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Sisco May Not Extend Israel Visit; Israelis Insist No UAR Troops In Pullback Area

JERUSALEM, Aug. 4 (JTA)--Contrary to previous expectations, United States Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J. Sisco will probably not extend his stay here for another week and will leave Friday, eight days after he arrived, informed sources said today. One possibility, they said, was that he would return home before visiting Egypt, and maybe even double back here between his Washington and Cairo stops. (In Washington, State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey said it was "highly unlikely" that Sisco would go to Egypt this time. See separate story.) American sources here had said earlier today that Sisco would remain in Israel an additional week because of resistance by Israeli officials to his reported proposals for Israeli "flexibility" on terms for an interim Israeli-Egyptian agreement on reopening the Suez. He is said to have recommended that Israel agree to a limited pull-back from her canal positions--between 20 and 25 miles--and a token Egyptian military reoccupation of the vacated area, in return for assurances of Egyptian readiness to extend the cease-fire--which will be one year old Saturday--for two to three years.

A report in the New York Times this morning that the Nixon Administration was pondering plans for a three to four year commitment to sell Israel an additional 100 jet warplanes was considered here a deliberate leak by the United States to indicate a promise of "compensation" to Israel for a more "flexible" attitude toward Sisco's proposals. The consensus of Israel's leaders was reported to be that the Sisco proposals were not satisfactory and that they will be rejected by Mrs. Meir but that the rejection will be phrased diplomatically. Details were lacking but the reports were that the turnaround will be phrased in a manner to give Sisco some leverage when and if he goes to Egypt to continue his efforts there for an interim Suez Canal agreement. The American sources also said Sisco apparently had not yet decided on a visit to Cairo when his talks here are completed. If he does go to Egypt, it was indicated, he is likely to go via Cyprus and be joined by Michael Stern, head of the State Department's Egyptian desk. Stern visited Cairo last month for a series of consultations with Donald Bergus, chief resident diplomat in Cairo, on the interim settlement proposals.

The Assistant Secretary conferred for 75 minutes today with Premier Golda Meir, Deputy Premier Yigal Allon, Foreign Minister Abba Eban, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, Ambassador to the U.S. Yitzhak Rabin, the U.S. envoy here, Walworth Barbour, and other officials. The reported plan for Egyptian troops to enter the parts of the Sinai evacuated by Israel was apparently the main stumbling block at the conference. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned that even the so-called doves of the left-wing Mapam Party were among the strong opponents of the plan. Mapam advocates withdrawal tied to demilitarization, as suggested in Security Council Resolution 242 of Nov. 22, 1967. Therefore, the proposed Egyptian canal crossing is as unacceptable to Mapam as to anyone else. Today's official communique noted the "continuing efforts" of the participants to reach agreement on a partial settlement. Tomorrow, Sisco will confer with Eban and other Foreign Ministry officials on matters not connected with the canal, such as loans and grants and other economic issues.

Story U.S. To Sell Israel Jets Viewed With Skepticism; Seen As 'Carrot' In Talks

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4 (JTA)--Knowledgeable sources here voiced skepticism today over a story today in the New York Times that the Nixon Administration was considering a proposal to modernize Israel's aging Air Force by agreeing to sell Israel as many as 110 jet planes over the next three to four years. White House and State Department spokesmen both said they had no information about any such plan. State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey described the report as "rather highly speculative." He added that Assistant Secretary Joseph J. Sisco did not take with him to Israel "any specific proposal regarding their (Israel's) military needs, including aircraft," although it was "entirely likely the subject would be discussed." The sources said that the reported proposal did not fit into anything that was known about Israeli-United States discussions on military assistance and dismissed the story as possibly "wishful thinking." Other sources, however, indicated that there was some basis for the Times report that such a plan was under consideration as a political action to give Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco a powerful "carrot" in his as yet unsuccessful efforts in Israel to persuade Israeli leaders to be more "flexible" on U.S. proposals for an interim Israeli-Egyptian agreement to permit reopening of the Suez Canal.

20 Jews Arrested In Kiev, Wilna Are Sentenced For Hooliganism

NEW YORK, Aug. 4 (JTA)--The 20 Jews arrested in Kiev and Wilna on Sunday when they tried to commemorate Tisha b'Av by visiting Jewish mass graves have been sentenced for "hooliganism," Jewish sources said here today. The 10 Kiev Jews received 15-day terms, and the 10 from Wilna were offered similar terms or fines. The Kiev Jews were identified by the sources as Aron Nalvett, Isak Kleisinger, Nathan Remenik, Leichenko Velednitskaya, Edward Davidovich, Abram Zingerman, Igor Raiz, Esvai Rabinovich, Leonid Governovskiy and an individual surnamed Vanseter. They were charged with resisting the police. Meanwhile, Ilya Libman of Riga, who participated in the recent hunger strike in Moscow, returned there to press for an exit visa. He was detained half a day, then ordered back to Riga and was warned not to continue demanding emigration, the sources said.

Former Knesset Member, Theologian Charge Israeli Is Intellectually Totalitarian

TEL AVIV, Aug. 4 (JTA)--A former Knesset member who is now a New York resident and an American theologian touched off spirited exchanges last night at the American-Israeli dialogue with charges that Israel was "intellectually totalitarian" and that American Jews were psychologically "over-committed" to Israel. The charge of totalitarianism was made by Hillel Kook, the former Knesset

member who was also a leader of the pre-State underground Irgun. He told the participants meeting in Rehovot for the American Jewish Congress-sponsored talks that Israel had "too little dissent, too little discussion of vital issues, too little debate on fundamental questions." Arthur A. Cohen, the New York theologian, philosopher and author of numerous articles on Judaism and Jewish problems, elaborating his charge of over-commitment, asserted that the American Jewish community had to define its priorities in relation to Israel. The "crisis" of American Jewish life, he asserted, was the development of a belief that every phase of American Jewish behavior had to be measured "and validated" by its relationship to Israel. Vigorously challenging the Zionist axiom that a Jew can lead a full Jewish life only in Israel, Cohen asserted that "in fact, there is greater opportunity outside Israel to maintain one's Jewish identity without public scrutiny and surveillance." He added that "there is an enormous advantage in not living in the 'goldfish bowl' of Israel as far as leading a Jewish life is concerned."

Cohen argued that "an American Jew can live a rich and complex Jewish life without public visibility and without the need of public endorsement." In Israel, he contended, "this remains impossible. In part because Israel's society today demands not unity but unanimity." The result, he said, is that "there is a kind of monolithic aspect to Israeli society that needs a 'kulturkampf' to bring about change." Those views were strongly challenged by Prof. David Landes of Harvard University and by two Israelis -- Dan Leon of the Jewish Agency and author of several books on the kibbutz system, and Dr. Nathan Lerner, executive director of the Israeli branch of the World Jewish Congress. Prof. Landes asserted that the American attachment to Israel represented "a healthy instinct." He declared that the founding of Israel had been a "watershed" in American Jewish life, bringing about a change in the character of American Jews and opening "a new dimension" in diaspora life. Prof. Landes also argued that there was far more dissent and criticism in Israel than in any other new country in history. He criticized as "a gross distortion" the use of such "apocalyptic" language as "totalitarian" to describe Israeli intellectual life. Leon and Lerner agreed that there was "ample discussion" in Israel on many problems vital to Jewish life, though in some cases, they said, Israelis prefer to argue crucial issues in practical rather than in abstract terms.

McCloskey: Unlikely Sisco Will Go To Egypt But Possibility Not Ruled Out

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4 (JTA)--State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey said today it was "highly unlikely" that Assistant Secretary Joseph J. Sisco and Arab-Israel Country Director Alfred L. Atherton will go to Egypt after ending their diplomatic visit to Israel. Sisco "did not go to Israel with the intention of making Egypt his next stop," McCloskey said. But he did not rule out the possibility, recalling that Sisco's decision to return to Egypt during his Middle East mission in May was made "literally the night before." McCloskey stressed that the State Department has not ordered Sisco to go to Cairo after his current Israeli tour. Nor, he continued, is the Assistant Secretary carrying any American proposal "which we would expect the two sides to sign...that have to be accepted or rejected."

Labor Disputes in Hospitals, Construction, Ashdod Continue To Plague Israel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 4 (JTA)--The strike situation in Israel not only continued but worsened today. The striking government hospital physicians, supported by their colleagues at the municipal hospitals, decided to intensify their action today by not staffing the mother-and-child-care clinics. Additionally, as a result of the continuing action, hospital conditions are becoming increasingly unkempt and unsanitary. Only patients in serious danger are accepted. A cartoon shows a doctor closing his ambulance door to a patient and saying: "Not accepted--he is still breathing." Moreover, administrative physicians in the Health Ministry have as of today discontinued their medical reports and their participation in Ministry consultations. The external clinics are paralyzed, and patients are being directed to private practitioners, who already have an unprecedented workload.

Labor troubles increased at Ashdod Port too, with the refusal of customs officials to work overtime. As a result, the Independent Liberals have threatened to quit the coalition government unless it initiates a bill to curtail strikes in essential services and force arbitration in public services. The threat was made by Hillel Zeidel, head of the party's labor movement and a member of the Histadrut Executive. Israeli construction work has now been affected by labor problems too. Several projects here had to be halted because the strike of cement workers in Ramleh has reduced the cement output to one-sixth its normal flow. The Nesher Cement Company is considering the importation of Rumanian cement to meet the demand. On the positive side, the dispute at Lydda Airport ended today after the workers and the Communications Ministry reached an agreement.

West Bank Military Authorities Allow Area Mayors To Meet

JERUSALEM, Aug. 4 (JTA)--The military authorities in the West Bank agreed yesterday to allow the area's mayors to meet to discuss common problems--the first time approval has been given for such a request, after numerous rejections, since the Six-Day War. The mayors will convene Aug. 18 in Bet Sachur, a village near Bethlehem, to consider practical measures against the Lebanese-proposed Arab boycott of West Bank agricultural products. The chairman of the West Bank Chambers of Commerce will not participate in the meeting, which they consider a political maneuver that will only complicate the issue. They have instead requested a permit to hold their annual meeting in Bethlehem on Aug. 15 to discuss the same problem among themselves. The failure of the West Bank leaders to come to a mutual understanding has caused Hamdy Kanaan, former mayor of Nablus, to initiate a public drive for democratic elections in the occupied territory. He and his followers are soliciting West Bankers' signatures on a petition to that effect. A spokesman for the military authorities said that policy is to hold elections in the area only if the majority of the residents want them. So far, he said, the authorities are not convinced of such a desire. The discussion by the mayors about the Arab states' threat to boycott agricultural products from the West Bank as of next month will be raised by Lebanon at the Arab League meeting in Cairo in September.

Vice-President's Office Denies Agnew Carried Message From Sadat To Nixon

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4 (JTA)--The office of Vice-President Spiro Agnew today flatly denied a persistent report that Agnew had carried a communication to President Nixon from Egyptian President Anwar Sadat last month on his tour of African and Asian countries. The New York Times reported on August 1 that Agnew informed Nixon of Sadat's willingness to discuss a Mideast pact if the negotiators for Israel are "native Palestinian Jews." Agnew reportedly said he was "encouraged to relay" the Arab preference of dealing with a native who could be more "sensitive to Palestinian problems." The article noted that native-born Defense Minister Moshe Dayan was cited by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, a recent visitor to Cairo, as a logical prospect. Victor Gold, press secretary for Agnew, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that there was "no message from President Sadat that he wanted communicated back to Mr. Nixon. King Faisal communicated ideas to the Vice-President for President Nixon, but not from President Sadat." Gold said he could not disclose the substance of Agnew's discussions with the heads of state with whom he had met, but did acknowledge that Sadat's name had come up in them, adding, "obviously there could not be any discussion of the Middle East without bringing the United Arab Republic and Sadat into it." Gold further added that any suggestion the Vice-President's presence in Saudi Arabia or in Kuwait was for the purpose of substantive mediation in the Middle East was in error. He stated that the United States' role in the Middle East is being carried out by Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J. Sisco.

Bar-Ilan Special Curriculum Will Help Russian Jews Begin New Life

TEL AVIV, Aug. 4 (JTA)--Scholars at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, are undertaking a unique project to help newly arrived Russian immigrants begin their new life as Jews in their historic homeland. Nearly 100 Russian students are studying at Bar-Ilan, and they are encountering inevitable problems brought on by a vastly different social background than that of the Israelis. But, according to University Chancellor Dr. Joseph H. Lookstein, the biggest single problem is the language barrier. Some of the students know a little Hebrew which they gleaned in secret from "radical literature" or from furtive encounters in synagogues or back alleys. They speak of learning Hebrew words from a song or from photocasts of smuggled copies of the Hebrew textbook "Eleph Millim." But by and large they have relatively little knowledge of their Jewish language and heritage. Many of them have never read the Bible or especially the Talmud. As one Russian girl at the university said, "I had no idea what Talmud was. I had never seen one before I came to Israel."

Bar-Ilan scholars are making it possible for Russian students to begin catching up with their cultural heritage by providing Russian translations of the Talmud and the Bible. Previously it has not been possible for Russians to read these holy books in their native tongue. Now Bar-Ilan is providing these translations for the students to use in their Judaic studies, and, ultimately, to help Russian Jews all over Israel deal with their new culture. The translation project is only a part of Bar-Ilan's effort to help Russian students. The Absorption Committee of the Students' Union conducts orientation on Judaism and on Israel in their mother tongue. Regular trips to all parts of the country show the students something of life on kibbutzim and in villages, and they get to know Israel's natural sights and historical landmarks. Rabbi Mordecai Chanzin, adviser to Bar-Ilan's Russian students and himself a Russian Jew who spent 21 years in prison before being allowed to come to Israel, says the aim of the university's program is to give the students the opportunity to know and understand Israel and its life, and to help them become a part of that life.

Louk, 'The Man In The Trunk,' Released After Six Years Of 10-Year Sentence

TEL AVIV, Aug. 4 (JTA)--Mordecai Louk, the "man in the trunk" who was sentenced in 1965 to 10 years in prison for spying for Egypt, was released yesterday after serving just over six years. Louk was arrested in Rome in November, 1964, after being discovered, drugged and bound, in a "diplomatic mail" trunk destined for Cairo. The Moroccan-born Israeli, then 29, returned to Israel voluntarily, claiming he would feel secure there, but a three-man district court concluded that "he did so for fear of his life" and actually "had no sense of responsibility in an honest society." It developed that the Egyptian government had become dissatisfied with Louk's work and decided to spirit him back in the trunk. The defendant's plea was that he had agreed to spy for Egypt only to get out of jail, where he said he had been kept illegally for 21 months as an escaped Israeli. He claimed he fed Egypt only worthless information. His attorney was Shmuel Tamir, now the leader of the Free Center faction in the Knesset.

Evidence Found Edomites Infiltrated Negev At Close Of First Temple

TEL AVIV, Aug. 4 (JTA)--Evidence of the Edomites' infiltration into the Negev at the close of the First Temple era was uncovered by archaeologists of Tel Aviv University at the Tel Malhata site between Beersheba and Arad. This infiltration was described by the prophets Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Obadiah. An excavation group of 50 men, headed by Dr. Moshe Cohavi of Tel Aviv University, uncovered the Edomite settlement, including many pieces of pottery brought from across the Jordan. This find tends to support the theory that the Edomites were in control of the Negev shortly before the downfall of the Kingdom of Judea. The excavators also unearthed remnants of an Israeli city, originally settled in the tenth century B.C.E., whose name remains to be identified. Especially impressive were the fortifications of the city which include embankments and a wall 13 feet wide.

70 U.S. Teenagers Leave For Israel To Study For One Year

NEW YORK, Aug. 4 (JTA)--Seventy American youngsters between the ages of 15 and 17 leave for Israel this month to take a year of high school study in Israel as participants in the America-Israel Secondary School Program of the Department of Education and Culture of the World Zionist Organization, it was announced by Dr. Abraham P. Gannes, director of the Department of Education and Culture of the World Zionist Organization--American Section. They will attend three high schools in Israel. An additional group of 75 American high school students will leave on Sept. 1, to attend the Mollie Goodman Academic High School program of the Zionist Organization of America.

SPECIAL JTA INTERVIEW

MALICE-IN-WONDERLAND

By JOEL MANDELBAUM, JTA Staff Reporter

NEW YORK, Aug. 4 (JTA)--Before he was expelled from Russia by Soviet authorities last month, Irving Silverman learned during his short visit there that there is "remarkable sympathy" amongst Soviet non-Jews for their Jewish countrymen who want to emigrate. He also discovered that "surprisingly, many Soviet citizens are willing to talk"; that Soviet Jews seek accurate information about Israel; and that not all Soviet Jews want to leave Russia. Discussing his trip to Russia and the circumstances of his expulsion, Silverman, the 51-year-old associate chairman of the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry, indicated that whereas he travels abroad in order to interact with foreigners and ascertain their aspirations for the future, Soviet authorities apparently prefer that visitors to Russia confine themselves to past history as displayed in museums. For after 16 days of a scheduled 20-day trip there, he and Leonard Schuster, a member of the Greater Philadelphia Council on Soviet Jewry, were suddenly and swiftly expelled. According to the authorities, Silverman told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, the members of a Kiev synagogue protested that the two Americans had insulted them with fabrications about Jews not being free and equal in Russia and with suggestions that they leave Russia for Israel.

"I'm so damn indignant at what they did," said Silverman, who is also a vice-president of the United Synagogue of America. "I'm terribly angry that I was asked to leave. It's the worst frustration of all." He said he is very annoyed, too, that the Russian authorities refused to accept any response to the charges against him. He was not permitted to confront his accusers--supposedly the Kiev Jews--and he was not allowed to appeal the decision to expel him. Silverman says that contrary to the Soviet government's "lie" that Russians were antagonized by him, he found them anxious to meet him and his wife and talk to them about life in the United States and Israel. Insisting that he did not discuss politics while in Russia, Silverman says hundreds of Russians "came to me" recognizing "that I was not Russian" and initiated conversation. He said they were "glowing" and "proud that I wanted to spend time talking to them." But he says the Soviet authorities are "not anxious for (foreign) people to talk to their people" because they fear that although they feel they have accomplished much for their citizens, visitors will focus upon the problems still to be solved. Similarly, Silverman implied, because Soviet authorities are afraid that the exodus of many Jews will give a "black eye to the political system," they brand those Soviet Jews who want to leave "anti-Soviet," though the Soviet Jews' desire to emigrate is dictated by primarily non-political personal, human needs.

Jews Leave Russia Not For Sake Of Leaving But To Go To Israel

"Those Jews who wish to leave are not enemies of Russia or traitors," Silverman observed, "and their involvement with Russian politics is minimal." Most of them "are not interested in leaving the Soviet Union just to leave the Soviet Union," he said, "but to go to Israel." Some of the Soviet Jews interested in moving to Israel did express "some degree of concern over what (their) living conditions would be like" there, Silverman said. The Soviet government has allowed reports to filter back to them that indicate they would not be able to get jobs or apartments and that Israeli life would not be compatible with their tastes. Kol Israel, Israel's national broadcaster, is "their main source of Jewish news," Silverman said, "and the battle goes on between what Kol Israel says and what their own press and t.v. tells them." He said the question often becomes who yells loudest and last, and confusion results since the people "can't distinguish between fact and propaganda." Silverman said it is "a mistake to think that all Soviet Jews want to leave." As a result of Soviet policies, many Soviet Jews have become "so assimilated," he said, that they have lost all contact with any family outside of Russia and don't feel any Jewish identity except for the identification on their Soviet identity cards. He said they are "so estranged" from Jewish history and their Jewish heritage that they "don't know what it is to be Jewish." And, he said, they "appear reasonably happy in their work and location."

Noting that Soviet non-Jews sympathize with those Russian Jews who do want to emigrate, Silverman said one Russian non-Jew he spoke with compared the situation of such Soviet Jews to someone forced to play for a soccer team he doesn't want to play for. The non-Jew said the player should be allowed to join another team. Soviet Jews voluntarily expressed to Silverman their disapproval of violent tactics by those in Western countries who support their aims. He said they encouraged, instead, "peaceful and persistent efforts" to bring the plight of Soviet Jews to the attention of all authorities. Silverman said they "stressed the need for persistent expressions rather than occasional outbursts of concern separated by long pauses." They feel "the reminder should be daily," Silverman said. Asked if he considered harassment of Soviet officials in the U.S. a violent tactic, Silverman said harassment in order to communicate with people who refuse to open up normal channels of communication "is not necessarily violent." He said that "established, responsible Jewish organizations are not interested in violent, damaging or harmful actions against the Soviet government and people," and when Soviet authorities refuse to discuss the Soviet Jewish situation, they make harassment "necessary." Now, after returning from the Soviet Union, Silverman feels it is important to record "the day to day efforts of Jews to achieve their release from an oppressive, living situation" and to impress those efforts on the minds of more and more people around the world. Says Silverman, "If the Soviet Jew is not welcome in the Soviet Union, then he should be given the privilege to leave."

Military Tribunal Sentences Terrorist To 50 Years Imprisonment

TEL AVIV, Aug. 4 (JTA)--A military tribunal in Gaza today sentenced a 22-year-old terrorist to 50 years imprisonment at hard labor. Abdallah Suleiman Abu Nakara was charged with the murder of three local Arabs working in Israel, and for possession of firearms and ammunition. The mother of one of the murdered Arabs said she pleaded with Nakara not to kill her son, saying "Better kill me." She told the court that despite her pleas, the terrorist, known as "the merciless" murdered her son. The court stressed that this merciless terrorist cannot claim mercy.