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Cabinet Calls On Egypt To Continue With Talks In Order To Reach Peace Agreement

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA)--The Cabinet called on Egypt today to continue the Jarring talks "in order to reach a peace agreement between the two states." Contrary to some expectations, the Cabinet did not attach the condition that such talks be face-to-face, thus leaving Cairo free to continue the indirect procedure applied to date. But the policymakers stated unequivocally that Israel "will not" restore the pre-Six-Day War borders of June 4, 1967. The resolution issued by the Cabinet today followed a debate that had begun at a special meeting last Thursday. In the resolution, the Cabinet declared that "the government of Israel views favorably the expression of the readiness of the government of Egypt to enter into a peace agreement with Israel, and expresses its own readiness for meaningful negotiations on all subjects relevant to a peace agreement between the two countries." It was reported late last week that in its Feb. 15 aide memoire to United Nations negotiator Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring, Cairo for the first time indicated a willingness to effect a peace "agreement"--but not a peace "treaty"--with Israel. The Cabinet said today that "the government of Israel hopes for a positive response by Egypt and for progress in the negotiations."

The resolution remarked that "the Egyptian note demonstrates the concrete differences between Egypt's positions and those of Israel, and particularly the substantial gap which exists on the issues of borders and refugees." It noted in this connection that "Egypt demands total withdrawal to the armistice lines, while the position of Israel is...that it will be ready to discuss the withdrawal of armed forces towards secure, recognized and agreed boundaries to be established in peace agreements." The negotiations, the Cabinet stressed, "should not be subject to prior commitments on the outstanding issues." But the key phrase in the Cabinet resolution was that Israel "views favorably...the readiness of...Egypt to enter into a peace agreement with Israel." The question of what to say in the statement was thrashed out informally over the weekend by Premier Golda Meir, her senior Cabinet colleagues and Yitzhak Rabin, ambassador to the United States. Rabin, who arrived here Friday on urgent summons, reportedly conveyed to Mrs. Meir his distinct impression that if Israel rejected Egypt's offer she would run the risk of losing American support. (At the airport on his arrival, Rabin told newsmen he was unaware of any special American pressure, but added: "It depends what you regard as pressure.")

Allon, Eban, Sapir Favor Accepting Sadat's Proposal; Mrs. Meir, Galili Opposed

It was understood that Mrs. Meir and her confidant, Minister Without Portfolio Israel Galili, were against accepting Cairo's offer, whereas Deputy Premier Yigal Allon, Foreign Minister Abba Eban and Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir favored acceptance. The current position of mercurial Defense Minister Moshe Dayan is not known for certain. But despite doubts about Egypt's sincerity, the Israeli government welcomed its willingness to conclude a peace pact of some kind. A Foreign Ministry spokesman commented to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that Israel would never agree to restrict Jewish immigration, even if it meant the foundering of the peace talks. Egypt's UN ambassador, Dr. Mohammed H. el Zayyat, was quoted in a New York daily last week as endorsing the sovereignty of a Jewish State of Israel if her government stopped the influx of Jews.

The alleged remark gave rise to speculation that such a proposal was included in Cairo's Feb. 15 message to Dr. Jarring. But Dr. Zayyat immediately told the JTA that the published story was "nonsense," and reliable sources confirmed today that the Egyptian message made no mention of immigrants. Meanwhile, political circles in Jerusalem said Jordan would soon approve Dr. Jarring's reported suggestion that Amman sign a peace accord with Israel after some territorial adjustments. And in another development, the Interparty Secretariat Against Withdrawal From Administered Territories--composed of Knesset members and professionals of all parties--urged the Meir administration to reject any demand for an unconditional pullback from the areas captured in the Six-Day War.

Muskie Did Not Meet With Soviet Jews In Moscow 'As Far As We Know,' Aide Says

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Sen. Edmund S. Muskie, who has made the plight of Soviet Jews a major issue in his unannounced campaign for the Presidency, apparently failed to meet with any of them during his recent personal mission to Moscow. On Muskies return to the United States after his tour of several capitals, he emphasized that one of the subjects he brought up with Soviet Premier Alexsei N. Kosygin was the problem Soviet Jews face in obtaining equal rights at home and in emigrating from their homeland. But he did not indicate that he had personally sought information on the problem from Soviet Jews themselves. Weeks of repeated inquiries by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency finally brought the admission of Bob Shepherd, an aide to the Maine Democrat, that "as far as we know, he did not" meet with Soviet Jews in Moscow. Attempts to obtain comment directly from Muskies have been unavailing. Shepherd said on Friday that the Senator, his party's Vice Presidential candidate in 1968, was vacationing and had left word with his staff that he was not to be bothered "unless Maine is invaded."

Scott: U.S. Must Continue To Play Key Role In Achieving Mideast Peace

NEW YORK, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott declared in a speech scheduled for delivery tonight that the United States must continue "to play a key role" in achieving peace in the Middle East, and declared that "it is clear that the Jarring mission will not succeed if the Soviet Union and Egypt regard it as an instrument to force Israel's surrender on the issue of territories and to deny Israel genuine peace." Scott, a Pennsylvania Republican and an Episcopalian, was scheduled to speak here to Bnai Zion, the American Fraternal Zionist Organization, which has awarded him its 1971 Israel Friendship Gold Medal. Some 1600 Zionist leaders are expected to attend the dinner, the organization's 63rd annual fete. In his prepared text, Scott stated that "as long as the Arabs and Israelis do not talk to each

other there is not the slightest chance of a genuine settlement." He observed: "There is no doubt in the minds of fairminded observers that the primary responsibility for the (Middle East) deadlock today rests on the Soviet Union, which uses the Arab-Israel conflict to further its own imperialistic ambitions in the Middle East."

Scott also observed: "We would like to think that many Egyptians are tired of war and that many Egyptians recognize that there would be great benefits to all the people of the Middle East if Egypt and Israel could begin to cooperate in genuine understanding and peace." But that, he said, requires a changed attitude by the USSR and the United Arab Republic. "Otherwise, the current situation, in which 'the Jewish people are made the pawns in a political war,' will continue. The Senator stressed that the U.S. should not be 'satisfied' with peace negotiations unless the Arab states recognize Israel "and obligate themselves to work for the attainment and maintenance of a genuine peace." Scott stated that the Congress has "fully supported" Arab-Israel talks and warned against any attempt by the Big Powers to impose a settlement. He recalled that a Congressional declaration last year was signed by 70 Senators including himself and 283 members of the House. The main thrust of this declaration, issued last May, called for a just and lasting peace to be achieved by direct negotiations between the Arabs and Israel, and that the deterrent strength of Israel should not be impaired.

"Our commitment to Israel is a vital commitment because the survival and growth of Israel means a positive contribution to the welfare of people in many parts of the world," Scott declared. "And here is where American and Israeli interests really converge. We share a common commitment - the commitment to freedom, to liberty and to the welfare of humanity." In a message to the meeting, President Nixon praised the role of Bnai Zion and commended its "benevolent activities." He added that "I fully share your admiration for his (Sen. Scott) dedicated efforts to strengthen the friendly relations between the United States and Israel." Israel's Premier Golda Meir stated in a message that the award to Sen. Scott is "a most fitting tribute to one of America's great citizens and legislators whom we in Israel recognize and salute as a veteran champion of human liberty and democracy." Mrs. Meir added that Scott "has long served as a dynamic bridge of friendship and understanding between our two countries contributing much to the bonds of fraternity that unite our democratic peoples." Israel's President Zelman Shazar stated in a cable to the meeting that Bnai Zion is "dedicated (in its) endeavors for Israel's children and Israel's ties of friendship with America."

Sapir Doubts U.S. Will Apply Economic Pressure To Force Israel To Make Concessions

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir, returning from talks with American officials on additional aid to Israel, said last night that he believed "America would not resort to applying economic pressures in order to force Israel into making political concessions." The Nixon administration, he said, is very sympathetic to Israel's request for another \$500 million in military and economic credits, and a second round of talks will be held this summer. As an example of that sympathy, he said, the U.S. guaranteed him a \$50 million loan for the construction of 5,000 housing units for immigrants and young couples. Sapir said he was most impressed during his Washington visit with an unofficial talk he had with Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and Southeast Asian Affairs. But the Israeli diplomat would not say what they discussed. Sapir, who is also Minister of Commerce and Industry, added that--on the basis of his talks with political and Jewish leaders in the countries he visited--devotion to Israel is at an unprecedented peak. Sapir said that the various Jewish communities he visited in Europe are continuing to make a supreme effort to achieve the goals of the fund raisings for Israel. "The devotion to Israel is unprecedented." He added that chances are good that the increased income in the funds would be fulfilled. Sapir noted that the \$50 million loan guaranteed by the American government will be earmarked for the construction of 5,000 housing units for immigrants and young couples arriving in Israel.

Maki, Rakach Adopt Opposing View On World Conference On Soviet Jewry

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA)--The opposition between the two Communist factions in Israel intensified this weekend as both officially adopted opposite positions on the World Conference on Soviet Jewry opening this week in Brussels. While the anti-Soviet Communist faction, Maki, headed by Dr. Moshe Sneh, adopted a resolution calling on Russia to "open its doors for those Jews wishing to go to Israel and grant those Jews who would stay behind all national rights in religious and cultural fields, the pro-Soviet Rakach faction, headed by Meir Wilner, Saturday condemned the Brussels convention as "organized by the Israeli government and the World Zionist Organization against the interests of peace and of improving relations with Russia." The Wilner faction convened especially on Saturday--apparently, observers believe, upon instructions from Moscow--to adopt this resolution. At the same time there were reports from Moscow that the Soviet government formally protested to the Belgian Embassy in Moscow that Belgian authorities "are not taking measures to prevent the holding of an openly anti-Soviet act." This protest, released by Tass, followed a two-part series last week in Pravda, the Communist Party newspaper, which contained the warning to Soviet Jews that anyone advocating Zionist views would "automatically become an agent of international Zionism and hence an enemy of the Soviet people." This was seen as an ominous threat to those Soviet Jews who have been campaigning for emigration and against the Soviet policy towards the three million Jews in the USSR. Izvestia, the government paper, however, asserted that Soviet authorities would continue to permit Jews to emigrate to Israel.

Meanwhile, former Premier David Ben-Gurion, accompanied by Labor Party secretary Ariele Eliav, left from Tel Aviv today for Brussels to participate in the conference. Before his departure, Ben-Gurion told newsmen that Sadat's latest offer might hold hope for peace, but without guarantees of peace, no withdrawal should be made. The former Premier also disclosed that he was now working on a new volume of his memoirs. Ben-Gurion, addressing the Hadassah mid-winter conference on Saturday night, declared: "Israel has a worse enemy to fear than the Russians--China. According to the former Premier, China is a threat to Israel because her destruction fits in with China's aim of world domination. He also told the delegation, 'The Jewish State does not yet exist,' explaining that his remark was justified by the fact that only 17 percent of the world Jewish population live in Israel, a position he called "unique and dangerous."

Housing Plan Adopted; Kollek Says Critics Deal Only With Methods Not With Needs

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA)--The controversial housing plan to build three satellite cities around Jerusalem was tonight adopted unanimously by the City Council. There was only one abstention. A resolution adopted by the Council stated that the municipality regarded the rapid building up of the Jerusalem area as a national project of prime importance. It added that in view of this importance it was the government's duty to bear the burden of establishing the infrastructure required for the new housing developments. The plan calls for three areas around Jerusalem containing 35,000 housing units for 122,000 people. These areas are East Jerusalem, where the Government House is currently the seat of the United Nations here; the area of Sharafat; and the Nabi Sawwil area. The plans have come under attack from architects and town planners who claim the multi-family dwellings would destroy the unique character of Jerusalem. In addition, the U.S. State Department expressed its displeasure last week by noting that the plans' "unilateral actions" tend to be regarded "as changing the status of the city" at a time when the Jarring talks are under way and the future of the city has to be decided in the peace talks.

Mayor Teddy Kollek, in his address to the Council, said that the criticism levelled at the building plans had not contained any denial of the need to build housing but had only concerned itself with the methods. He added that where it was felt necessary to change the city's master plan for aesthetic reasons it should be amended. Kollek, however, took issue with the approach by the Housing Minister, Zeev Sharef, for pressing for the adoption of his ministry's mass housing construction even over the opposition of the municipality. Kollek said that the question of the future shape of the city was the city's prerogative. It was Sharef's announcement last week that the housing plan was essentially an effort to assure a Jewish majority in that city and for Jerusalem to remain a united city under Israeli control, that led to the State Department criticism. (At the United Nations, Secretary General U Thant criticized Israel, in a report to the Security Council last Thursday released last Friday, for what he termed her failure to confirm that construction efforts in Jerusalem are not affecting the Government House. Israel's Ambassador Yosef Tekoah declared in a press statement, not a message to Thant, that construction efforts in Jerusalem "in no way" affect Government House. He said that since the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967, "the city's development has made great strides (and has) benefited all residents of the city.")

Labor Israel Conclave Urges U.S. Support Israel; Continues Protests For Soviet Jewry

NEW YORK, Feb. 21 (JTA)--The plight of Jews in the Soviet Union and the efforts to develop a peaceful solution to the problems of the Middle East were central themes today of the annual mid-winter conference of the National Committee for Labor Israel. Principal speakers at the luncheon session, attended by 800 delegates, were Leon H. Keyserling, Washington economist and president of the National Committee, and Dr. William A. Wexler, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major National Jewish Organizations. A resolution on the Middle East adopted at the conference, stated that with the resumption of talks under United Nations Mideast representative Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, there was hope "that at long last steps will be taken to attain a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. However, in view of a long history, the conference cannot be without misgivings as to the intentions of Egypt and the Soviet Union, considering the blatant violations of the ceasefire agreement and the constant threats still emanating from high Arab sources against the security and very existence of the State of Israel." The resolution on Soviet Jewry stated: "This earnest protest of Jews and non-Jews at last has broken the silence surrounding conditions in which the Jews of the Soviet Union must struggle for their survival as a people."

The resolution noted that the protest had effected a commutation of the death sentence imposed on two of the Jews at the Leningrad trials, but "this act of clemency is not enough to mitigate our growing concern about the fate of three million Jews within the Soviet Union. It is therefore imperative that the protests on behalf of Russian Jewry be continued by the free world, until the anti-Jewish and anti-Israel campaign ceases and until Jews are allowed to emigrate freely to the State of Israel." In an address to the conference, Keyserling declared: "Only an America which maintains its lead in terms of international power can exert its influence fully toward ultimate and enduring peace. This is the supreme meaning to America's Jews and non-Jews of the critical situation in the Middle East." The economic and political resources, and "the potential military strength of the United States, must be exerted in the Middle East and elsewhere." Dr. Wexler told the conference: "The evolution and growth of the State of Israel is inconceivable without the pioneering effort of Histadrut. Histadrut's contribution has been in three areas: Developing Israel; attracting to Zionism multitudes of Jewish socialists abroad who have broken with Jewish religious tradition; and enlisting for Zionism and for Israel support of the world labor movement."

Two representatives of Histadrut, the Israel labor federation, told the conference delegates that the constructive task of developing the country goes on despite the no-war, no-peace climate. Uzi Bloch, a Jerusalem attorney and liaison officer of Histadrut and the American trade union movement, stated that the 1,100,000 organized workers in Israel constitute the "backbone of a new democratic society" that is unique in the Middle East. Uri Raviv, director of the Amal network of 32 vocational schools under Histadrut auspices, reported that "technical and vocational" training in the 1970s would receive high priority in the effort to develop a solid social structure and economic base. In a separate report, Dr. Sol Stein, executive vice-president of the Israel Histadrut Foundation stated that in its first decade the Foundation had passed the \$20 million mark, and had set a target of \$50 million to be reached by 1975.

Communist Party Leader Says Anti-Zionism Is Deteriorating Into Anti-Semitism

LONDON, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Umberto Terracini, the 76-year-old Italian Communist leader, said on television here that anti-Zionism is deteriorating into anti-Semitism and must be condemned. He participated in a discussion of anti-Semitism with French writer Jean Daniel; Sen. Giovanni Leone, an Italian Jewish leader; Augusto Egri. Terracini also termed a drastic solution to "the Jewish problem" the policy of Arab governments of expelling their Jewish citizens and confiscating their property.

SPECIAL JTA INTERVIEW**LEONID RIGERMAN COMES 'HOME' TO AMERICA
By GEORGE FRIEDMAN, JTA Staff Reporter**

NEW YORK, Feb. 21 (JTA)--"It's not real. It's probably a post card I'm looking at. I want to see everything here, everything here." Leonid Rigerman had come "home" to America. The Soviet Jew, whose efforts to break the Kremlin's emigration barriers had brought him widespread attention and encouragement in the West, spoke today to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency correspondent in the apartment of Rabbi Steven Riskin of Lincoln Square Synagogue. Jacob Birnbaum, head of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, noted afterward that the Center for Russian Jews, headed by Rabbi Riskin, and the SSSJ had been instrumental in effecting Rigerman's emigration. The 30-year-old computer programmer alighted with his mother, Mrs. Esther Rigerman, from a Pan American jet at John F. Kennedy International Airport at midnight Saturday. He had been expected to arrive at 10 p.m., but the flight was delayed because of what a Pan Am spokesman said had been "mechanical troubles in Moscow." Rigerman--small, slightly built, quiet-spoken, almost frog-looking--attended today's interview in a dark brown suit, a multi-colored yet sedate tie, frameless glasses and a black yarmulke. He smiled often and broadly. His pointed beard was neatly trimmed. He looked so biblical that one observer inadvertently addressed him as "rabbi."

He had been born 30 years ago to a Brooklynite mother whose socialist husband had insisted before Leonid's birth that his wife live with him in the "Soviet Paradise." Leonid became a computer programmer. And then he became aware of his Jewish heritage--so aware that he began to agitate for his freedom from what he deemed official Soviet anti-Semitism. Several months ago, he tried to enter the United States Embassy in Moscow to assert American citizenship on the grounds that his mother was American-born. The Soviet government, insisting he was a Russian subject and not eager to let the world see that not everyone considers the Soviet Fatherland a Paradise, had the authorities block him physically. He tried three more times, and three more times was blocked. But thanks to the efforts of the U.S. State Department--goaded by legislators, Jewish leaders, public opinion and Rigerman's lawyer, New York City official Daniel Greer--the Soviet Jew was granted U.S. citizenship last Dec. 19.

Rigerman Thankful For State Department Aid; Scores UN As A Do-Nothing Organization

"I want to rest a little and, well, to look around," Rigerman told the JTA. He had not yet made arrangements for permanent living quarters or employment. He said he had already met his 57-year-old uncle, Louis Michael of the Bronx, but not his ill, 87-year-old grandfather, Jacob Michael, also of the Bronx. He had been greeted by numerous other relatives here, he said, and on the way to the interview had strolled along some of the city's streets with the similarly yarmulke'd Greer. Rigerman offered thanks to the State Department for its aid and for the score of emigrations as a do-nothing organization that has been particularly ineffective in ameliorating the plight of Soviet Jews. He said that probably around 400,000 of the estimated 3.5 million Soviet Jews were anxious to leave their country immediately, but were being rebuffed by Red tape. Asked whether that meant that the great majority of Soviet Jews want to stay where they are, Rigerman demurred. They are, he said, "just waiting for us to break the way out," and will assert themselves "as soon as they know that nothing is going to happen to them."

Rigerman discounted claims by the Jewish Defense League that all Soviet Jews endorse the tactics of that militant organization. Jewry, he noted, is not monolithic. Asked how Americans can help the cause of Soviet Jews, he urged them to "speak out" and create a wave of verbal and diplomatic pressure that the image-conscious Kremlin cannot ignore. Having achieved his goal of reaching his Promised Land, Rigerman's thoughts were on the future. "I want to see it," he said of this country. "I want to see as much as I can. I want to feel it, you see. I want to live through it." He put out his hand and smiled as the JTA correspondent, elder son of a Russian immigrant, closed the interview with "spasibo," the Russian word for "thank you."

Some 3,000 Persons Stage Rally To Dramatize Plight Of Soviet Jews

LONG ISLAND, N.Y., Feb. 21 (JTA)--Close to 3,000 Long Island residents of all faiths participated today in a unique "Prison Camp Supper" to dramatically protest Soviet oppression of Jews. The event, staged at Mitchell Field in Garden City, sponsored by the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry, attempted to focus attention on the entire Soviet Jewry problem and the intolerable conditions under which Soviet prisoners live. According to Inez Weissman, coordinator of the "Prison Supper," all participants "assumed the status of Soviet prison camp inmates, in order to create a spirit of sharing the suffering of Soviet Jewry." Entire families, under the eyes of "camp guards," ate a 300 calorie meal, consisting of beet soup and black bread. Every man, woman and child received facsimile identification cards which all Russian Jews must carry, and will keep these cards as a symbolic link with all Soviet Jews.

Among those addressing the participants were County Executive Ralph G. Caso who proclaimed the day as "Soviet Jewry Day"; Lester L. Wolff, Nassau County Congressman; Mrs. Alla Rusinek, a 21-year-old Soviet Jew who recently emigrated to Israel; Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum of the American Jewish Committee; William Korey of B'nai B'rith, and Morris Brafman, president of the International League for the Repatriation of Russian Jews. Mrs. Rusinek presented a moving account to her listeners of the plight of Soviet Jewry and her personal ordeal of emigration. The audience of young and old, men and women, religious and non-religious--appeared visibly moved, and some women wept openly and unrestrainedly. Mrs. Rusinek said that prior to the Six-Day War, she had not even been aware of the existence of the Jewish State. After that period, she said, she and other young Jews, who had previously felt that they had no homeland of their own, began studying Hebrew and thought earnestly of settling in Israel.

During the "supper," a 30-foot banner was unveiled, reading "If 2,000 Soviet Jews are permitted to emigrate annually it will take 175 years for all to leave...We will not wait that long..." A Committee spokesman disclosed that the banner will travel throughout Long Island and be displayed in synagogues, churches and organization offices "until the number of Russian Jews permitted to emigrate is increased." Another highlight of the event was the signing of a 600-foot "Scroll of Liberty."