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Some 100 Soviet Jews Stage Sit-In At Supreme Soviet Building; Police Clear Them Out

NEW YORK, March 10 (JTA)--More than 100 Soviet Jews staged a sit-in this morning in the reception room of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow, vowing to stay until there was action on their emigration applications, according to reports reaching here. Several hours after they began their sit-in police surrounded the building and sealed it off by locking the doors. When the police entered the conference room they found the Jews reading prayers in Hebrew and several of them translating it into Russian for those who did not understand Hebrew. Russian authorities turned out the lights in the conference room and police gave the demonstrators two minutes to clear out. There were no reports of arrests. Estimates of the number of demonstrators ranged from 102 to 110. Most of them--some 60 to 90--were said to be from Riga, Latvia, with the others from Kovno and Vilna, Lithuania; Lvov, the Ukraine; the Caucasus, which includes Tbilisi, and probably Moscow. One report said that 45 Vilna Jews were sitting-in at the Central Committee building.

The Riga Jews reportedly at the Presidium were said to include Rivka Aleksandrovich, mother of imprisoned activist Ruth Aleksandrovich; Gershon Valk, said to have been applying for emigration permission for 14 years; and Eva Mendelevich, mother of Yosif M. Mendelevich, who was sentenced to 10 years in the Leningrad "Leningrad Trials." Yosif Mendelevich is the brother of another arrested, Meri Mendelevich Khanokh, whose husband, Leib G. Khanokh, was sentenced to 13 years at Leningrad. Today's reported demonstration is the fourth of its kind in the past two weeks. A group of 24 to 30 Soviet Jews sat-in at the Supreme Soviet on Feb. 24 and again on March 1. Twenty-four Riga Jews reportedly sat-in at the OVIR (visa) office in Riga on Feb. 26. These demonstrations are unprecedented. Some of those at the Supreme Soviet today said they would go on a hunger strike. The sit-in comes three weeks before the opening of the Soviet Communist Party congress in Moscow. The Kremlin is believed to be embarrassed at the recent series of major demonstrations by Jews, especially at this time.

20 Soviet Jews Arrive In Vienna; Newsman Describes 'Mini-Exodus'

Meanwhile, a flight of Jews who were allowed out of the Soviet Union made its way today to Vienna. CBS newsman David Levy was on the plane. His remarks were heard today on the CBS Radio Network. Levy said he thought about those they left behind in Russia, "darkened the spirits of the 20-odd Jewish men, women and children who landed here in Vienna this evening (Wednesday). The flight from Moscow in a Tuplev-134 stopped over in Kiev on the way, picking up more Jewish families there, as customs formalities were undergone too. Both in Moscow and in Kiev, Soviet officialdom was absolutely correct, polite and businesslike with not a hint of meanness. Observing them in action, you would never think that this mini-exodus of Jews from the Soviet was the hot international issue that it is. Even though the flight was only to Vienna, on every pink exit visa the words "destination Israel for permanent residence" appeared--magic long-awaited words but not without their price in heartache for those few Soviet Jews whose long dream has just started to come true."

Board Of Rabbis Protests Reagan's Dismissal Of Three Rabbis As Discriminatory

LOS ANGELES, Calif., March 10 (JTA)--The Southern California Board of Rabbis, based in this city, has protested California Gov. Ronald Reagan's plan to dismiss the three full-time Jewish chaplains for the state's 14 mental hospitals, ostensibly for economic reasons. Rabbi Harry Hyman, director of chaplaincy for the Board, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency by telephone today that Reagan's deletion of the Jewish chaplaincies from his proposed 1971-72 budget was "purely discriminatory." He noted that the Governor proposes the retention of the more than 30 full-time Catholic and Protestant chaplains. Rabbi Hyman condemned Reagan's endorsement of the Department of Mental Health's proposal that as there are not enough Jewish mental patients in the state to justify three full-time Jewish chaplains, their duties should be taken over by local rabbis.

That, said Rabbi Hyman, would be "totally ineffective," as the chaplains' duties also include family counseling, welfare guidance and various other tasks. "Which self-respecting rabbi with a full congregation can accept this?" he asked. Hearings on Reagan's budget will be held in Sacramento within a few weeks. The Jewish chaplains are assured of their jobs until at least July 1. On Monday, Percy Moore, a black who is executive director of Oakland's anti-poverty program and president of the California Community Action Program Directors Association, charged that the planned elimination of the Jewish chaplains was "nothing more than a blatant act of anti-Semitism that is right in line with other recent acts of the Governor that discriminate against the poor and the sick, and with special impact on those of the minority groups." Rabbi Hyman identified the three Jewish chaplains as Rabbi Eugene Gruenberger of Los Angeles, who has held the post for 18 years; Rabbi Harry Levenberg of Mountainview, Calif., and Rabbi Seymour (Sholom) Stern of Norwalk, Calif.

Mrs. Meir Says Sadat's Readiness To Reach Peace Accord Is An Ultimatum

TEL AVIV, March 10 (JTA)--Premier Golda Meir contended today that Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's expressed readiness to reach a peace agreement with Israel actually constituted an ultimatum rather than a negotiation move because it was conditioned on a prior total withdrawal by Israel from the occupied territories. Speaking at a question-and-answer meeting with students at the Haifa Technion, Mrs. Meir said also that while Israel was ready to enter negotiations with Egypt without preconditions, Egypt in its position statements through United Nations emissary Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring, had made it clear it was not ready for negotiations on a reciprocal basis. She reiterated that Israel, in

presenting a peace program through Dr. Jarring, had said again it was ready to "withdraw to secure, agreed and recognized borders" and also that "we are not withdrawing to the June 4 (1967) borders" in existence before the Six-Day War. But Mrs. Meir added, "we did not say that's that and the Egyptians should sign." She stressed that Israel was ready "to enter negotiations on every single item of a peace agreement but we are not prepared to accept preconditions, definitely not a precondition that would bring us back to the June 4 borders." She said it was those borders that were established by the Arabs on June 5 and that "it was not because of the Arabs that they did not succeed in destroying those borders and what is across them." Mrs. Meir added Israel wanted borders that "will be good not only for defense, if and when we are attacked, but borders that would deter any Arab ruler from trying to attack us." She said Israel sought conditions that were essential for true peace but nothing more.

Ribicoff: Big Four, Security Council Assurance Of Mideast Peace Is Insufficient

WASHINGTON, March 10 (JTA)--Sen. Abraham A. Ribicoff has advised Congress that "United Nations or multi-power guarantees have notably failed to keep the peace in the past," and stressed that "Security Council or Big Four assurances of a Middle East settlement are no substitute for direct negotiations and mutual expressions of peaceful intentions." In that connection, the Connecticut Democrat charged that President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, like his predecessor, the late Gamal Abdel Nasser, "speaks in one voice for Western consumption and in a much different voice to his own people--and to Palestinian terrorist leaders." Ribicoff, speaking on the floor of the Senate, also accused the State Department of "hovering on the brink of committing a tragic foreign policy blunder" by advocating Israeli withdrawal to its June 4, 1967, borders with only "insubstantial" changes. "In return," he said, "Israel is being offered only vague promises by the Arabs and uncertain assurances by the United Nations and the United States" that "cannot bring lasting peace to the Middle East." Ribicoff implored President Nixon to "undertake an urgent review of our current Middle East policies before irreparable damage is done to American interests." Minority leader Hugh Scott, Republican of Pennsylvania, told the Senate yesterday that President Nixon's rejection of an imposed settlement gave Israel "a degree of latitude" in which to participate in "meaningful peace negotiations."

Four Terrorists Receive Life Sentences; Five Terrorists Given 15-25 Years In Prison

TEL AVIV, March 10 (JTA)--Four life sentences were pronounced by Israeli military courts in Gaza and Hebron today. The Gaza tribunal sentenced two Bedouins, Mouhamed Abu Souwarka, 31, and Hassan Ali Halafat, 22, to life terms for spying for Egypt. The pair was captured in Sinai while on a sabotage mission against Nahal Dikla, an Israeli settlement in the northern end of the peninsula. They were both reportedly trained in intelligence work and sabotage. They confessed to all the charges after initially denying them at their trial. Sentenced by the Hebron court were Ali Ashtraif, 31, and Mahmoud Danhash, 21, members of a terrorist gang that kidnapped and murdered seven Arab elders from a small village in order to breed "respect" for their gang. They were captured in a clash with an Israeli patrol during which one Israeli officer was killed. Other members of the gang received shorter sentences. Five Arab terrorists, captured Jan. 1, on the shores of Akhziv, north of Nahariya in northern Israel, were also sentenced today to long prison terms. Four of the terrorists received sentences of 25 years, while one received a 15 year sentence. The five were found guilty of attempting to enter Israel by sea for the purpose of kidnapping an Israeli citizen who was to be exchanged in return for the release of captured Arab terrorists.

French, Russian Leaders Confer in Paris And Moscow On Mideast Situation

PARIS, March 10 (JTA)--President Georges Pompidou conferred with Soviet Ambassador Valerian A. Zorin for an hour today on the Middle East stalemate and a big-power role in a solution. Zorin, who has represented the USSR here since 1965, was Soviet ambassador to the United Nations from 1960 to 1962. Also today, French Ambassador Roger Seydoux called on Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko in Moscow. Both meetings were held within the framework of the special "protocol" signed by the two countries during Pompidou's recent visit to Russia. The agreement calls for regular consultations on political matters. It was understood that both of today's meetings were sought by the USSR and were aimed at drawing France's attention to what the Kremlin considers the "gravity" of the Mideast situation and the necessity for diplomatic initiatives to prevent a breakdown of the Jarring talks.

Israel's Permanent Retention Of Sharm el-Sheikh Vital To Peace

LONDON, March 10 (JTA)--Premier Golda Meir of Israel contended in a taped television interview today that Israel's permanent retention of the Sharm el-Sheikh strongpoint in southern Sinai was vital to peace in the Middle East. Sharm el-Sheikh commands the Straits of Tiran which give Israel's port of Eilat access to the sea. It was occupied by Israeli forces during the June, 1967 Six-Day War. Mrs. Meir made her remark when asked by interviewer Peter Snow whether she endorsed Defense Minister Moshe Dayan's recent statement that he would prefer to keep Sharm el-Sheikh without peace than to have peace without Sharm el-Sheikh. She said, "Peace in the Middle East and Sharm el-Sheikh are inexorably bound up. We do not want to have a repetition of what happened last time (the Egyptian blockade). Without Sharm el-Sheikh guarding the approaches to our southern ports, peace would be meaningless."

Police Investigate Two Killings In Gaza Strip Refugee Camps

TEL AVIV, March 10 (JTA)--Israeli police are investigating two killings in Gaza Strip refugee camps during the past 24 hours. An Israeli patrol shot to death a resident of Rafah early this morning when he tried to escape after being stopped as a curfew violator. Police are seeking unknown assassins after the body of a 30-year-old man was found near his home in the Shatti refugee camp. Shots were heard in the camp during the night. The body of a 25-year-old man was found in the Nuezatrath refugee camp. Jordanian Army forces battled Palestinian guerrillas for two hours last night in the Jordan Valley. Residents of the Israeli border settlement of Tirat Zvi reported hearing automatic weapon and mortar fire. The Jordanians used flares to light the combat area.

Eban Says There is Neither A Confrontation Nor Cooling-Off Of U.S.-Israel Relations

JERUSALEM, March 10 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Abba Eban declared in the Knesset today that there was neither a "confrontation" nor a cooling-off of relations between Washington and Israel. He praised President Nixon's "firm stand" against an imposed Middle East peace settlement. He disclosed that the President had reiterated that stand at his White House meeting yesterday with President Zolman Shazar, of Israel who is presently visiting the United States. He charged that Egypt's desire for an imposed settlement was the main stumbling block to peace. Speaking in reply to Haim Landau of the opposition Gahal faction, Eban conceded that there were differences of opinion between Israel and the U.S. on the question of borders. He said the U.S. never concealed its view that any border changes should be only minor ones. Eban sharply criticized the Soviet Union and France for refusing to join in a Four Power appeal for an extension of the Suez cease-fire which expired at midnight last Sunday. He called it a "shocking political and moral scandal." Moscow refused to go along with such an appeal apparently to avoid embarrassing President Sadat of Egypt who said his government would agree to no further extensions of the truce. Eban called Egypt's reply to UN mediator Gunnar Jarring's Feb. 8 questionnaire "quite unacceptable as a solution." He maintained that Israel's reply, on the other hand, offered "a wide range of possibilities."

Jewish Students, Cold, Hungry End Three Day Fast-Vigil; Hundreds Participated

NEW YORK, March 10 (JTA)--Jewish students who had been braving the biting cold of winter weather since Sunday afternoon ended today their 72-hour fast-vigil which they had conducted near the Soviet Mission to the United Nations. Several of the 25 students who formed the core of the vigil-fast, said they were "very tired and cold but very determined" to continue. Several of the students reported that they had been near fainting as a result of the fast but refused to leave the vigil. This afternoon they were joined by a large contingent of students from nearby Hunter College. During the three-day fast several hundred students from metropolitan area schools participated in the vigil in addition to some 150 youngsters from local yeshivot. The peaceful demonstration was sponsored by the Noar Mizrahi Youth Movement, the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, Yavneh, the National Council of Young Israel Young Adults, and student organizations at Columbia University, Yeshiva University, Long Island University, Hunter College, Brooklyn College, City College, Stern College for Women, and Herbert H. Lehman College. Various area rabbis addressed the students throughout the vigil. Tomorrow morning, the fasters will attend an address by Soviet Jewish emigre Leonid Rigerman at Park East Synagogue.

Sisco Denies U.S. Pressuring Israel To Withdraw To Pre-1967 Borders

WASHINGTON, March 10 (JTA)--Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asia affairs, today denied that the U.S. was pressuring Israel to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula. In a letter appearing in the March 10 issue of Near East Report, a weekly newsletter on American policy in the Near East published here, Sisco wrote that such reports "could not be more wrong." "It has never been our policy that the Security Council resolution of June, 1967 requires total Israeli withdrawal in all cases to the pre-June 5, 1967 line," Sisco wrote. "We recognize that in some instances the possibility must be kept open for some changes in the pre-June, 1967 armistice lines where a return to those lines would leave elements of that conflict unresolved." Sisco was replying to charges published in the March 3 issue of NER by Editor I.L. Kennen, that "We seem to be reliving 1957, when the Soviet Union and the U.S., competing for President Nasser's favor, forced Israel to withdraw completely from Sharm el-Sheikh and other positions occupied in the Sinal War. Once again, as in 1957, the Great Powers are pressuring Israel to surrender to Egyptian terms, total withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula."

In denying the charges, Sisco said "It has been fundamental to our policy since June, 1967, that there should be no return to the conditions of the past; that there must this time be a settlement which replaces armistice with peace based on direct and reciprocal commitments of the parties to each other, a settlement that recognizes Israel's borders and its sovereignty, and terminates all claims of belligerency and that includes security arrangements that are inherently durable." Sisco added that while the U.S. recognizes that borders may have to be changed, the U.S. believes such changes should be insubstantial since "in our judgement peace is not attainable on the basis of substantial alterations in the map of the area that was in existence before the June, 1967 war." Commenting on the Sisco letter, Kennen said "It is true that our government's stated objective may differ from 1957, in that we now seek a peace treaty. But our procedure may bar that objective." He said that by attempting to fix the Israeli-Egyptian border in advance of direct negotiations, the U.S. had circumscribed Israel's capacity to negotiate freely. "In that respect," he continued, "the difference between 1957 and 1971--to use the word of the day--may prove to be 'insubstantial'."

Gahal's Return To Coalition Ruled Out; Defeated In Move To Debate Mideast Moves

JERUSALEM, March 10 (JTA)--The return of Gahal to the coalition government was ruled out today by Premier Golda Meir. Replying to questions from students at the Haifa Technion she said if Gahal were to return it would require negotiation of a new government policy and the establishment of a new coalition. She said that this was not the time for such negotiations and that, moreover, the situation has not changed since Gahal decided to break with the coalition. In any event, Mrs. Meir added, Gahal has made no approaches for a return. Gahal chairman Menachem Beigin said last week that his party would be willing to consider conditions that might be offered by the government for rejoining the coalition. But he emphatically denied that he was hinting that Gahal wanted to return.

Gahal suffered a defeat in the Knesset today when a motion to debate recent moves on the Middle East was removed from the agenda by a 40-25 vote. The motion, introduced by Herut MK Haim Landau, demanded a debate on recent statements by President Nixon, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and UN Secretary General U Thant. Landau demanded that the government openly reject Nixon's view that any border changes must be "insubstantial" and urged the coalition to join with the opposition parties to launch a major propaganda campaign in the U.S. with a view to changing Washington's position on boundaries.

