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ISRAELI OFFICIALS NOT CONCERNED THAT FORD IS MEETING FIRST WITH SADAT AND WITH RABIN LATER IN JUNE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 5 (JTA)--Officials here said today that they were not concerned by the fact that President Ford's meeting with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat next month will precede his meeting with Premier Yitzhak Rabin or that Rabin has been invited to come to Washington while Ford will meet the Egyptian leader in Salzburg, Austria--neutral ground. They recalled that most past meetings between American Presidents and Israeli Prime Ministers have been held in Washington.

The Rabin-Ford meeting on June 11-12 was confirmed by simultaneous announcements in Jerusalem and Washington today. The White House announcement said that Ford had invited Rabin "for discussions of matters of mutual interest and in order to strengthen the friendly ties between the two countries." The official announcement of the Ford-Sadat meeting in Salzburg June 1-2 was made by the White House last Friday.

Officials here said, however, that Israel had been informed in advance of that announcement that President Ford intended to meet with Sadat and Rabin. The officials would give no details of Premier Rabin's schedule during his two-day visit to Washington or whether he would meet with President Ford more than once. They said they firmly believed that the U.S. would adopt no final positions before Ford's meeting with Rabin.

U.S. Trying To Renew Diplomatic Efforts

The officials said the Cabinet would schedule its "political debate" as close as possible to Rabin's departure date for Washington. That indicated that the debate would be held after the Ford-Sadat meeting in Salzburg. Ford's meetings with the heads of the governments of the two principal antagonists in the Middle East conflict are viewed by observers here and in the U.S. as an indication that the United States was renewing its diplomatic efforts to obtain some sort of second-stage accord between Israel and Egypt before the Mideast peace conference is reconvened in Geneva.

Those efforts broke down when the bilateral talks conducted by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger were suspended last March 22, prompting President Ford to order a reassessment of U.S. Middle East policy. It was regarded as significant that the President, not the Secretary of State, will spearhead the new initiative.

Ford will fly to Europe later this month to participate in a meeting of NATO government chiefs to be held in Brussels May 29-30. He will also meet with Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky in Salzburg. The President will be accompanied on his trip by Mrs. Ford.

Ford's meetings with Sadat and Rabin confirm what observers here and abroad have been pointing out for some time--that neither the United States, Egypt nor Israel are particularly enthusiastic about resuming the Geneva conference without some prior agreement between the disputing parties. The U.S., on the diplomatic defensive in many parts of the world since its Vietnam debacle is apparently hopeful of a diplomatic success in

the Middle East before it sits down at Geneva where the Soviet Union enjoys equal status as a co-chairman of the peace conference.

Meanwhile, well placed sources here said today that they had no knowledge of reports from Washington that June 24 has been fixed as the date for a brief session of the Geneva conference. The sources said that this issue would "no doubt" be discussed by Secretary Kissinger and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko who are due to meet shortly to discuss the Geneva conference.

TERRORIST BOMB VICTIM DIES

JERUSALEM, May 5 (JTA)--Yaacob Beja, a 37-year-old father of three, died at Shaare Zedek Hospital this morning of burns he suffered when terrorist bombs exploded in the stairwell of his apartment building on Hebron Road in southwest Jerusalem early yesterday morning. Beja was leaving for work at 7 a.m. when he spotted suspicious looking cannisters in the stairwell and was about to return to his flat to call the police when they exploded. He was a partner in a book-binding business a few minutes walk from his home. He immigrated to Israel from Egypt in 1948.

Another victim of the explosion, Mrs. Geula Zartzi, 28, remained in the hospital today for treatment of less serious burns. Police meanwhile are holding 30 suspects out of 100 Arabs who were detained for questioning yesterday in the vicinity of the explosion. Security forces are also searching for the perpetrators in East Jerusalem and on the West Bank.

CABINET TO ASSUME DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ROOTING OUT CORRUPTION IN GOV'T., ARMED FORCES By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 5 (JTA)--The Cabinet decided yesterday to assume direct responsibility for implementing the recommendations contained in State Comptroller Yitzhak Nebenzahl's recent report for rooting out corruption, incompetence and fraud alleged to exist in most branches of the government and the armed forces. Civil servants who are slow to carry out the Comptroller's recommendations may face disciplinary action, the Cabinet warned.

The Cabinet session was devoted largely to a discussion of the Nebenzahl report's disclosures and the Comptroller's assertion that if more attention had been paid to his previous reports, some of the recently exposed cases of corruption might have been avoided. The Cabinet instructed Finance Minister Yehoshua Rabinowitz to report to it quarterly on the progress made in implementing the Comptroller's recommendations. Hitherto, the Finance Ministry alone was responsible for following up the State Comptroller's proposals.

(See full story on Nebenzahl's report in the May 2 Daily News Bulletin.)

The issue was raised by Gideon Hausner, Minister-Without-Portfolio of the Independent Liberal Party who wrote to Premier Yitzhak Rabin last week urging him to set aside precedent and schedule a Cabinet debate on the Comptroller's report. Yesterday's discussion was the first of its kind ever undertaken by the government and it was expected to be continued at a subsequent session. Defense Minister Shimon Peres announced that he

American Jewish leaders and representatives of Jewish communities abroad, marking the close of a two-day National Leadership Assembly convened by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry to discuss the current crisis facing Jews in the USSR.

The Declaration urged President Ford to "communicate to the Soviet government that in the best American tradition we seek an end to all discrimination and repression of Soviet Jews." It condemned anti-Semitic propaganda in the Soviet Union and urged that "the plight of Soviet Jews must be kept on the agenda of every appropriate international forum."

The Declaration also declared support for Congress in its legislation linking American trade with the USSR with Soviet emigration practices and called for a careful study by the lawmakers of Soviet violations of human rights in the area of restrictive emigration practices.

Earlier today the delegates to the assembly at the Statler-Hilton Hotel were addressed by Senators Henry M. Jackson (D, Wash.) and Edward Kennedy (D, Mass.). Both assured the gathering that Congressional support for the Jackson-Vanik legislation is not eroding and U.S. friendship and assistance for Israel will continue. "Perhaps it is more appropriate today than at any other time in the recent past to say--reassessment or no reassessment--that the friendship will endure between us and Israel," Kennedy declared.

He also told the delegates that on his recent trip to the Soviet Union he met with Jewish activists and declared, "I shall continue to add my voice to yours in appealing for freedom for those Soviet Jews who are imprisoned and harassed."

Jackson said he did not personally know of any Senator who had backed the Jackson-Vanik legislation who has said he would no longer support it. Congress, Jackson asserted, will remain firmly behind the law and the Ford Administration and the Soviet government will in time have to recognize that. The U.S., he said, must stand by its own law which is based on international law--the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights--that has been signed by the Soviet government.

U.S., UN Urged To Speak Out For Soviet Jews

Stanley H. Lowell, chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, told the delegates yesterday that he was calling on Treasury Secretary William Simon and Secretary of Commerce Frederick Dent as well as American representatives at the United Nations to speak out on behalf of freedom for Soviet Jews. He said that Simon and Dent especially "should not lend credence while in Moscow to the Soviet expression that trade has suffered because of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment."

Lowell added, "and of course, the Secretary of State and the President of the United States should reiterate again and again their previous expressions of support of freedom for Soviet Jewry and not treat this matter as last year's business."

ISRAEL MAY PAY DAMAGES TO THE 32 PERSONS WOUNDED BY PROTTER

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 5 (JTA)--A Foreign Ministry spokesman said today that Israel may pay voluntary damages to the 32 persons who were wounded by David Protter, a mentally deranged employee of the Israeli Consulate General in Johannesburg, South Africa, last Monday. The spokesman said the matter was under discussion between Israeli and South African authorities but that no decision had been reached yet on whether Israel would make

the payments or in what amounts.

Well placed sources here said, however, that the government was expected to be "forthcoming" with ex-gratia payments to the injured parties and would be influenced by the humanitarian and political aspects of the tragedy rather than by narrow legal considerations. There were reports in South Africa that some of the victims planned to sue the Israeli government for damages.

Protter, a 24-year-old South African Jew who was discharged from the Israeli army three years ago for psychiatric reasons, seized the Consulate offices where he had been employed as an assistant security guard and held more than 20 fellow employees and their families hostage for 19 hours. At one point he fired a submachinegun into the streets, killing 32 persons. He also murdered the Consulate's security officer, Giora Raviv.

Legal experts here said damage suits filed against the Israeli government might not succeed because it could be claimed that Protter was not acting in line of duty and Israel was, therefore, not responsible for his actions. Officials here noted with evident satisfaction that Jerusalem's relations with the South African government in Pretoria had not been adversely affected by the tragic affair and that the discussions of it were proceeding without rancor.

Allon Praises Unna, Consulate Staff

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Yigal Allon has cabled the Israeli Ambassador in South Africa, Yitzhak Unna, his "deepest appreciation for the fitting way in which you fulfilled your duty as Israeli Ambassador in that difficult and testing time." Allon asked Unna to convey a similar message of appreciation to "the devoted staff members of our representations" in South Africa. Unna was instrumental in getting Protter to release his hostages and surrender to the police.

Premier Yitzhak Rabin's special advisor, Gen. (Res.) Rehavam Zeevi who was sent to South Africa to investigate the incident, reported his findings to the Cabinet yesterday. He related how Protter came to be hired by the Consulate and how he managed to seize the offices. The Cabinet met as a ministerial security committee and no details of Zeevi's report were made public beyond a statement that Rabin had summed up the lessons learned and that they would be applied.

Israeli officials reported that an arms cache found in the Consulate consisted of licensed weapons plus what Protter had managed to smuggle into the premises. As a security guard whose duty was to search visitors to the Consulate, Protter was permitted to carry weapons.

SANTIAGO (JTA)--Gen. Jose Berdichewsky, a Chilean Jew, will serve as acting commander in chief of the Chilean Air Force and member of the ruling military junta during the absence abroad of Air Force Commander Gen. Gustavo Leigh. It was announced here. Berdichewsky is the second in command of the Air Force. He was recently honored at a dinner held by leaders of the Jewish community.

TEL AVIV (JTA)--Raul Rego, the Portuguese Socialist leader, has cancelled a visit to Israel as guest of the Labor Party due to the tense political situation in Portugal. It was announced Monday. He had been expected to arrive here Sunday. Dr. Rego was Minister for Social Communications in the Cabinet of the former President Gen. Antonio De Spinoia.

setting up a three-man watchdog committee to combat corruption in the defense establishment. (See separate story.)

An effort by Likud to force through a motion of no confidence arising out of the State Comptroller's report was defeated in the Knesset today by a vote of 47-35. Yoram Erldor, for Likud, said that the present government was part of the "system" which the State Comptroller had found to be at fault--and it should therefore resign and call new elections. Rabinowitz, for the government, termed the Likud motion "deliberately troublesome." He stressed that the government intended introducing tighter follow-up procedures regarding the State Comptroller's reports and recommendations.

PERES TRYING TO FORM A NON-PARTISAN WATCHDOG COMMITTEE

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, May 5 (JTA)--Defense Minister Shimon Peres disclosed yesterday that he has approached three persons of unquestioned integrity to form a non-partisan watchdog committee against corruption in Israel's defense establishment. The disclosure was made following yesterday's Cabinet meeting which discussed the recently released report of State Comptroller Yitzhak Nebenzahl that cited numerous instances of corruption and mismanagement in government ministries, departments and the armed forces.

"I do not feel myself a citizen of a corrupted state but a citizen of a state that fights corruption," Peres reportedly told his fellow ministers at the meeting.

Although the Nebenzahl report found corruption to exist throughout the civil service, the public has been most shocked by the exposure of bribery and fraud in the Defense Ministry and armed forces, hitherto regarded as models of probity. Peres has declared that he would not shield the identity of any officials involved no matter how high their position.

He said the people asked to undertake the watchdog task were Shimon Avidan, former commander of the famed Givati Brigade that fought the Egyptians in Israel's War for Independence in 1948 and who is presently secretary general of the Mapam-sponsored Hakibbutz Haartzi movement; and Prof. Hans Klinghoffer a former Knesset member and legal advisor to the Liberal Party. The name of the third person, described as a prominent auditor, was not immediately disclosed.

Peres said that the three-man team would be provided with a staff of auditors, accountants and other professionals to help oversee the transactions and maintenance systems of the Defense Ministry and the armed forces.

More Cases Uncovered

Meanwhile, additional cases of alleged corruption have been uncovered in the Defense Ministry and while some of them are of a relatively petty nature, they are regarded as serious because of their impact on public confidence in the defense establishment. It was disclosed today that 18 persons are being questioned by police in the northern district in connection with mishandling of goods, falsifying delivery documents and missing goods from a military construction materials depot on the Golan Heights.

The persons under investigation were identified as contractors, clerks, two sergeant-majors who were formerly employed as civilian workers at the supply depot and the officers in charge of the depot. The police are being assisted by military police and the suspects are cooperating with

the investigation, sources said.

It was also learned that two Foreign Ministry employees have been suspended pending trial on charges of receiving bribes in amounts up to \$10,000. One was employed in an Asian country and the other was an attaché in an African country. Their names were not disclosed.

ARAB PROPAGANDA DRIVE IN BRITAIN

LONDON, May 5 (JTA)--The Arab propaganda drive in Britain has moved into the smart illustrated weekly field with the publication of "The Middle East," a magazine styled on Newsweek. It is reportedly funded by Kuwaiti money and its publisher is Afif Ben Yedder. He is not known in publishing but the editor of the new magazine, Richard Purdy is a notorious pro-Arab journalist.

In its introduction, the magazine said "The Middle East is the first international publication to be written specifically to satisfy the interests and the information needs of the top men in business and industry, government and finance throughout the 25 nations of the Middle East." Not unexpectedly, the "twenty-five nations" do not include Israel.

The magazine's message is much more sophisticated than past Arab propaganda material. However, the message comes through with such items as "Whitehall has come to recognize that Britain's economic stability is widely dependent at present on Arab goodwill." This plush magazine contains large advertisements from big companies. There is a two-page center spread from Fiat, Deutsche Bank, Lufthansa, Caterpillar, Continental Bank of Chicago and a number of Arab banks and airlines.

ALMOGI CONCERNED ABOUT CORRUPTION

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, May 5 (JTA)--Haifa's Mayor Yosef Almogi expressed deep concern over the recent cases of corruption in Israel and called for an uncompromising all-out war against it. "I am not as concerned about the United States Mideast policy as I am concerned over the corruption in Israeli society," Almogi said in an interview here with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "These cases of corruption weaken not only Israel but all the Jewish people," Almogi said, adding: "I hope that we will find the way to eradicate these ills because there is nothing more harmful to the strength of the Jewish people than this sort of misdeeds."

Almogi, who is also a Knesset member, arrived here last Thursday night for a 10-day lecture tour on behalf of the Israel Bond Organization. He is scheduled to address meetings on the East Coast. He said Friday that he will not meet with American officials during his tour.

Observing that Israel is in a difficult period, Almogi stated that at no other time in Israel's 27 years of existence have the needs to strengthen the ties between Israel and world Jewry been as urgent and important as they are now. "We must re-emphasize the importance of the international Zionist movement," he said, adding that new resources must be found for this purpose and that there is a need to improve the quality of Israeli emissaries to Jewish communities throughout the world. He also suggested that more "missions of high-ranking Jewish Americans" should visit Israel to strengthen the ties of American Jewry and Israelis.

DECLARATION OF FREEDOM FOR SOVIET JEWS SIGNED ON CAPITOL STEPS

WASHINGTON, May 5 (JTA)--A "Declaration of Freedom" for Soviet Jews was signed on the Capitol steps this afternoon by more than 250

AJ COMMITTEE URGES CONGRESS TO CONSIDER PROGRAM TO PROTECT ECONOMY FROM FOREIGN CONTROL, BOYCOTT

NEW YORK, May 5 (JTA)--The American Jewish Committee urged Congress and the Ford Administration to consider an eight-point program to protect sensitive sectors of the U.S. economy from foreign control, to curb the effects in this country of the Arab boycott and blacklisting of firms doing business with Israel, and to counteract attempts at job discrimination accompanying business dealings with Arab interests.

At the same time, the AJ Committee declared that it supported America's traditional openness to foreign investment, including Arab oil money, and its commitment to "the freest possible trade for all nations."

The AJ Committee's views were contained in a policy statement on Arab Economic Warfare, and were made public by Alfred H. Moses, chairman of its Domestic Affairs Commission. The AJ Committee, whose 69th annual meeting closed yesterday at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, asked that the following legislative and administrative steps be taken under advisement:

Full disclosure of foreign investments in the U.S., with close monitoring of the defense, communications and banking industries; legislation empowering the President to limit, delay, or in other ways restrict investments he deems contrary to the American interest; amendment of the Export Administration Act to forbid participation by Americans in foreign-inspired boycotts against countries friendly to the U.S., and to insure full reporting of boycott requests received by business companies; and strengthening and application of anti-trust laws to acts of cooperation with the Arab boycott.

Also, withholding of American aid, including sales of military supplies, from nations that practice blacklisting; an administrative ruling that laws against discrimination may not be violated because some foreign countries may refuse to grant visas to certain classes of personnel; broadening laws against job discrimination to include directorships and high-level management posts; and outlawing discrimination in lending, investment and other business dealings, including the choice of suppliers and subcontractors.

INDUCEMENTS FOR YORDIM TO RETURN

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 5 (JTA)--A special committee headed by Labor MK Aviad Yaffe has recommended a series of benefits and privileges to be offered by the government to induce yordim to return home. Yordim are Israelis who have lived abroad for two years or longer. Their present number is estimated at about 200,000, most of them living in the United States.

The recommendations, which were submitted to Absorption Minister Shlomo Rosen and Jewish Agency chairman Pinhas Sapir, include many benefits similar to those granted new immigrants but unavailable to native Israelis. The committee said they were intended to make the repatriation of Israelis easier but stressed that there was no intention to grant yordim "special privileges just because they lived abroad." The recommendations are expected to be adopted.

They include customs duty exemptions as high as IL 5,000 on goods the yordim bring with them when they return; and exemption from the sales tax on such items as refrigerators, washing machines, cooking stoves and television sets purchased in Israel. Such appliances brought in from

abroad will, however, be subject to duties.

Returning Israelis who have lived abroad for at least two years will also be entitled to customs and sales tax exemptions on personal belongings such as clothing, used working tools, portable typewriters, cameras and kitchen utensils. Returning students will enjoy the same benefits if they have been abroad for 20 months and return to Israel immediately after completing their studies.

Committee To Study Needs

The recommendations include the establishment of a committee to study the needs of returning Israelis on an individual case basis. It will be authorized to grant IL 20-IL 60,000 mortgages toward the purchase of an apartment on the same terms granted new immigrants. The size of the mortgages will be determined by the size of the returning families, their economic situation, requested place of residence and the length of time they lived abroad.

Returnees who commit themselves to live in new development areas will be eligible for special assistance, as will those whose professions or skills are considered vital to the country's welfare. Israelis living abroad will be able to participate in the government's housing savings program. After seven years they will receive a loan equivalent to the sum saved, not exceeding IL 30,000, for the purchase of a 75 square meter apartment.

The committee also recommended that young couples who were married after Oct. 1, 1969 should be allowed to register for special housing programs at the regional offices of the Jewish Agency's immigration and absorption department if they return from abroad. They will be required to exercise their privilege within one year. Special assistance was also recommended for returning Israelis who have difficulties finding suitable jobs.

The committee prefaced its recommendations with the statement that "The vision of the return to Zion places as a central target the concentration of as many Jews as possible in Israel. The return of Israelis who have stayed overseas for a long period of time is therefore one of the important ways to accomplish this end."

KENNETH KEATING DEAD AT 74

WASHINGTON, May 5 (JTA)--Kenneth B. Keating, the U.S. Ambassador to Israel since 1973, died today at the age of 74. It was announced by the State Department. He had entered Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York after suffering a heart attack April 17. At the time, a spokesman for the Israel Desk at the State Department said he could neither confirm nor deny the report that Mr. Keating had suffered a heart attack nor that he was in a hospital. Subsequently, Mr. Keating's wife was reported as saying that the Ambassador was expected to recover and return to Israel in about two weeks.

Ambassador Keating, a New York Republican, served for 12 years in the House of Representatives and was elected to the Senate in 1958. He was defeated for re-election in 1965 and a year later was appointed an associate justice in the New York State Court of Appeals. In 1968 he was named Ambassador to India by President Nixon. Since assuming his ambassadorial post in Israel in 1973 he was closely involved in U.S. Middle East policy and American aid for Israel. Israeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz, expressing his country's deep sorrow in a telegram today to Mrs. Keating, referred to the Ambassador as a distinguished servant of his country.