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STATEMENT BY
I. L. KENEN
EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
SUBMITTED TO THE
PLATFORM COMMITTEE OF THE
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION
MIAMI, FLORIDA AUGUST 16, 1972

CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS OF MAJOR AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

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AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC
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COUNCIL for HISTADRUT

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AMERICAN SECTION, INC.

ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA

July 12, 1972

Mr. I. L. Kenen
American Israel Public Affairs
Committee
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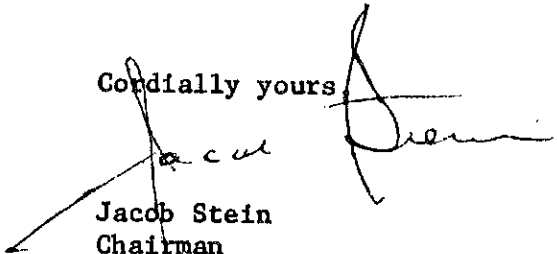
Dear Mr. Kenen:

It is my understanding that you will submit to the platform committee for the national convention of the Republican Party, a statement embracing the proposal contained in the policy statement adopted at your annual conference, which took place in April 1972.

As chairman of the Presidents Conference, I would like to inform you that proposals submitted to the platform committee of the Republican Party, based on this policy statement, enjoy the full support of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and I hope that you will be successful in developing a strong platform on the Middle East which will constitute a constructive step towards the attainment of peace.

With best wishes.

Cordially yours,


Jacob Stein
Chairman

JS:cr

Thank you for the privilege of appearing here today.

I am the executive vice chairman of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, an organization of American Jews that has worked over the years to strengthen U.S. - Israel relations.

We are a non-partisan organization; we do not make endorsements or participate in the political campaigns, but since 1944 we, and our predecessor organization, have presented our proposals to the Administration, to Congress and to the national political conventions.

In order to assist your Committee, we submit the text of the statement of policy adopted by our Committee on April 20, as well as the text of the Democratic platform adopted last month.

We are confident that our views are shared by the overwhelming majority of American Jews. Our proposals have the endorsement of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, which comprises 26 major national Jewish organizations. The American Jewish Committee also concurs in our recommendations.

Indeed, we submit that our major recommendations are substantially consistent with the views of the Administration and a bipartisan majority of the Congress.

President Nixon has emphasized the commitment of the American people to the survival of Israel, and is currently pursuing policies that fulfill that commitment by strengthening Israel and by promoting a peace settlement.

We urge the Platform Committee to adopt a Middle East plank that will reaffirm the words and views of the President and pledge continuation of his policies.

BACKGROUND

Five years after the six-day war, the Arab states still reject a negotiated peace and cling to the illusion that the Great Powers will impose a settlement forcing Israel back to pre-1967 demarcation lines which would make her vulnerable to renewed attack. Since that war, our Committee has emphasized two major points:

1. To gain peace -- promote direct Arab-Israel negotiations to achieve a final peace based on agreed and defensible frontiers;
2. To prevent war -- provide Israel with planes and other vital equipment and economic supporting assistance needed to deter new aggression.

We should note that both parties - Republican and Democratic -- adopted similar planks calling for negotiations and for planes for Israel in their 1968 platforms; that large majorities of the Senate and House have repeatedly endorsed these proposals in resolutions and declarations during the last three years.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

On January 25, 1970, President Nixon declared:

"The United States stands by its friends. Israel is one of its friends.

"The United States believes that peace can be based only on agreement between the parties and that agreement can be achieved only through negotiations between them. We do not see any substitute for such negotiations if peace and security arrangements acceptable to the parties are to be worked out.

"The United States does not intend to negotiate the terms of peace. It will not impose the terms of peace."

We urge you to reaffirm the President's statements.

We believe that the American people want our government to be the friend of both Arabs and Israelis. We know of no better way to put our friendship to work than to push for direct face-to-face Arab-Israel talks which will settle all outstanding issues.

The road to an Arab-Israel peace will be traveled when Arabs and Israelis travel it together. A peace between sovereign states cannot be imposed by others and cannot be enforced by outside intervention or empty guarantees.

In 1969, 1970 and 1971 large majorities of both the Senate and House subscribed their names to Congressional declarations and resolutions calling for direct negotiations. In 1970 a declaration was signed by 70 Senators and 280 Representatives, including the major candidates for the presidency.

Again, in 1971, 78 Senators and 257 Representatives sponsored resolutions calling for a peace settlement to be negotiated by the parties themselves. Those resolutions also called upon the Administration to supply Phantom jet planes for Israel without delay.

THE ARMS RACE

All of us want disarmament in the Middle East. Manifestly, that will not be feasible so long as Arab leaders continue to spurn negotiation and cry for war.

The Soviet Union began the arms race in the Middle East in 1955. It has paced it ever since, using weapons as currency to buy Arab favor. From the beginning, it has been necessary to make it clear to the Russians that we will not permit them to win the arms race in this vital area.

But while the need to arm Israel has been accepted in principle, we regret that for a long time our government was reluctant to act swiftly and

adequately to counter the Soviet threat. As a result of our diffidence, the Soviet Union felt free to pour weapons into the Arab states without effective challenge.

In recent years, there has been a change for the better. On July 1, 1970, President Nixon declared in a television program:

"What should U.S. policy be? I'll summarize it . . .

"One: our interest is peace, and the integrity of every country in the area.

"Two: we recognize that Israel . . . is not desirous of driving any of the other countries into the sea. The other countries do want to drive Israel into the sea.

"Three: once the balance of power shifts where Israel is weaker than its neighbors, there will be a war.

"Therefore, it is in U. S. interests to maintain the balance of power, and we will maintain that balance of power."

President Nixon has moved to carry out that policy with bipartisan support in Congress. And in recent days there is evidence that the policy of maintaining Israel's deterrent strength has been effective. The purpose of that policy has been to convince Russians and Egyptians that another war would be futile.

Last month there came welcome news that the frustrated Egyptian Government has ousted most of the Russian military personnel. We would like to believe that this action will ultimately open the door to peace. But the Egyptians have spurned negotiations with Israel, they have begun shopping for arms in other countries and are launching a diplomatic offensive to force Israel's surrender to their territorial demands.

It would be premature and reckless to abandon a policy that has been vindicated by results. Diplomatic, military and economic support for Israel

are vitally essential in order to persuade Israel's neighbors that they have no genuine alternative to a peace negotiated by the parties themselves.

We trust that the United States will continue to provide Israel with the military equipment, the necessary financial credits, the economic supporting assistance and the diplomatic support to further advance this policy.

ECONOMIC AID

It should be stressed that Israel has not asked for American soldiers to fight in her defense nor has she ever received the gift of weapons. She has asked that she be enabled to buy the means to defend herself against heavy odds. As a result, the Israelis have incurred enormous defense costs, going deeply into debt, gravely impairing their economy. For many years the Israel per capita foreign currency debt has been the highest of any country in the world. It is our hope that the Administration and Congress will provide Israel with assistance to lighten the burden imposed by the Soviet Union's arms policy.

OTHER ISSUES

Refugees: Over the years hundreds of thousands of Jews have come out of Arab countries, while hundreds of thousands of Arabs have left what is now Israel. We believe that a population exchange, for which there is ample historical precedent, is the practical and rational solution of this problem.

We urge you to adopt the view that the Arab refugees be resettled in Arab lands where there is room and opportunity for them. The Arab states can make this humanitarian contribution and end, once and for all, the exploitation of the refugees as pawns in the Arab war against Israel.

At the same time, we urge that our government continue to provide funds for the UN Relief and Works Administration (UNRWA), stressing the need to

use funds wherever possible for vocational training and resettlement. However, these funds should not be used to maintain terrorist activities.

The Arab states have recently won huge increases in their oil revenues. Their contributions over the years to UNRWA have been miniscule. It is time that they assume some responsibility for solving the problem which was brought about when the Arab League launched its war against Israel and the UN Partition Resolution in 1948.

Another group of refugees is now entering the Middle East. I refer to the Soviet Union's decision to grant exit permits to some of the Jews of that country who seek to rejoin their people in Israel. We hope that the Administration and Congress will approve pending legislation to help Israel absorb these Soviet Jewish immigrants.

Both the House and Senate have already voted their approval by authorizing legislation sponsored by 46 members of the Senate and 67 Representatives, but the appropriation has not yet won approval.

Boundaries: Because we are convinced that secure, recognized and defensible boundaries between Israel and the Arab states can be fixed once and for all by negotiations, we believe it undermines free negotiations when Great Powers project blueprints and maps which would reinstate the vulnerable and insecure demarcation lines of the past. I use the adjective "defensible" boundaries advisedly; it is the word that Mr. Nixon used in this context on July 1, 1970.

Jerusalem: Since the six-day war, the ugly barricades which partitioned Jerusalem have come down and the city has become unified under Israel's administration. Jerusalem now flourishes as a city open to all, in which Arabs and Israelis work and live together and the religious shrines of all faiths at last are freely accessible to all.

Five years have gone by since the six-day war and we regretfully see no early prospect of a formal Arab-Israel peace. Yet, there is hope that little by little, as a result of Israel's exemplary administration of Jerusalem and of territories in Samaria, Judea and Gaza, and the higher standard of living and greater freedom which Arab residents of those areas now enjoy, these two peoples will move on toward broader and deeper understanding and cooperation.

Although Jerusalem has been Israel's capital since 1953, the U. S. Government has maintained its embassy in Tel Aviv. Congressional leaders have recently urged that the United States move its embassy to Jerusalem. This proposal was first made by Representative Gerald Ford, the Republican Leader of the House, and strongly endorsed by Senator Robert Griffin, the Republican Whip of the Senate. In recent weeks, it has also been endorsed by Senators Humphrey, McGovern and Muskie and it has been written into the Democratic platform. We believe such a move would be a salutary step, for it would contribute to stability. Whatever may be the future status of Jerusalem, there is no reason to challenge Israel's right to maintain its capital there, where Jews have constituted a majority for more than 100 years.

PEACE

There are many other issues which divide Israel and the Arab states, but we are confident that all are soluble. Genuine peace treaties arrived at through direct negotiations obligating the parties to each other would lead to

- a) the establishment of secure, defensible and agreed boundaries;
- b) freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran;

- c) preservation of the unity of Jerusalem with free access to the holy places;
- d) resettlement and compensation for refugees, Arabs and Jews;
- e) effective controls to end terrorism and hijacking;
- f) the end of economic warfare, boycotts and blockades;
- g) de-escalation of the arms race.

The United States and Israel share a common objective -- the achievement of an Arab-Israel peace contributing to the welfare of both Arabs and Jews.

A firm and consistent policy by the United States is essential to achieve this objective.

SUMMARY

In summary, we recommend the following proposals:

- 1) Promote direct Arab-Israel negotiations to achieve a final peace based on agreed and defensible frontiers;
- 2) Maintain Israel's deterrent strength by providing her with planes and other sophisticated equipment, and economic supporting assistance;
- 3) Maintain U.S. strength in Europe and the Mediterranean area to preserve the balance of strength and prevent an eruption of hostilities;
- 4) Recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move the U. S. Embassy there;
- 5) Assist Israel and the Arab states to rehabilitate and resettle Arab and Jewish refugees.

Finally, we must emphasize the importance of your Middle East plank.

Platforms inform other nations of the United States' position. This is of particular importance in the Middle East in order to serve notice to

the Arab states and the Soviet Union of our unswerving resolution to preserve Israel's survival and to promote an Arab-Israeli peace settlement.

Bipartisan agreement can help make it clear that the people of our country do want a negotiated Arab-Israeli peace; that they are opposed to imposed settlements which settle nothing; that they are determined to prevent another disastrous war, and that they will not falter or waver in these commitments.

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POLICY STATEMENT Adopted by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Washington, D.C., on April 19-20, 1972

Peace Negotiations

Five years after the six-day war, the Arab states still reject a negotiated peace with Israel, clinging to the illusion that the Great Powers will ultimately impose a settlement forcing Israel back to pre-1967 demarcation lines which would make her vulnerable to renewed attack.

The road to an Arab-Israel peace will be traveled when Arabs and Israelis travel it together.

We affirm our conviction that a genuine and lasting peace between Israel and the Arab states can be achieved only through negotiations between the parties directly involved. A peace between sovereign states cannot be imposed by others and cannot be enforced by outside intervention or empty guarantees. Direct negotiations will establish the framework and climate for mutual accommodation and reconciliation.

The Soviet Presence

The Soviet Union has expanded its presence and influence in the Middle East by deploying weapons and military personnel in Arab states and by spearheading a diplomatic offensive against Israel.

In his message to Congress on February 9, President Nixon declared that the "Soviet Union's effort to use the Arab-Israel conflict to perpetuate and expand its own military position in Egypt has been a matter of concern to the United States. The USSR has taken advantage of Egypt's increasing dependence on Soviet military supplies to gain the use of naval and air facilities in Egypt. This has serious implications for the stability of the balance of power locally, regionally in the Eastern Mediterranean, and globally."

The President enumerated Soviet assistance to Egypt in 1970: 80 surface-to-air missile installations with 5,000 operators; squadrons of combat aircraft with Soviet pilots; and 11,000 other advisers. More recent acquisitions include the advanced SA-6 surface-to-air missiles, the Foxbat and other MIG aircraft and TU-16 bombers.

President Nixon called upon the Soviet Union to exercise restraint in its arms supply and to refrain from using the Arab-Israel conflict to enhance its own military position.

We urge our Government to continue efforts to secure withdrawal of Soviet military forces from the Middle East and to oppose any arrange-

ments legitimizing their presence—a threat to the survival and independence of all states in the region.

Assistance to Israel

We warmly commend President Nixon and the Congress for the adoption and implementation of the basic policy that as long as the Soviet Union continues to provide large-scale arms shipments to the Arab states, the United States will allow Israel to obtain arms adequate to maintain the power balance. We trust that the United States will continue to provide planes and other weapons, as well as the necessary financial credits, to conform with this policy.

We welcome the strong support Israel has received in the Congress in response to her appeal for economic assistance. We urge the Administration and Congress to give sympathetic consideration to Israel's need for financial help to meet the economic burdens resulting from the war still being waged against her by the Arab states, aided and abetted by the Soviet Union.

Arab-Israel Relations

Israel's exemplary administration of Jerusalem and of territories in Samaria, Judea and Gaza since the six-day war holds out the hope of peace. Arab residents of these areas now enjoy a higher standard of living and greater freedom than under Arab rule.

Israel's policy of permitting hundreds of thousands of Arabs from all parts of the Arab world to visit the West Bank and Israel has improved relationships between the two peoples, supporting the belief that they can and will live together in peace.

The United Nations

We deplore the repeated abuse of the platform of the United Nations by those members of the Human Rights Commission who persist in pushing through false and defamatory resolutions charging Israel with alleged transgressions in the administered territories.

We similarly deplore resolutions adopted in the Security Council by a built-in coalition of Arab and pro-Arab states condemning Israel for preventive and defensive actions while ignoring the provocative and aggressive acts of her enemies.

Jerusalem

Jerusalem now flourishes as a unified city open to all—Christians, Mos-

lems and Jews—without discrimination. We oppose all attempts to alter the status of Jerusalem as a unified city, the capital of Israel.

Soviet Jews

We welcome the increased emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union to Israel. We demand that the Soviet Union grant exit permits to all who seek to rejoin their people in Israel. We demand that the Soviet Union ensure full rights—religious, cultural and national—for Jews who continue to live there. We demand that the Soviet Union release all Jews imprisoned for insisting on their rights to live as Jews and to emigrate to Israel.

We appeal to President Nixon to raise these issues during his forthcoming visit with the leaders of the Soviet Union.

We urge the Congress to approve pending legislation to help Israel absorb Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union.

Jews in Arab Lands

We protest the cruel treatment of Jews living in some Arab countries, especially in Syria, and call for United Nations intervention to end these harsh and vindictive policies. The small remnants of Jews in Arab lands should be permitted to emigrate to Israel or to any other country of their choice.

Peace Treaties

We believe that all outstanding issues between the Arabs and the Israelis can be resolved by peace treaties, arrived at through direct negotiations, obligating the parties to each other and leading to:

a) The establishment of secure, recognized and agreed boundaries and demilitarized zones;

b) Preservation of the unity of Jerusalem with free access to the holy places;

c) Freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran;

d) Resettlement and compensation for refugees, Arab and Jewish;

e) Effective controls to end terrorism and hijacking;

f) The end of economic warfare, boycotts and blockades;

g) De-escalation of the arms race.

The United States and Israel share a common objective—the achievement of an Arab-Israel peace contributing to the welfare of both Arabs and Jews. A firm and consistent policy by the United States is essential to achieve this objective.

Appendix

Printed below are the Middle East and Soviet Jewry planks adopted by the 1972 Democratic National Convention in Miami, Florida

MIDDLE EAST

The United States must be unequivocally committed to support of Israel's right to exist within secure and defensible boundaries. Progress toward a negotiated political settlement in the Middle East will permit Israel and her Arab neighbors to live at peace with each other, and to turn their energies to internal development. It will also free the world from the threat of the explosion of Mid-East tensions into world war. In working toward a settlement, our continuing pledge to the security and freedom of Israel must be both clear and consistent.

A Democratic Administration should:

- * make and carry out a firm, long-term public commitment to provide Israel with aircraft and other military equipment in the quantity and sophistication she needs to preserve her deterrent strength in the face of Soviet arming of Arab threats of renewed war;
- * seek to bring the parties into direct negotiation toward a permanent political solution based on the necessity of agreement on secure and defensible national boundaries;
- * maintain a political commitment and a military force in Europe and at sea in the Mediterranean ample to deter the Soviet Union from putting unbearable pressure on Israel.
- * recognize and support the established status of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, with free access to all its holy places provided to all faiths. As a symbol of this stand, the U.S. Embassy should be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem;
- * recognize the responsibility of the world community for a just solution to the problems of the Arab and Jewish refugees.

SOVIET JEWS

We welcome every improvement in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and every step taken toward reaching vital agreements on trade and other subjects. However, in our pursuit of improved relations, America cannot afford to be blind to the continued existence of serious differences between us. In particular, the U.S. should by diplomatic contacts seek to mobilize world opinion to express concern at the denial to the oppressed peoples of Eastern Europe and the minorities of the Soviet Union, including the Soviet Jews, of the right to practice their religion and culture and to leave their respective countries.