

As the Washington poison machine clicks into gear....

COMPROMISE" is the word now most often heard on Washington's Capitol Hill in connection with the bitterly controversial arms sale package proposed by the Carter Administration.

Few people have been fooled by the administration's 11th-hour decision to stop calling the three-year deal a package. Everyone is aware that without Congressional acquiescence for all three sales it is most unlikely Carter will follow through on any.

The kind of compromise now being discussed has to do mostly with increasing the number of planes for Israel and decreasing this restricting the planes for Saudi Arabia.

### Determined

Instead of 15 F-15s and 75 F-16s for Israel, the numbers being talked about go as high as 25 F-15s and 150 F-16s. There does appear to be considerable White House flexibility on raising the number of the planes for Israel if this will improve prospects for the other sales as well.

But when it comes to the matter of 60 F-15s for Saudi Arabia, the Carter Administration seems

# Compromise means more for Israelis, less for Kingdom

The general situation in Congress has become much more confused than it was just a week ago when the White House felt quite confident it could block defeat of the arms package in the House International Relations Committee.

The chairman of that committee, Clement Zablocki, was then stating that 15 members were firmly for the package and a 19-member majority could be assured by the time a vote could be expected.

### More anxiety

But just a few days ago a majority of that committee joined in a resolution criticising the package and aimed at forcing major compromises from Carter.

"We're hoping, of course, now that the administration is on definite notice that the votes are not

there (in the committee), that we can work out an accommodation," Congressman Stephen Solaris of New York stated.

### Statements

The White House still believes it has the votes on both the Senate and House floors, but there is more anxiety than before. Thus, movement seems to be toward some form of compromise rather than a show-down which neither side may want.

But the Jewish lobby is continuing to pressure strongly against the F-15 sale to Saudi Arabia. In its weekly newsletter, in the lead editorial comment this week, the following statements are made:

The administration wants to sell the Saudis a plane which would make the Kingdom a confrontation state with Israel.

There is no effective way to guarantee that the Saudis would not use their F-15s against Israel.

### Merits

If the administration is bent on selling F-15s to Saudi Arabia it should let the proposal be considered on its own merits and not link it with the U.S. commitment to sell fighters to Israel.

And what if the F-15 sale to the Saudis is defeated and the Saudis purchase French F-15s? It will pose less of a dilemma for U.S. policymakers to the F-15 is the most advanced fighter bomber in the world.... neither the French, the Russians nor anyone else have anything like it. The French F-15 is both less sophisticated and more difficult to fly. And the Saudis are likely to buy F-15s whether or not they get the F-15.

### Effective

The scare mongering and fact-twisting technique used in the article is familiar (See "The Washington Poison Machine" - Saudi Gazette May 3) but still effective with wavering voters.

And it shows that the Israelis, who have apparently abandoned their claim that they would prefer no planes be sold to anyone rather than see F-15s go to Saudi Arabia, are still fighting to score the biggest possible advantages out of the deal.

# Saudi Gazette