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REMARKS

STATEMENT BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.
REPUBLICAN LEADER, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AT THE AMERICAN-ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE LUNCHEON
IN ROOM B-339, RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, WASHINGTON D.C.
12 NOON THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 1969

FOR RELEASE AT 12 NOON THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 1969

I firmly believe that the fate of Israel is linked to the national security interests of the United States. I therefore cannot conceive of a situation in which the U.S. Administration will sell Israel down the Nile.

Concern has been expressed that the Soviet Union and France may prevail at the current Big Four talks on the Middle East. I can assure you that your government will not permit this to happen. We are conscious of Soviet ambitions.

Israel may enter its 21st anniversary confident of its manhood. Israel's record of achievement and courage makes the state worthy of that status. Israel can feel certain that Americans are aware of her dedication to freedom and of the basic affinity linking Israel with the United States.

I join with those who are concerned about overall Soviet designs on the Middle East and Mediterranean. One need only follow the news reports of Operation "Dawn Patrol," the NATO naval maneuvers now in progress in the Mediterranean. We are aware of the unprecedented Soviet naval build-up in that region. We know that the Russians are trying to exert pressures in the Mediterranean at a time when we are preoccupied in the Far East.

Your government is not naive. Nor are the members of Congress. Let me state one fact very simply and directly: Israel must not become another Czechoslovakia.

I have no illusions about Soviet policy and the attempts by the Kremlin to create a sphere of influence in the Middle East that would undermine vital American security interests and threaten the entire southern flank of NATO. The game being played by the Russians, exploiting Arab hostility against Israel, is transparent.

It is my conviction that American policy will not seek to "impose" a settlement as a result of the present Big Four Conference or outside the context of such talks.

President Nixon has pledged that Israel's vital interests will be preserved and that withdrawal can occur only by consent of the parties directly

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concerned, based upon a contractual agreement establishing a peace involving recognized, defensible, and just boundaries.

American participation in the Big Four Conference is consistent with efforts to test the Soviet Union's professed desire to preserve peace and to avoid a nuclear confrontation. But no accord will be purchased at the expense of Israel. As I have said, we are well aware of Soviet aims and attitudes. We are also mindful of the continuing brutal suppression of Czechoslovakia, as denounced only last Friday by President Nixon.

The U.S. Government is aware that the Soviet-made MIG's that treacherously attacked an unarmed U.S. reconnaissance plane in international airspace off the Korean coast represented the same type of aircraft and weapons systems supplied to the radical Arab states.

Our Government must therefore continue to maintain the military combat and deterrent capacities of Israel through the earliest possible supply of Phantom jets and other military hardware requirements. I am pleased to note that Israeli air and ground crews to man the Phantoms are presently receiving special training at a U.S. Air Force Base in California. The Phantoms will be ready for shipment at a time coinciding with the completion of training -- a matter of months. Many of the Phantoms will be in service in Israel before the end of 1969.

We appreciate Israel's isolated geographic position, surrounded as she is by enemies. Her very life depends on airpower and civilian air links with the free world. In this connection, one must note with regret that attacks on unarmed aircraft have escalated worldwide from the hijacking of American commercial airliners to Cuba, to attacks at various European airports on Israeli airliners by Arab terrorists armed with Russian weapons, and now the criminal attack by Communist North Korean MIG-21's on an unarmed American plane in international airspace.

Are the Russians sincerely seeking a relaxation of tensions or have they merely relegated their dirty work to the fanatics and fourth-rate despots of the world?

We have heard the Kremlin profess great concern about Middle Eastern peace. But we have watched them pour naval forces into the Mediterranean. We have heard them demand American withdrawal. We have watched them build up the war potential of radical and irresponsible Arab States that refuse to enter into real peace negotiations with Israel.

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Moscow is attempting to achieve indirectly what Communist and Arab pressure have failed to accomplish by military pressure and threats. They have sought to roll back the Israelis from the cease-fire lines of June, 1967, without a meaningful peace settlement. Thus they would keep the sore open, restore the intolerable situation that existed immediately before the outbreak of the Six-Day War, and exploit any retreat by Israel and her friends to push further against free world interests.

The Soviet Union has not clarified her policy to my satisfaction. Indeed, they seem to have a variety of policies, to suit their convenience. They have one policy in the Middle East, another in Czechoslovakia, and yet another in North Korea. In North Korea they help us one week to search for possible survivors of the plane shot down by the MIG's they provided. Then, the very next week, they protest because we send a Naval force to protect our reconnaissance flights and our right to use international waters and airspace.

An assessment must be made at American-Soviet bilateral talks on the Middle East and at the Big Four meetings. It is whether Moscow is sincere in seeking a reduction of tensions or whether Russia is trying to exploit the fear of war in hope of turning a complex situation to her advantage.

Not only the Soviet Union but also Communist China is fishing in the troubled waters of the Middle East. Arab terrorists are being trained in Peking. Chinese "button" mines, mortars, rockets, and other weapons used against U.S. forces in Viet Nam have emerged in the Arab guerrilla assaults against Israel. Arab guerilla leaders have openly proclaimed that they will reject any peace settlement that might be reached by the Big Four or signed by King Hussein or President Nasser.

Citing Chairman Mao of Communist China as their inspiration, the Arab terrorists have proclaimed a so-called war of national liberation in the Middle East. Their aim is the liquidation of Israel and all pro-western Arab regimes.

There is evidence that the leading Arab terrorist movement, El Fatah, is working through Arab students at various American colleges and universities to build up U.S. support for an Arab "national liberation front" similar to the campus underground mobilized for the Viet Cong National Liberation Front. Indeed, we now find that some Arabs here on student visas are working with the U.S. Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong); the youth arm of the pro-Peking Workers World Party known as Youth Against War and Fascism, and its

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front group, the Committee to Support Middle East Liberation.

Indications of the flow of trained agitators from the Middle East have been revealed in contacts between the Arabs and the Black Panthers, the Students for a Democratic Society (S.D.S.), and other anti-democratic groups.

Our nation already is beset by disruption at our institutions of higher learning. We have no need of agitators from abroad.

I am confident that the Department of Justice will carefully examine the activities of the estimated 10,000 Arab students in the United States to ascertain possible violations of visa requirements. If they are abusing our hospitality in an unlawful manner, there should be some immediate administrative action.

We are painfully aware of how the Middle East conflict has already spilled over to our shores in the case of the convicted murderer, Sirhan Sirhan. This nation will not tolerate assassination and terrorism.

Let me reiterate that the Republican leadership of the House of Representatives identifies with your concerns. We are committed to the growth of Israel-American friendship. We share your aspirations for the preservation of freedom and justice for all.

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AMERICAN-ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMM. LUNCHEON
B-339, RHOB, 12 NOON, APRIL 24, 1969

I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE FATE OF ISRAEL IS LINKED TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES. I THEREFORE CANNOT CONCEIVE OF A SITUATION IN WHICH THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION WILL SELL ISRAEL DOWN THE NILE.

CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED THAT THE SOVIET UNION AND FRANCE MAY PREVAIL AT THE CURRENT BIG FOUR TALKS ON THE MIDDLE EAST. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT WILL NOT PERMIT THIS TO HAPPEN. WE ARE CONSCIOUS OF SOVIET AMBITIONS.

ISRAEL MAY ENTER ITS 21ST ANNIVERSARY CONFIDENT OF ITS MANHOOD. ISRAEL'S RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT AND COURAGE MAKES THE STATE WORTHY OF THAT STATUS. ISRAEL CAN FEEL CERTAIN THAT AMERICANS ARE AWARE OF HER DEDICATION TO FREEDOM AND OF THE BASIC AFFINITY LINKING ISRAEL WITH THE *U.S.*

UNITED STATES.

I JOIN WITH THOSE WHO ARE CONCERNED ABOUT OVERALL SOVIET DESIGNS ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND MEDITERRANEAN. ONE NEED ONLY FOLLOW THE NEWS REPORTS OF OPERATION "DAWN PATROL," THE NATO NAVAL MANEUVERS NOW IN PROGRESS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. WE ARE AWARE OF THE UNPRECEDENTED SOVIET NAVAL BUILD-UP IN THAT REGION. WE KNOW THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE TRYING TO EXERT PRESSURES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AT A TIME WHEN WE ARE PREOCCUPIED IN THE FAR EAST.

YOUR GOVERNMENT IS NOT NAIVE. NOR ARE THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. LET ME STATE ONE FACT VERY SIMPLY AND DIRECTLY: ISRAEL MUST NOT BECOME ANOTHER CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

I HAVE NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT SOVIET POLICY AND THE ATTEMPTS BY THE KREMLIN TO CREATE A SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST THAT WOULD UNDERMINE VITAL AMERICAN

SECURITY INTERESTS AND THREATEN THE ENTIRE SOUTHERN FLANK OF NATO. THE GAME BEING PLAYED BY THE RUSSIANS, EXPLOITING ARAB HOSTILITY AGAINST ISRAEL, IS TRANSPARENT.

IT IS MY CONVICTION THAT AMERICAN POLICY WILL NOT SEEK TO "IMPOSE" A SETTLEMENT AS A RESULT OF THE PRESENT BIG FOUR CONFERENCE OR OUTSIDE THE CONTEXT OF SUCH TALKS.

PRESIDENT NIXON HAS PLEDGED THAT ISRAEL'S VITAL INTERESTS WILL BE PRESERVED AND THAT WITHDRAWAL CAN OCCUR ONLY BY CONSENT OF THE PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED, BASED UPON A CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING A PEACE INVOLVING RECOGNIZED, DEFENSIBLE, AND JUST BOUNDARIES.

AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE BIG FOUR CONFERENCE IS CONSISTENT WITH EFFORTS TO TEST THE SOVIET UNION'S PROFESSED DESIRE TO PRESERVE PEACE AND TO AVOID A

NUCLEAR CONFRONTATION. BUT NO ACCORD WILL BE PURCHASED/AT THE EXPENSE OF ISRAEL. AS I HAVE SAID, WE ARE WELL AWARE OF SOVIET AIMS AND ATTITUDES. WE ARE ALSO MINDFUL OF THE CONTINUING BRUTAL SUPPRESSION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AS DENOUNCED ONLY LAST FRIDAY BY PRESIDENT NIXON.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS AWARE THAT THE SOVIET-MADE MIG'S THAT TREACHEROUSLY ATTACKED AN UNARMED U.S. RECONNAISSANCE PLANE IN INTERNATIONAL AIRSPACE OFF THE KOREAN COAST REPRESENTED THE SAME TYPE OF AIRCRAFT AND WEAPONS SYSTEMS SUPPLIED TO THE RADICAL ARAB STATES.

THEREFORE

OUR GOVERNMENT MUST, CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THE MILITARY COMBAT AND DETERRENT CAPACITIES OF ISRAEL THROUGH THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE SUPPLY OF PHANTOM JETS AND OTHER MILITARY HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS. I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT ISRAELI AIR AND GROUND CREWS

TO MAN THE PHANTOMS ARE PRESENTLY RECEIVING SPECIAL TRAINING AT A U.S. AIR FORCE BASE IN CALIFORNIA. THE PHANTOMS WILL BE READY FOR SHIPMENT AT A TIME COINCIDING WITH THE COMPLETION OF TRAINING -- A MATTER OF MONTHS. MANY OF THE PHANTOMS WILL BE IN SERVICE IN ISRAEL BEFORE THE END OF 1969.

WE APPRECIATE ISRAEL'S ISOLATED GEOGRAPHIC POSITION, SURROUNDED AS SHE IS BY ENEMIES. HER VERY LIFE DEPENDS ON AIRPOWER AND CIVILIAN AIR LINKS WITH THE FREE WORLD. IN THIS CONNECTION, ONE MUST NOTE WITH REGRET THAT ATTACKS ON UNARMED AIRCRAFT HAVE ESCALATED WORLDWIDE FROM THE HIJACKING OF AMERICAN COMMERCIAL AIRLINERS TO CUBA, TO ATTACKS AT VARIOUS EUROPEAN AIRPORTS ON ISRAELI AIRLINERS BY ARAB TERRORISTS ARMED WITH RUSSIAN WEAPONS, AND NOW THE CRIMINAL ATTACK BY COMMUNIST NORTH KOREAN MIG-21'S ON AN UNARMED AMERICAN PLANE

IN INTERNATIONAL AIRSPACE.

ARE THE RUSSIANS SINCERELY SEEKING A RELAXATION OF TENSIONS OR HAVE THEY MERELY RELEGATED THEIR DIRTY WORK TO THE FANATICS AND FOURTH-RATE DESPOTS OF THE WORLD?

WE HAVE HEARD THE KREMLIN PROFESS GREAT CONCERN ABOUT MIDDLE EASTERN PEACE. BUT WE HAVE WATCHED THEM POUR NAVAL FORCES INTO THE MEDITERRANEAN. WE HAVE HEARD THEM DEMAND AMERICAN WITHDRAWAL. WE HAVE WATCHED THEM BUILD UP THE WAR POTENTIAL OF RADICAL AND IRRESPONSIBLE ARAB STATES THAT REFUSE TO ENTER INTO REAL PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL.

MOSCOW IS ATTEMPTING TO ACHIEVE INDIRECTLY WHAT COMMUNIST AND ARAB PRESSURE HAVE FAILED TO ACCOMPLISH BY MILITARY PRESSURE AND THREATS. THEY HAVE SOUGHT TO ROLL BACK THE ISRAELIS FROM THE CEASE-FIRE LINES OF JUNE, 1967, WITHOUT A MEANINGFUL

PEACE SETTLEMENT. THUS THEY WOULD KEEP THE SORE OPEN, RESTORE THE INTOLERABLE SITUATION THAT EXISTED IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF THE SIX-DAY WAR, AND EXPLOIT ANY RETREAT BY ISRAEL AND HER FRIENDS TO PUSH FURTHER AGAINST FREE WORLD INTERESTS.

THE SOVIET UNION HAS NOT CLARIFIED HER POLICY TO MY SATISFACTION. INDEED, THEY SEEM TO HAVE A VARIETY OF POLICIES, TO SUIT THEIR CONVENIENCE. THEY HAVE ONE POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, ANOTHER IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND YET ANOTHER IN NORTH KOREA. IN NORTH KOREA THEY HELP US ONE WEEK TO SEARCH FOR POSSIBLE SURVIVORS OF THE PLANE SHOT DOWN BY THE MIG'S THEY PROVIDED. THEN, THE VERY NEXT WEEK, THEY PROTEST BECAUSE WE SEND A NAVAL FORCE TO PROTECT OUR RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS AND OUR RIGHT TO USE INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND AIRSPACE.

AN ASSESSMENT MUST BE MADE AT

AMERICAN-SOVIET BILATERAL TALKS ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND AT THE BIG FOUR MEETINGS. IT IS WHETHER MOSCOW IS SINCERE IN SEEKING A REDUCTION OF TENSIONS OR/WHETHER RUSSIA IS TRYING TO EXPLOIT THE FEAR OF WAR IN HOPE OF TURNING A COMPLEX SITUATION TO HER ADVANTAGE.

NOT ONLY THE SOVIET UNION BUT ALSO COMMUNIST CHINA IS FISHING IN THE TROUBLED WATERS OF THE MIDDLE EAST. ARAB TERRORISTS ARE BEING TRAINED IN PEKING. CHINESE "BUTTON" MINES, MORTARS, ROCKETS, AND OTHER WEAPONS USED AGAINST U.S. FORCES IN VIET NAM HAVE EMERGED IN THE ARAB GUERRILLA ASSAULTS AGAINST ISRAEL. ARAB GUERRILLA LEADERS HAVE OPENLY PROCLAIMED THAT THEY WILL REJECT ANY PEACE SETTLEMENT THAT MIGHT BE REACHED BY THE BIG FOUR OR SIGNED BY KING HUSSEIN OR PRESIDENT NASSER.

CITING CHAIRMAN MAO OF COMMUNIST

CHINA AS THEIR INSPIRATION, THE ARAB
TERRORISTS HAVE PROCLAIMED A SO-CALLED WAR
OF NATIONAL LIBERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST.
THEIR AIM IS THE LIQUIDATION OF ISRAEL AND
ALL PRO-WESTERN ARAB REGIMES.

THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THE
LEADING ARAB TERRORIST MOVEMENT, EL FATAH,
IS WORKING THROUGH ARAB STUDENTS AT VARIOUS
AMERICAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO BUILD
UP U.S. SUPPORT FOR AN ARAB "NATIONAL
LIBERATION FRONT" SIMILAR TO THE CAMPUS
UNDERGROUND MOBILIZED FOR THE VIET CONG
NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT. INDEED, WE NOW
FIND THAT SOME ARABS HERE ON STUDENT VISAS
ARE WORKING WITH THE U.S. COMMITTEE TO AID
THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (VIET CONG);
THE YOUTH ARM OF THE PRO-PEKING WORKERS
WORLD PARTY KNOWN AS YOUTH AGAINST WAR AND
FASCISM, AND ITS FRONT GROUP, THE COMMITTEE
TO SUPPORT MIDDLE EAST LIBERATION.

INDICATIONS OF THE FLOW OF TRAINED AGITATORS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST HAVE BEEN REVEALED IN CONTACTS BETWEEN THE ARABS AND THE BLACK PANTHERS, THE STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY (S.D.S.), AND OTHER ANTI-DEMOCRATIC GROUPS.

OUR NATION ALREADY IS BESET BY DISRUPTION AT OUR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING. WE HAVE NO NEED OF AGITATORS FROM ABROAD.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WILL CAREFULLY EXAMINE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ESTIMATED 10,000 ARAB STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES TO ASCERTAIN POSSIBLE VIOLATIONS OF VISA REQUIREMENTS. IF THEY ARE ABUSING OUR HOSPITALITY IN AN UNLAWFUL MANNER, THERE SHOULD BE SOME IMMEDIATE ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION.

WE ARE PAINFULLY AWARE OF HOW THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT HAS ALREADY SPILLED

OVER TO OUR SHORES IN THE CASE OF THE CONVICTED MURDERER, SIRHAN SIRHAN. THIS NATION WILL NOT TOLERATE ASSASSINATION AND TERRORISM.

LET ME REITERATE THAT THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IDENTIFIES WITH YOUR CONCERNS. WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE GROWTH OF ISRAEL-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP. WE SHARE YOUR ASPIRATIONS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.

-- END --