

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 6, 1984

I am delighted to extend my very warmest wishes to members and guests of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee as you meet in your Annual Policy Conference.

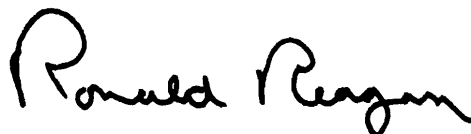
As you undertake your deliberations, you should take satisfaction from AIPAC's justly earned reputation as a staunch advocate of strong American-Israeli relations. Your efforts to enhance those ties are an outstanding example of the freedom our society offers to all citizens to participate in the foreign policy process, and they are welcomed by those who count ourselves as friends of Israel.

All of us can take satisfaction, as well, from the new plateau which the Israeli-American relationship has reached. It is correct to speak of a "plateau", rather than a "summit", because we have attained a new, high level upon which we continue to build, rather than a peak from which we will descend.

The ramifications of this are evident throughout the relationship. Over the past few months, the United States and Israel have established a Joint Political Military Group, which is focusing on the threat posed by increased Soviet involvement in the Middle East and is considering such measures as combined military planning, joint exercises, and requirements for the repositioning of American equipment in Israel. We are also holding talks with the Israelis leading toward the establishment of a Free Trade Area. Moreover, we have changed the composition of our aid to Israel from a combination of grants and concessionary loans to one of grants alone.

The net result of all this is to demonstrate once again -- as if there could be any doubt -- the importance that the United States and I personally attach to the strongest possible relationship with Israel. This relationship is a cornerstone of our foreign policy and of the structure of a just and lasting peace which one day will be attained between Israel and all her neighbors.

You have my best wishes. May your Conference be a most successful one.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald Reagan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".