reagan administration also intended to sell the Saudis five AWACS, Israel decided to strongly oppose the entire package.

Prime Minister Begin observed the diplomatic niceties by telling American Jewish and general audiences that the proposed sales to Saudi Arabia were matters for the U.S. government to decide, and that he would not intervene in the discussions between the executive and legislative branches. However, whenever he was asked his personal opinion, as he was by President Reagan, the Congressional foreign relations committees, and the media, Begin stated bluntly that he regarded the enhancement of the Saudis' offensive capacity as "a grave threat to Israel's security." He contended that the 1,177 advanced AIM 9-L sidewinder air-to-air missiles the Reagan administration planned to sell the Saudis would change the qualitative edge that Israel held. The proposed F-15 enhancement sale also included six KC-707 aerial refueling tanker aircraft, with an option for the Saudis to buy two more, and

101 pairs of "conformal fuel tanks" that greatly extend the F-15's range and combat endurance. Begin stressed that this meant the 62 Saudi F-15's would be able to reach Tel Aviv and the entire Dan region from any part of Saudi Arabia.

The five AWACS and 22 ground radar stations combined with the increased offensive capacity of the F-15's would create a formidable integrated air combat team. Begin said that General Sagui, Israel's chief of military intelligence, had demonstrated on maps that five of Israel's seven major airfields would be completely exposed to surveillance by Saudi AWACS. The Saudis cooperated closely with Jordan, which in turn had recently been helping Iraq, Israel's most implacable foe. This raised the spectre of the AWACS equipment and intelligence being made available as part of a *jihad* (holy war) to "liberate Jerusalem and the occupied Arab lands," which had been proclaimed as a major objective of the Islamic summit conference which the Saudis had hosted in Taif at the end of January.

Virtually all major American Jewish organizations engaged in a strong lobbying campaign opposing the sale. Already on April 1, Presidents Conference chairman Howard Squadron had written to Secretary of State Haig, arguing that proceeding with the sale would convey a "misleading signal." Noting that the Reagan administration had been elected on a two-fold promise to pursue a global anti-communist strategy and to demand consideration of U.S. interests from the international community, Squadron pointed out that Saudi Arabia and other Arab states which gave first priority to their conflict with Israel were "clearly acting at cross purposes" with American goals. The interests of the United States required that the Arab world cease its support of PLO terrorism and holy war against Israel. Arms for Saudi Arabia or other Arab states, Squadron said, should be made conditional upon their agreeing to "come to the peace table with Israel, to enter the Camp David process, and to deal cooperatively in the pursuit of this country's global strategy." Squadron concluded that "in the absence of such an agreement by Saudi Arabia, the American Jewish community will be obliged to oppose vigorously the proposed sale."

Groups like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and the American Jewish Committee argued that the proposed sale was contrary to American interests. The American Jewish Committee acknowledged the U.S. interest in protecting the Saudi airfields from foreign attack and in keeping the Persian Gulf shipping lanes open, but pointed out that these interests were already well served by the four United States AWACS that had been sent to Saudi Arabia in October 1980 at the start of the Iraq-Iran war. The crucial difference was that these planes and their sophisticated equipment remained under American operational control and the intelligence gathered could not be diverted to anti-Israeli use.

It was widely suspected that prestige rather than security was the real motivation for the request by the Saudis, who wanted the latest and best equipment to enhance their standing among their Arab neighbors. The Saudis also made the deal a litmus test of American friendship. Having won approval in principle for the sale from the Carter administration, the Saudis would have regarded a reversal by the Reagan administration as an act of bad faith. Within the United States Senate, however, the

Carter administration's agreement to sell the F-15 enhancement package was itself seen as a violation of a solemn commitment. In February Senators Thomas Eagleton (D., Mo.), Daniel Inouye (D., Hawaii), and Patrick Leahy (D., Vt.) had written to the president pointing out that they had voted to support the 1978 Middle East arms sale package only after receiving assurance that Saudi Arabia would not receive equipment of the type now proposed. They added that they had informed President Carter as soon as the new request had surfaced that "we consider any modification of the planes to enhance offensive capabilities to be a direct violation of that earlier understanding." The senators said that they appreciated that the heightened tension in the Middle East and Persian Gulf area necessitated a review of Saudi defense policy, but they rejected the argument of both the Carter and Reagan administrations that the changed circumstances justified a renegeing on the pledge to the Senate. They concluded that "the spirit of the [1978] arms sale agreement precludes the transfer of any offensively enhanced F-15's to Saudi Arabia."

The Saudis, aided by powerful allies in the business community, especially the ARAMCO oil partners and the numerous defense and building contractors operating in Saudi Arabia, such as Boeing, Bechtel, and Westinghouse, lobbied actively for the sale in Washington. The lobbying effort was led by Prince Bandar bin Sultan, assisted by the National Association of Arab Americans, several public relations firms, and four former American ambassadors to Saudi Arabia. It was not generally realized, but the United States had already concluded \$34.4 billion in military sales to Saudi Arabia, not counting the proposed \$8.5 billion AWACS and F-15 enhancement package. Most of the funds were for the construction of "military cities," base facilities, and infrastructure. Moreover, American companies had a large share in the nearly \$200 billion spent on the Saudi development plan for 1975-1980, and were eager to participate in the new development plan for 1980-1985, which budgeted a colossal \$391 billion.

The Saudi "Peace" Plan and the AWACS Deal

When Crown Prince Fahd first revealed a Saudi "peace" plan in an interview over Riyadh radio on August 7, President Sadat—then meeting with President Reagan in Washington—dismissed it as nothing new. Many observers speculated that the Saudis' timing had been determined by a desire to impress Congress, which was about to consider the AWACS deal. Saudi Arabia officially explained its "peace" initiative as designed to produce an Arab consensus and win international support for a plan that could replace the Camp David accords, "whose failure has been proven." Fahd hoped the Reagan administration would accept "the uselessness of the Camp David agreements" and initiate "a drastic change in American policy" which would demonstrate that the U.S. was "less biased toward Israel and more equitable toward the Arabs."

There were eight points in the Fahd plan: (1) Israel should withdraw from all Arab territory occupied in 1967, including Arab Jerusalem; (2) Israeli settlements

built on Arab land after 1967 should be dismantled; (3) freedom of worship for all religions in the holy places should be guaranteed; (4) the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homes, and to compensation for those who do not wish to return, should be reaffirmed; (5) there should be a transitional period, under the auspices of the United Nations and not exceeding several months, for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; (6) an independent Palestinian state should be set up, with Jerusalem as its capital; (7) the states of the region should be able to live in peace; and (8) the United Nations or its member states should guarantee to execute these principles. Fahd called on the UN security council to consolidate these points in a new and binding resolution.

While the Reagan administration sought to depict the Fahd plan as a positive trend in the evolution of the Saudi position, it soon became clear that the Saudis were still not prepared to recognize Israel officially or establish normal diplomatic relations with it. The Saudi plan did not specifically endorse security council resolution 242, which recognized Israel's right to exist within "secure and recognized boundaries," or resolution 338, which called for direct negotiations among the parties to implement resolution 242. Indeed, doubt remained that the Saudis were prepared to include Israel among the nations with a legitimate right to a permanent existence within the Middle East. Thus, when Saudi foreign minister Saud al-Faisal officially presented the Fahd plan to the United Nations in the course of a major address to the general assembly on October 5, he stated, "Ever since the forces of East and West combined to partition Palestine and establish the *so-called* State of Israel, that state has decided to adopt expansion as its principle and aggression as its way of life." (Emphasis added.) In another passage the Saudi foreign minister spoke of the "blind arrogance" that led Israel to proclaim Jerusalem as the capital "of its *racist entity*." (Emphasis added.)

If the Fahd plan was intended to demonstrate Saudi moderation, it certainly failed to convince the members of Congress. Under a 1974 amendment to the arms export control act, Congress was empowered to block a proposed sale if both houses passed a joint resolution of disapproval. When such a resolution opposing the Saudi sale was first introduced in the House by Representatives Clarence Long (D., Md.) and Norman Lent (R., N.Y.) in July, it drew 228 co-sponsors. The number continued to grow over the summer, and when the matter finally came to a vote in the House on October 14, the Reagan proposal was defeated by 301 to 111. A majority of Republicans voted against the president (108 opposed and 78 for); among the Democratic opposition the tally was even more lopsided, with 193 disapproving and only 33 supporting the sale. The House vote was in line with popular sentiment around the country. A nationwide Louis Harris poll conducted in late September found that 59 per cent of the respondents were against the sale, 28 per cent in favor, and 13 per cent undecided.

The Reagan administration now concentrated all its efforts on winning a majority for the sale within the Senate. This was by no means an easy task. In early July the president had received a letter signed by 52 senators—an absolute majority of its 100 members—saying, "It is our deep belief that this sale is not in the best interest

of the United States, and therefore recommend that you refrain from sending this proposal to the Congress." The Senate opposition was led by Republicans Robert Packwood (Ore.) and Rudy Boschwitz (Minn.) and Democrats William Roth (Del.), Roger Jepsen (Iowa), Henry Jackson (Washington), Howell Helfin (Ala.), David Pryor (Ark.), and Daniel Inouye (Hawaii).

Responding to the fear that the Saudi regime would go the way of the Shah of Iran, President Reagan declared at a press conference on October 1 that the United States "will not permit" Saudi Arabia "to be an Iran" and implied that the U.S. was prepared to use its own forces to intervene since "there's no way [the U.S.] could stand by and see [Saudi Arabia] taken over by anyone who would shut off the oil." Yet, this significant restatement of the American commitment to Saudi Arabia received far less prominence than Reagan's assertion that "it is not the business of other nations to make American foreign policy." Although there was heavy lobbying by Saudi Arabia in favor of the sale, the media universally regarded the president's criticism as directed against Israel. The New York *Daily News* ran a front page banner headline: "Reagan to Begin: Butt Out!" Administration lobbyists for the Saudi sale had been attempting to cast the issue as one of Begin versus Reagan, implying that the opponents of the president's position were guilty of disloyalty. There were warnings of a backlash against Israel if Saudi displeasure resulted in negative foreign policy and domestic economic consequences. Although the president disclaimed any such intention, sources close to the administration did not discourage the fear that antisemitism might be stirred up within the United States if Jews maintained too high a profile in opposing the Saudi sale. Former president Richard Nixon, whose White House tapes had disclosed a propensity for antisemitic remarks, sharply criticized and suggestively linked "intense opposition by Begin and parts of the American Jewish community" to the AWACS sale.

Assassination of President Sadat and the AWACS Debate

On October 6, while reviewing a military parade commemorating the 1973 war with Israel, Egyptian president Sadat was assassinated by a group of Muslim fanatics who had infiltrated the army. Vice President Hosni Mubarak, upon being sworn in as the new president, reaffirmed Egypt's commitment to its international obligations, including peace with Israel and the continuation of the Camp David process. While maintaining close ties with the United States, Mubarak also held out an olive branch to the Soviet Union and to the various Arab states, most significantly Saudi Arabia, which had broken off relations with Egypt after Sadat had made peace with Israel.

Sadat's death became yet another element in the AWACS debate. Opponents of the sale cited the assassination as proof of the instability and unreliability of the Arab world. The administration, however, tried to make the sale a posthumous referendum on the highly popular Egyptian president. Secretary of State Haig declared that defeat of the sale to the Saudis would "make a mockery of all that President Sadat stood for," ignoring the fact that the Saudi rulers had been at odds

with Sadat personally and had opposed his peace efforts and strategic cooperation with the United States. The administration also argued that with the Shah and Sadat both gone, Saudi Arabian friendship had become even more important to the United States, if it wished to maintain influence in the Middle East.

The major effect of President Sadat's assassination was psychological. Several heretofore undecided senators now argued that irrespective of the merits of the AWACS arguments pro and con, it would be inappropriate to abandon President Reagan at a time of crisis. In the crucial final days before the vote, the president personally spoke to most of the senators and stressed that a defeat on the AWACS sale would cripple his effectiveness as a leader in foreign affairs. To help allay the fears of opponents to the sale, the president also sent a letter to Congress stating that the United States would retain close involvement in the security of the AWACS equipment and information for many years, that the Saudis would in any case require a long period of training and American assistance in the handling of the F-15's, and finally that the AWACS would not be delivered to Saudi Arabia until the president had certified that "significant progress" toward peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israel conflict had been accomplished "with the substantial assistance of Saudi Arabia." (However, the day after the vote, White House chief-of-staff James Baker said that the president's letter was binding only as a "moral commitment," but probably did not have the "technical legal effect" to stop the AWACS deliveries if Riyadh failed to support American peace initiatives.)

On October 28, after months of heated debate and intense lobbying, the administration managed to garner 52 votes in the Senate to defeat the resolution of disapproval. Yet the fact that 48 Senators held firm in opposition to the Saudi sale despite the combination of presidential arm-twisting and assurances indicated the depth of the misgivings about the American arms sales policy to Saudi Arabia.

U.S. Agrees to Participate in MFO

Almost lost in the furor over the AWACS debate was an important Congressional action in support of American participation in the Sinai peace-keeping force. The Camp David accords had provided for a UN force to undertake this task, but the threat of a Soviet veto led to the creation of a multinational force and observers unit (MFO), with half of the 2,500-man force consisting of Americans. The United States agreed to pay \$125 million, or 60 per cent of the initial cost of facilities and deployment, with Egypt and Israel splitting the remaining \$80 million. Starting in fiscal 1983 each of the three countries would pay a third. U.S. participation in the MFO received unanimous Senate approval on October 7, the day after Sadat's assassination. Senator Charles Percy (R., Ill.), chairman of the foreign relations committee, had strongly urged his colleagues to "support this resolution and thereby give tangible evidence of our support for the peace process which President Sadat so courageously set in motion." The House approved the MFO resolution on November 19 by a vote of 368 to 13.

Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Cooperation

On November 30 the United States and Israel signed a memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation to deter Soviet threats in the Middle East. The memorandum called for joint military exercises, "including naval and air exercises in the eastern Mediterranean Sea," and the establishment and maintenance of joint readiness activities. The agreement also proposed the formation of joint working groups to address specific military issues.

The memorandum received a mixed reaction in Israel. While members of the ruling Likud government praised it as "another stage in the friendly relations between Israel and the United States," opponents saw the memorandum as a one-sided deal whereby the United States gained Israeli military strength to help deter the Soviets, while Israel gained nothing new from America and needlessly provoked Moscow. Article 1:1 of the memorandum stated, "United States-Israeli strategic cooperation, as set forth in this memorandum, is designed against the threat to peace and security of the region caused by the Soviet Union or Soviet-controlled forces from outside the region introduced into the region." Reaction in the Arab states was harshly critical of the United States' strategic venture. The United States, it was claimed, could not arbitrate the Middle East conflict as a neutral third party while maintaining a strategic alliance with Israel. The Reagan administration denied that the memorandum addressed any country other than the Soviet Union.

Golan Heights Law

The issue of the memorandum was complicated when, on December 14, the Knesset voted to extend its "law, jurisdiction, and administration" to the occupied Golan Heights. What followed in America and the world at large was condemnation of Israel's action. On December 18 the United States joined with the rest of the UN security council in a resolution opposing Israel's action, stressing that it lacked international legal effect. Furthermore, because Israel had not consulted the United States before acting, the United States postponed indefinitely discussions intended to implement the memorandum of understanding signed only two weeks earlier. The state department spokesman claimed that "the spirit of that agreement obliged each party to take into consideration in its decisions the implications for the broad policy concerns of the other. We do not believe that spirit was upheld in the case of Israel's decision on the Golan." The United States also suspended its plans to purchase \$200 million worth of Israeli-produced goods and services.

Secretary of Defense Weinberger called the annexation "provocative and destabilizing." Secretary of State Haig said the Israeli action "is not consistent with [UN security council resolution] 242, which is the fundamental United Nations resolution underlying the peace process itself." Prime Minister Begin challenged this view. In a statement issued to U.S. ambassador Lewis after the United States' harsh criticism of Israel, he said, "The essence of the resolution (242) is negotiations for

the determination of recognized, secure borders. Syria announced that it would not negotiate with us, that it does not recognize us, and that it will not recognize us. And thus it took the essence out of 242. How could we therefore harm 242?"

Begin was furious that the U.S. government had over the last six months "punished Israel three times" and had in fact "breached a signed contract." Referring to American criticism of the Israeli raid on the PLO headquarters in Beirut, Begin said, "You don't have the right, from a moral perspective, to preach to us regarding civilian loss of life." Noting that the Knesset had passed the Golan Heights law by a decisive two-thirds majority, he bristled at the renewed talk of "punishing Israel." Begin asked rhetorically: "Are we a vassal state of yours? Are we a banana republic?" The U.S., he warned, would find Israel deaf to threats and amenable only to "rational arguments." Begin further charged that the effort to win a Senate majority for the arms deal for Saudi Arabia was "accompanied by an ugly antisemitic campaign."

Within the American Jewish community the initial response to Begin's Golan Heights action was confusion and quiet questioning. Yet, when the United States reacted by suspending the memorandum of understanding, the Jewish community tended to side with Israel in characterizing the American response as inappropriate and excessive. Howard Squadron, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, strongly criticized the United States. He said that Prime Minister Begin's bitter attack on the Reagan administration in the wake of the suspension of the strategic cooperation memorandum was "perfectly understandable." The strategic cooperation agreement, he added, was a pact of mutual defense and "not a favor to Israel." Other American Jews, while opposed to United States criticism of Israel, were embarrassed by the vitriolic character of the prime minister's public attack on the United States. They called for moderation on both sides and a quick resumption of friendly relations. The American Jewish Committee said it understood "American disappointment over the annexation as well as Mr. Begin's anguish over the response," but added, "It is less important now to assess blame for the present disarray than to get the two governments back to positive trusting discussions." This, in fact, proved to be the case; Israel and the United States sought to smooth over this latest conflict. Nevertheless, the memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation remained in limbo at the end of the year. Moreover, the Habib mission failed to bring about the removal of Syrian missiles or to stop the continuing buildup of PLO forces in southern Lebanon. Despite professed agreement on overall objectives, the Reagan and Begin administrations seemed destined to clash over the methods and tactics required to remove these threats.

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