



# daily news bulletin

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## RABIN SAYS ABSENCE OF DIRECT ISRAEL, EGYPT CONTACT CONTRIBUTED TO FAILURE OF RECENT NEGOTIATIONS

JERUSALEM, April 2 (JTA)--Premier Yitzhak Rabin attributes the failure of the bilateral talks with Egypt conducted by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger in large measure to the absence of direct contact between Israeli and Egyptian negotiators. Speaking on the Armed Forces Radio Station today, Rabin said that absence was "sorely felt" and was responsible for "misunderstandings" that occurred during the talks.

"The reasons for the misunderstandings lie mainly in the absence of direct Israeli-Egyptian contact. All through the negotiations we sought clarifications and sought direct contact, but this was rejected by Egypt," Rabin said. He said that Israel was not responsible for the suspension of the talks and still seeks to make progress toward peace "whether by way of an overall agreement at a reconvened Geneva conference or by way of an interim agreement with Egypt."

### Not Disturbed By U.S. Reassessment

Rabin said in his radio interview that Israel was not disturbed by the current American reappraisal of its Middle Eastern policy in the aftermath of the breakdown of Kissinger's negotiating efforts. "It is my belief that the U.S., when it holds a considered discussion on the reality that has come about, will respect the fact that her friend in the Middle East is independent both in its decisions and in its readiness to bear the consequences of these decisions," Rabin said.

He noted that there have been differences of opinion between Israel and the U.S. in the past and said he was confident that the "basis of friendship, understanding and common interests between our two countries remains firm and will make it possible to come through the present differences that perhaps exist in the present time."

### No Comment On Egypt's Call for Parley

Meanwhile, there was still no official comment here on Egypt's formal request to reconvene the Geneva conference. The request was conveyed yesterday by Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy to U.S. Ambassador Hermann Eilts and Soviet Ambassador Vladimir Polyakov in Cairo. The U.S. and the Soviet Union are co-chairmen of the Geneva conference. Fahmy told reporters that Egypt would welcome the attendance of Britain, France and any non-aligned nations at the conference to prevent its polarization and stalemate. He said that President Anwar Sadat was in contact with a number of heads of state over reconvening the Geneva talks.

The official Middle East News Agency reported in Cairo yesterday that after meeting with Fahmy the Soviet Ambassador cabled representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The contents of the cable were not disclosed but they are believed to relate to the Geneva conference.

## U.S. CONFIRMS EGYPT'S PARLEY REQUEST

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, April 2 (JTA)--The State De-

partment confirmed today that the U.S. government has received official notification from Egypt that it seeks to have the Geneva peace conference reconvened and said that the U.S. would be in touch with its conference co-chairman, the Soviet Union, and with other parties to it regarding a date and other possible participants.

Department spokesman Robert Anderson, who made the announcement, said he would not discuss the nature of the Egyptian message other than the fact that Egypt made the request. He said there was no estimate at this time of a date and that no date was suggested by Egypt. Questioned on reports that the United Kingdom and France might be invited by Arab countries to participate in the Geneva talks, Anderson said the U.S. obviously would be talking with the Soviet Union and other parties, but he would not discuss U.S. views on that aspect.

State Department sources were quoted yesterday as cautioning that a Middle East peace settlement would be difficult to achieve at the Geneva conference but that the U.S. was ready to go along with the multi-national forum.

The sources referred to Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger's news conference last Wednesday when he said peace negotiations were more effectively dealt with on a step-by-step basis. He acknowledged the failure of that approach last month and observed that the Mideast issues would now have to be taken up "comprehensively, under more difficult circumstances," meaning the Geneva parley.

## JEWS IN SOME EIGHT SOVIET CITIES IN HUNGER STRIKES PROTESTING AGAINST EXILE SENTENCES

SARASOTA, Fla., April 2 (JTA)--Eight Minsk Jewish activists have gone on a three-day hunger strike to protest the exile sentence given Mark Nashpitz and Boris Tsitilonok, Mrs. Genya Intrator, national vice-president of the Canadian Committee for Soviet Jewry, said today. Mrs. Intrator, who is vacationing here, said she called the Minsk group last night and learned that because of the disruption of the activists' telephones they had not learned of the sentencing Monday until yesterday morning.

The Minsk activists, led by Col. Lev Ovsishcher, also told her that similar hunger strikes are being conducted by Jews in Moscow, Leningrad, Odessa, Kiev, Vilna, Kishinev and possibly other cities. Some 100 Jews are believed to be involved in the hunger strikes.

Mrs. Intrator said that after it was learned on March 27 that the trial of the two men would be held March 31, John Roberts, the Liberal MP from her Toronto Riding, applied for an emergency visa to attend the trial as an observer. But he was told the visa would take 10 days so he cancelled his trip since he would not have been able to arrive before the trial.

## U.S. TRYING TO CONVINCE OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO PERSUADE ISRAEL TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE IN TALKS

WASHINGTON, April 2 (JTA)--Officials high in the Ford Administration appear to be mounting a concerted but discreet campaign to convince other governments that Israel had been intransi-

gent during the latest effort by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger to help achieve a second-stage accord between Egypt and Israel, and to urge other governments to persuade Israel to adopt a more flexible position.

This campaign, according to sources, emerged yesterday after a meeting between Secretary of State Kissinger and Allan J. MacEachen, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs. Kissinger reportedly urged MacEachen to use his influence to urge Israel to adopt greater flexibility in the negotiating process. In addition, according to sources, the view that Israel was less than flexible during Kissinger's latest shuttle effort was also transmitted through Administration channels to the governments of West Germany and Holland.

However, State Department spokesman Robert Anderson told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that "no request has been made to any government to intervene with Israel in any way."

Publicly, Kissinger has refused to apportion blame to either Egypt or Israel for the breakdown of the latest talks. Privately, however, he is known to have expressed some bitterness over what he considers to be a hard stand by Israel. President Ford expressed anger with Israel publicly, most notably in a March 24 interview in Hearst newspapers in which he blamed Israeli intransigence for the failure of Kissinger's latest effort.

#### Brain Trusting Reassessment

Meanwhile, Kissinger met yesterday with a group of prominent public figures to obtain ideas from them on how to advance Mideast negotiations following the breakdown of his mediation efforts. Participants in the private three-hour session included George W. Ball, former Undersecretary of State, George P. Shultz, former Treasury Secretary, David Rockefeller, chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank, Dean Rusk, former Secretary of State, W. Averell Harriman, former Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Robert S. McNamara, former Defense Secretary, and David K. E. Bruce, presently assigned to NATO.

The meeting was seen as part of the Administration's current reassessment of U.S. policy in the Middle East. There was no immediate information as to the specifics discussed during the meeting nor whether any decisions were taken. A similar meeting is scheduled for tomorrow before Kissinger flies to Palm Springs, California to consult with Ford on the Mideast and Indochina. None of those present at yesterday's meeting are considered Mideast experts although many of them have dealt with that area in public discussions.

#### ISRAELI WRITERS URGE JEWISH WRITERS TO RALLY AROUND ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, April 2 (JTA)--The biannual meeting of the Israeli Writers Association ended last night with an appeal to Jewish writers all over the world to rally around Israel and support its position and cause. Another resolution urged writers in general to act according to their conscience with regard to the Middle East conflict. Resolutions were also adopted protesting the genocide conducted against the Kurds by the Iraqi regime and in Indochina.

The two-day conference was a subdued affair, attended mostly by "old guard" Israeli writers with few young faces present. The main theme of the gathering was the need for unity among Israeli writers. Dissenting writers who established a separate union a few months ago which soon

dissolved were urged to return to the fold.

#### ARMY PREPARES FOR RETURN FROM EGYPT OF BODIES OF ISRAELI SOLDIERS

TEL AVIV, April 2 (JTA)--The Israeli Army Chaplaincy Corps is preparing for the difficult task of identifying and later reburying the remains of 39 Israeli soldiers killed in the Yom Kippur War which are being returned to Israel by Egypt April 8, it was reported last night.

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat disclosed last Saturday that the bodies of 39 Israeli soldiers who were killed during the Yom Kippur War and were buried in a mass grave would be returned to Israel. Israel lists 56 soldiers as still missing in the Sinai.

The transfer will be held in the middle of the United Nations buffer zone in the Sinai with Israeli, Egyptian, Red Cross and United Nations Emergency Force officials participating. The soldiers will be given a full military funeral.

#### SHELEPIN VISIT A FIASCO

LONDON, April 2 (JTA)--Alexander Shelepin, the Soviet trade union boss, Politburo member and former head of the KGB (secret police) left Britain today almost surreptitiously by way of Glasgow, cutting what was to have been a four-day visit to two days and leaving the general impression of a fiasco, especially on the part of the leaders of the Trade Union Congress who had invited him here.

At his only press conference, to which several of Britain's most important newspapers were not invited, Shelepin blamed "Zionists" mainly for the widespread demonstrations against him. "There was a noisy campaign against me and the Soviet Union by Zionists and others," he charged. Although British Jewry was bitterly opposed to the visit of the man they hold largely responsible for the anguish of many Soviet Jews seeking exit visas, the biggest and noisiest demonstrations against Shelepin were staged by Ukrainians, Lithuanians and other Soviet ethnic minorities in Britain.

They carried placards branding the ex-KGB chief a "murderer." Relatively few Jewish groups demonstrated because of the Passover holiday. A small group of Jewish women carried placards urging the release of "prisoners of Zion"--Russian Jews imprisoned for seeking exit visas.

#### Mass Rally Slated

The Board of Deputies of British Jews plans to hold a mass demonstration Friday. Participants will march from a London synagogue to the Soviet Embassy where they will try to meet with the Ambassador. A spokesman for the Board told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency "We are demonstrating against the treatment of Jewish activists in the Soviet Union and not against Shelepin in particular, though his visit here is most unwelcome."

Labor MP Greville Janner, described Shelepin's visit as "a Ruritanian farce," alluding to the use of decoys to divert the attention of demonstrators as the Russian official moved about London. The visit did not strengthen detente but in fact, weakened it, Janner claimed. Len Murray, secretary general of the TUC, was booed and mocked by a large crowd today. He was derided as the man who was fooled by a former KGB chief posing as a trade unionist.

#### McGOVERN SAYS STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM ABOUT PLO ARE 'INCORRECT'

WASHINGTON, April 2 (JTA)--Sen. George

McGovern (D,SD) has relayed word to his office at the Capitol that he has not made any of the statements attributed to him on his meeting with PLO chief Yasir Arafat, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency was told today by a press aide to McGovern. The aide said that according to McGovern "any statements attributed to him regarding his meeting with Arafat are not reliable because he has made no statement."

The aide also said the questions attributed to the Democratic Party's Presidential nominee in 1972 by Middle East media are "incorrect." McGovern, he said, does not plan to make "any official statement" about his Middle East travels until he returns to Washington April 9 and holds a news conference. Israel will be the last stop on his tour. He will be there April 6-8.

According to the aide, McGovern spoke with an administrative official in his office here early yesterday regarding news reports concerning his 90-minute meeting with Arafat in Beirut including one by the Palestinian news agency Wafa that "American policy should take into serious consideration the question of recognizing the Palestine Liberation Organization."

#### U.S. Reporters Not Present

McGovern also was quoted by the Beirut newspaper, An Nahar, as saying it was "imperative for some kind of Palestinian national entity to emerge because it is difficult to achieve stability in the area unless the Palestinians exercise an efficient political existence."

"These reports include statements I did not make. They put words in my mouth," McGovern's press aide reported the Senator as saying. The aide stressed that the half dozen American media persons in McGovern's entourage were not permitted to attend the Arafat-McGovern meeting and only Lebanese newsmen were allowed to be present. Traveling as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's subcommittee on Middle Eastern Affairs, McGovern included Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Iran and Lebanon on his tour.

#### STATE DEPARTMENT MUM ON ISRAELI CARGOES IN SUEZ CANAL

WASHINGTON, April 2 (JTA)--The State Department continued today to refuse to confirm or deny reports that the January, 1974 disengagement agreement between Israel and Egypt contained an understanding that Israeli cargoes would be allowed transit through the Suez Canal once the waterway is reopened. Israel insists there was such an understanding and charges that President Anwar Sadat specifically violated the disengagement accord when he stated last week that Israeli cargoes as well as Israeli ships would be barred from the canal when it reopens June 5.

Questioned on the matter again today, Department spokesman Robert Anderson replied: "As we indicated at the time, certain of the understandings in connection with the disengagement agreement were not made public. We have informed the proper committees of Congress, however, of all the relevant documents. It would not be appropriate to discuss our confidential exchanges with other governments."

Anderson also would not confirm or deny that a message sent to the governments of 30 countries by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger after the suspension of the second-stage Israeli-Egyptian talks last month contained

praise of the Egyptian position but was silent on Israel. Anderson said, "I am not going into details on the substance" of Kissinger's message. (By Joseph Polakoff)

#### LEVI SEES SERIOUS ANTI-TRUST QUESTIONS POSED BY ARAB BOYCOTT

WASHINGTON, April 2 (JTA)--U.S. Attorney General Edward H. Levi sees "serious anti-trust questions" in relation to aspects of the Arab boycott but feels his authority "may be limited" in the area of religious discrimination. The Department of Justice, Levi said in a letter to Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman (D,NY) that she made public today, currently has reports of the boycott's "economic activities" under investigation.

Ms. Holtzman, Rep. Sidney Yates (D, Ill) and 136 other members of Congress asked the Justice Department to determine whether federal anti-trust and civil rights laws had been violated by Arab-inspired discrimination against Jews. Among the reported violations is the practice of some American firms to agree with Arab demands not to do business with companies identified as trading with Israel.

"In my view an agreement among separate firms doing business in the United States not to deal with a third firm would raise serious anti-trust questions," Levi wrote. "In the area of religious discrimination, however, the authority of the Attorney General to combat such discrimination through enforcement of federal law may be limited."

Levi referred to the testimony of Antonin Scalia, Assistant Attorney General, on March 13 before a House subcommittee investigating the boycott, that a company would not necessarily violate a law if it hired any persons able to obtain the necessary visas to enter the foreign country in which it was interested. Saudi Arabia effectively bans Jews by insisting on baptismal or other documents attesting to the applicant's religious affiliation.

#### Pleased With Justice Department Probe

Regarding possible violations of fair employment statutes, Levi noted that the Department of Justice no longer has authority to bring lawsuits concerning the discriminatory practices of private employers. The Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in employment on account of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Under this statute, the Justice Department has authority only with respect to state and local governments. Alleged discrimination in federal employment is the responsibility of each individual agency, Levi wrote.

"I am informed that both the State Department and the Defense Department have responded to Congress regarding the assignment of Jewish personnel to certain Middle East countries," Levi said. "There are of course difficulties which almost uniformly discourage Jewish foreign service officers or military personnel from seeking assignment to nations which practice discrimination against Jews, but the Defense Department and the State Department assert that they do not follow a discriminatory assignment policy. Private employers are subject to the jurisdiction of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission."

In a brief statement accompanying her release of the Levi letter, Rep. Holtzman said: "I am pleased to learn that the Justice Department is investigating reports of Arab boycotts against businesses that are owned by or employ Jews, or that trade with Israel. I am hopeful that the investigation will be expeditious and thorough, and that any violations of law will be speedily prosecuted."

