

AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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PRESS RELEASE

For Release:

Miami Beach, Fla., Aug. 16 -- The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) today urged the Republican Party to adopt a Middle East plank reaffirming the words and views of President Nixon and pledging continuation of his policy.

In a statement to the platform committee, I. L. Kenen, executive vice chairman of AIPAC, recalled President Nixon's statement (Jan. 1970) that "peace can be based only on agreement between the parties and that agreement can be achieved only through negotiations between them."

Noting that AIPAC's recommendations "are substantially consistent with the views of the Administration and a bipartisan majority of Congress," Kenen said that the current U.S. policy "of maintaining Israel's deterrent strength has been effective." AIPAC called for a continuation of this policy of providing Israel "with planes and other sophisticated equipment, and economic supporting assistance."

U.S. policy has helped to persuade Russia and Egypt that another war would be futile, Kenen declared. He urged the maintenance of U.S. strength in Europe and the Mediterranean as essential to preserve the balance of strength and to prevent an outbreak of hostilities.

Referring to the recent ouster of Russian military personnel from Egypt, Kenen noted: "We would like to believe that this action will ultimately open the door to peace. But the Egyptians have spurned negotiations with Israel, have begun shopping for arms in other countries, and are launching a diplomatic offensive to force Israel's surrender to their territorial demands."

The spokesman for AIPAC, a non-partisan organization which does not make political endorsements, warned that "it would be premature and reckless to abandon a policy that has been vindicated by results."

AIPAC's proposals, which have the support of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations (which embraces 26 national organizations) also include a recommendation to "recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move the U.S. Embassy there." Kenen urged the adoption of this proposal, which was "first made by Rep. Gerald Ford, the Republican Leader of the House, and strongly endorsed by Sen. Robert Griffin, the Republican Whip of the Senate."

Kenen emphasized the importance of a Middle East plank which, he said, "serves notice on the Arab states and the Soviet Union of our unswerving resolution to preserve Israel's survival and to promote an Arab-Israeli peace settlement."

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