

Senate Pair Questions Sale to Iran Of Jet Fighter Withheld From Israel

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Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday needed Pentagon witnesses on the Administration's decision to sell F-4 Phantom supersonic jet fighter planes to the Shah of Iran but, so far, not to a more needy Israel.

Sen. John J. Sparkman (D-Ala.), wondered why the planes were being sold to Iran on the argument of "self-protection against the Soviet Union" when Iran recently signed a \$150-million arms purchase agreement with the Soviet Union and now is getting Russian help in building big industrial plants.

Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.) suggested that the Administration's decision to keep the Shah "happy" may have been influenced by the Iranian oil fields which supply U.S. oil companies.

Paul C. Warnke, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, differed.

But he suggested that Iran, with U.S. assistance, now was sufficiently strong for Moscow to desire to be "friendly" with its southern neighbor. Under further questioning he acknowledged that the United States has just now agreed to sell the Shah \$100-million worth of other sophisticated military equipment at concessionary credit terms to help Iran defend itself against three "radical" Arab neighbors which the Soviets currently are arming: Egypt, Syria and Iraq.

Symington then noted that Israel, which is under far

greater threat of being overrun today than Iran, can't get the United States to sell her 50 of the same Phantoms the U.S. is selling the Shah.

Warnke said the State Department had to approve of such sales.

Warnke did say, however, that both Israel's Premier Levi Eshkol and its Defense Minister, Gen. Moshe Dayan, had acquiesced to the Administration decision, earlier this year, to resume arms sales to Jordan. Warnke said they found American arms to an Arab

neighbor preferable to Soviet arms.

Warnke appeared before the Committee to testify on behalf of an Administration request to authorize \$296 million in military credit sales.

Under prodding from Republican Senators, Warnke acknowledged that the \$296 million would form just one part of the projected \$1.5 billion in U.S. arms transactions for the coming fiscal year. The rest would be made through private commercial transactions and U.S. government grants.