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PLO MAKES IT CLEAR IT WILL NOT CHANGE ITS COVENANT

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 (JTA)--The Palestine Liberation Organization made it clear this weekend that it will not heed the urging of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and others that it change its covenant which calls for the replacement of Israel with a single democratic secular state in all of Palestine.

Farouk Kaddumi, head of the PLO's political department, in an interview with Cairo's Al Ahram, translated by the State Department yesterday, denounced the call for the terrorist organization to amend "its charter in such a way that it would guarantee Israel's survival." He declared, "How can the West ask us to make concessions while Israel refused to recognize the PLO?"

Kaddumi said the PLO has "conveyed" to United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim its "specific stand" on the Geneva conference. He said the PLO "should participate as an independent delegation in all the work of the conference and at all of the sessions on condition that the Palestinian question is an independent topic on the agenda along with the giving of international guarantees for the survival of the new Palestinian state." He said the guarantees must come from the large states, "specifically" the United States and the Soviet Union.

Hammami Spells Out Position

Meanwhile in London, Said Hammami, the PLO's representative there, said in an interview today in the Observer that the Palestine National Council when it meets in Cairo March 12 cannot amend the charter because it represents ideology rather than a practical program.

However, he said the PLO is ready to accept two states in Palestine "because since 1948 there has been a new factor, the Israeli people, not the Jewish people." But he said that Israel cannot survive in the long run as a Jewish State but will eventually become a Hebrew-speaking corner of the Arab world.

Hammami listed three points that comprise the PLO policy: a demand for complete withdrawal of Israel from occupied territory; that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip be handed over to the Palestinians to form an independent state under the PLO with the option later of deciding whether it wanted to join with Jordan and/or Syria; and the recognition of the right of all Palestinians to return to their homes, although this right might not be exercised "for a number of years."

SADAT SAYS ARABS ARE READY FOR PEACE; WARNS THAT THE U.S. SHOULD USE ITS POWER TO END CONFLICT

NEW YORK, Feb. 27 (JTA)--President Anwar Sadat of Egypt insisted today that "We Arabs are ready for peace now." He said 1977 should be the turning point of the Arab-Israeli conflict but warned that "the United States should use its utmost power" toward that end because without the U.S. there was no chance for peace in the Mideast.

Replying to questions on the ABC-TV "Issues and Answers" program, Sadat stressed his proposed linkage between Jordan and a Palestinian state, denied emphatically that Egypt was still receiving arms from the Soviet Union and commented on Israel's domestic politics.

He said he hoped that country's general elections May 17 would pave the way for its full participation in the Geneva peace process. In order to reach peace "we need a solid domestic situation in Israel," Sadat said. He discounted the rift between Premier Yitzhak Rabin and Defense Minister Shimon Peres on grounds that there was little difference between "doves" and "hawks" in Israel.

Sadat said his proposed Palestinian-Jordan linkage was nothing new, that he had made the suggestion in 1974 after talks with Jordan's King Hussein and that since then PLO chief Yasir Arafat and Syria have agreed to the idea. He did not know if the recent disclosure of CIA payments to Hussein would hurt his linkage proposal.

Sadat noted that the PLO leadership will soon meet in Cairo. Asked if he would attempt to get the PLO to accept arrangements for its participation in the Geneva conference, he said he would try. But he asked, why must the PLO always be urged to recognize Israel; why can't there be a mutual "coming together" on the points involved?

Denies Getting Arms From The USSR

Sadat assured the panel of reporters that "We have received no arms or parts from the Soviet Union or any Communist bloc country." He said that after two years of waiting he was just notified that the Soviet Union would ship 120 refurbished MIGs to Egypt but he was skeptical. "When they arrive I will tell the whole world," Sadat said. Asked what he would do if the U.S. refuses to sell arms to Egypt, Sadat said in that case "I will be asking other markets. I will get them where I can. All I am asking for is defensive arms to defend my country."

The Egyptian leader said he was grateful to President Carter for the \$500 million economic aid extended to Egypt and for cancelling the proposed sale of concussion bombs to Israel. Sadat referred to reports from "reliable" sources that Israel possesses a stock of nuclear weapons. He said he would like to see a nuclear arms ban in the Middle East emerge from the Geneva conference.

GUSH EFFORT TO SET UP WEST BANK SETTLEMENT THWARTED BY TROOPS By Yitzhak Shargil and David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27 (JTA)--A group of 42 Gush Emunim followers attempted to establish a new settlement on the West Bank today but withdrew on the arrival of airborne troops with orders to evacuate them by whatever means necessary. The group, claiming to be the advance party for a major settlement project, arrived at noon at the Messascha police post, about seven kilometers east of the "green line" in the Petach Tikva area.

They brought tons of equipment, an electric

generator and began pouring concrete for pre-fab houses. The group's leader, Nissim Simyansky, claimed that the Messcha site had been approved by the Cabinet for settlement. But Gen. David Haguel, Governor of the West Bank who arrived on the scene with four helicopter loads of soldiers, ordered them to leave and closed off the area. Simyansky said his people had no desire to clash with the army. But he said they hoped to return to the area "very soon."

At today's Cabinet meeting, Defense Minister Shimon Peres and Israel Galili, Ministerial Settlement Committee chairmen, condemned the latest Gush move and said it was a serious breach because the site had been approved in principle for settlement but the Gush had chosen to act without authorization. They said that technical, not political circumstances were delaying settlement there, implying that the Gush Eumunim had attempted a political provocation.

Labor Ready For Territorial Concessions

The latest attempt by the Gush Eumunim to extend their presence on the West Bank came little more than a day after the Labor Party convention narrowly adopted a platform plank stating Israel's readiness for territorial concessions in "all sectors" in exchange for peace. Many observers believe that the Gush move was a deliberate test of the government's will and an attempt to sabotage the platform plank over which the Labor Party delegates split almost in half.

The plank was adopted Friday afternoon by a vote of 659-606, a bare 53-vote majority, after a prolonged and often bitter debate. The opposition was led by former Defense Minister Moshe Dayan who demanded elimination of the clause on territorial concessions in all sectors including the West Bank. He said that while he was not opposed to territorial concessions in principle, the plank implied that the West Bank had been part of Jordan before 1967 whereas it never belonged to that country but was occupied by Jordanian forces in 1948.

Dayan also demanded that the entire area be open to Jewish settlement and that the Jordan Valley and the Jerusalem region be exempted from any restrictions on settlement. Dayan maintained that the Arab states were not ready to make peace as long as Israel holds the Golan Heights, the Sharm el-Sheikh region and the Jordan Valley. "Therefore, we must not, at this stage, give up hopes for returning to Samaria and Judea," he said.

Basis For Party's Plank

The controversial plank, though unpalatable to many Laborites, was a political concession to Mapam which had demanded its inclusion in the platform as the price for remaining within the Labor Alignment. Foreign Minister Yigal Alon argued for it on other grounds. He said Israel was ready for territorial concessions in all sectors in exchange for a genuine peace settlement.

Israel would not oppose a Jordanian federation on both sides of the Jordan River, Alon said, on condition that it rules out a third state. He stressed that Israel wants permanent borders based on its security needs, not on mystic, theological or nationalist motives. He said the two conditions essential for any peace moves were that no third party should try to impose a plan of its own and that negotiations be conducted directly between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Peres warned against giving the same conces-

sions for an end to belligerency as Israel might give for an overall peace agreement. He also stressed the importance of the Judea-Samaria regions to Israel's security. "I know of no man who thinks it is possible to protect the eastern border of Israel at a point where it is only 14 kilometers wide," Peres said. He added that with today's advanced weaponry, even irregulars could launch a serious attack on Israel in such a vulnerable area.

Meanwhile, having ironed out its differences with Mapam, the Labor Party moved over the weekend to heal the rift in its own ranks. At the suggestion of party Secretary General Meir Zarmi, Premier Yitzhak Rabin held a private meeting with Peres, the man who had challenged him for the Premiership and was defeated by a paper-thin margin of 41 votes at the convention last Wednesday night. Peres supporters have already organized themselves into a faction within Labor and their demand for 50 percent representation on all party bodies was promptly met.

Rabin said after his victory that he would include Peres in the next Cabinet. But he still has refused to say whether his rival would retain the Defense post or be offered a less important portfolio. Some party leaders urged Rabin to announce at the convention closing that Peres would remain Defense Minister in the new government, assuming a Labor victory May 17. But Rabin kept mum.

VANCE, WALDHEIM AGREE ON MOST ISSUES AFFECTING THE MIDDLE EAST By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 (JTA)--Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim both declined to say yesterday which leaders in Arab governments recognize Israel's sovereignty. They also agreed that "the most practical time" for a Geneva conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict would be in the "latter half of this year." Their statements came as they stood side-by-side in the State Department lobby after concluding a meeting of more than two hours that completed Waldheim's two-day official visit to Washington.

When the Jewish Telegraphic Agency asked whether during their separate Mideast visits they had found that "any Arab governmental leader has recognized Israel as a viable, independent Jewish State," Vance replied, "the answer is yes." Waldheim interpolated "it can support that statement." The JTA asked the two diplomats to name those Arab leaders. "I prefer not to," Vance replied. "I will let them speak for themselves."

Vance and Waldheim, when asked whether they had reached an agreement or understanding on the procedural process for the Geneva conference, seemed to indicate a meeting of minds had not taken place. Vance said they had exchanged ideas and Waldheim pointed out "a lot of preparatory work is still needed in the next few weeks and months." President Carter will meet with Middle East leaders starting with Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin early in March in Washington.

Waldheim, who has received an unprecedented official welcome from Carter, told a press conference Friday that in his meeting at the White House with Carter "no agreement was reached on the Middle East" and "therefore the question" of the PLO is open. Asked whether the PLO should be invited to the Geneva conference,

Waldheim replied that "the Palestinian dimension is of crucial importance."

Later, he noted that the PLO was "nominated" at the Rabat conference of Arab states as the "sole spokesman" of the Palestinians and that it was recognized by the UN General Assembly. However, he agreed that the UN has not conducted a plebiscite among Palestinians on whom they want as their leader.

SPECIAL INTERVIEW

RIVLIN: A NEW CHALLENGE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27 (JTA)--It was strange to hear Moshe Rivlin talking Zionism. At the helm of the Zionist movement for nearly a dozen years as director general of the Jewish Agency, Rivlin has had little time for talking. He made his mark as a doer, an achiever--a bitaist. He left the talking to the politicians.

But as the words tumbled out--"vision," "challenge," "commitment," "Jewish destiny," the clichés of Zionist rhetoric--they seemed to take on a new dimension of immediacy, of sincerity. "I passionately believe in all this, otherwise I couldn't stay on this job for a single day. You cannot be a real bitaist if you don't believe, just as a pure ideologue who achieves nothing on the ground is also pretty useless."

Rivlin is about to leave the Jewish Agency now moving down the corridor to the office of chairman of the Jewish National Fund. He leaves on a low note, at a time of waning aliyah, of neshira (drop-outs) as a seemingly permanent and irreversible trend. He does not try to minimize these huge disappointments and the fundamental question--marks they pose to the Zionist idea.

On the contrary, he stresses the atmosphere of crisis, and throws down a demanding challenge to the Zionist movement and to broader echelons of Jewish leadership: "The entire relationship between Israel and the Jewish people urgently needs a thorough reassessment."

Matter Of Vital Priority

After the elections in Israel, he proposes, the new government must, as a matter of vital priority, summon a council of all ranking Jewish leaders to conduct this reassessment. To allow the situation to remain static, or deteriorate still further, would be catastrophic for Israel, he warns.

The severity of the crisis, he says, is most forcefully illustrated by the fact that Jews in several countries, who are on the verge of packing up and emigrating, are not thinking of Israel as their natural destination. This applies to South African Jews, Rhodesian Jews, Latin American Jews, and, of course, to so many of those Jews who succeed in escaping from the Soviet Union.

At the same time, says Rivlin, and perhaps as part of the same problem, Israel is visibly losing its prestige and authority among the established Western Jewish communities. Plainly, much of the fault lies with Israel itself, with facets of Israeli society which are familiar to Jews abroad and which frankly deter or repel them. But to recognize this, even to work to put right Israel's wrongs, is not a sufficient solution to the fundamental Israel-diaspora crisis, says Rivlin.

"Israel needs a new message, a new challenge, a task to inspire young Jews abroad," he stresses. The Jewish State's dual tasks in the past have always been aliyah and defense; they may no longer be sufficient to motivate the diaspora to

action beyond fund-raising. Nor can Israel, Rivlin is convinced, afford to resign itself to the present, static situation, if only for purely demographic reasons. And beyond demography, there is the need for diaspora-Israel interaction, based on ongoing aliyah, which is at the root of the Zionist vision--a vision which Rivlin insists is as valid today as ever it was.

Specific Elements Outlined

He dismisses with scorn the argument that a small sovereign state and a large, sympathetic diaspora was the natural situation of the Jewish people throughout the Second Commonwealth and may be an integral and inevitable part of the dialectic of Jewish history. "The Zionist movement never resigned itself, never accepted the contention that that's inevitable and you can't change the inevitable. Zionism did change that which seemed immutable, inevitable."

The challenge, then, he says, must be to levy a volunteer army of 50,000 young people, Israeli and diaspora Jews, who would undertake to settle in the Galilee, to populate the Negev, to populate Jerusalem and its environs, and to live and work in development towns. The Zionist movement would spearhead this new national drive forward. It would no longer be a movement seeking as broad a base as possible among as many Jews as possible, but rather a "fighting, pioneering" movement dedicated to action, inspiring others to act, Rivlin declares.

This kind of radical overhaul in Israel-diaspora relations, and in the role of Zionism in the 1980s would "cleanse the atmosphere," he says, both within the country and vis-a-vis the diaspora. Obviously the inspiration and leadership must come from the government of Israel itself; the Zionist movement would be the instrumentality, not the instigator. Here Rivlin treads carefully, anxious to steer clear of intra- or inter-party politics. "It is up to the next government to make the move," he says.

1941 GENERAL STRIKE MARKED

AMSTERDAM, Feb. 27 (JTA)--As they have done every year since their liberation from German occupation, the citizens of Amsterdam marked the anniversary of the Feb. 25-26, 1941 general strike when Dutch workers tried in vain to halt the deportation of the first 400 Amsterdam Jews to Nazi death camps. The commemoration began with a ceremony under the auspices of the Mayor and town Aldermen at the stevedors' monument. The Amsterdam port workers were credited with having organized the protest strike and for that reason wreaths are placed every Feb. 25 at the base of the statue.

But the Dutch Communist Party also claims credit for having initiated the 1941 action. It marks the occasion annually with a parade through town and a rally at which Communist speakers make speeches on more topical issues. This year, in addition to demands for government control of multi-national enterprises and compensation to offset inflation, they also urged severe punishment for Pieter Menten, a Dutch art dealer accused of having participated in the murders of Jews and others in the Lemberg area of Poland when he was a member of an SS unit in July, 1941. Menten, who was arrested last year, is now awaiting trial.

JERUSALEM (JTA)--The Cabinet approved Premier Yitzhak Rabin's visit to Washington early next month.

CANADA IS NOT PLANNING ANY LEGISLATION TO DEAL WITH BOYCOTT By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27 (JTA)--Canadian Minister of External Affairs Don Jamieson says his government is "not proposing to go the legislative route" to deal with the effect of the Arab boycott on Canadian companies that refuse to abide by Arab demands. Jamieson, who affirmed that "we have been quite categorical in our denunciation of the boycott," noted that the Canadian policy adopted last October "denies governmental assistance of any kind" to a company that is complying with the boycott.

He said it was too early to see the effect of his government's policy but added that Canada will "keep monitoring" trade with the Arab countries and "consulting" with the United States about the boycott. The Minister's comments were in response to questions from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency at a meeting last week with foreign and domestic reporters at Blair House where Jamieson accompanied Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau on his official visit to President Carter.

The boycott issue came into focus last week when the Senate banking subcommittee held a series of hearings. One of the witnesses opposing the boycott was McGill University law professor Irwin Cotler who presented to the subcommittee recommendations for a "common front" among countries hit by the boycott and urged Canadian laws to buttress that country's policy.

On the issue of whether the Canadian government was ferreting out former Nazis living in that country, Jamieson said "I know of no such cases." He said he was informed that "some" Nazis might move to Canada. Asked whether Canadian authorities were investigating this report, he said that "security agencies by design do not always advise me in advance." According to one recent report, Archbishop Valarian Trifa, who has been suspended from the board of the National Council of Churches, is believed planning to move to Canada. Trifa is a former leader in the fascist Rumanian Iron Guard.

Policy Regarding The PLO

Regarding Canada's view of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Jamieson said "we have not been in communication with the PLO." He said Canadian policy is "pretty much" like that of the U.S. with respect to the terrorist organization. He said he agrees with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's position that there "is no way for Israel to be prepared to negotiate with the PLO" as long as the "PLO declaration stands to cause the eradication of Israel." However, Jamieson said, "the Palestinians must have some voice in the settlement to be arrived at." He said Canada has not decided on what "mechanism" is to be adopted.

The Canadian official categorically opposed a Jackson-Vanik amendment for Canada regarding trade benefits and Soviet emigration policy.

"Our position is that we will respect United Nations sanctions, but we ourselves won't stop dealing with a country simply because we don't like their postures or policy," he said. He added that he does not see anything "remotely" resembling the Jackson-Vanik measure in a future Canadian law.

USSR USING HELSINKI ACCORDS AS EXCUSE TO WITHHOLD EMIGRATION VISAS

NEW YORK, Feb. 27 (JTA)--The Soviet government in recent months has refused visas to emigrate to Israel on the grounds that applicants would be leaving close relatives (i.e. parents) in the USSR. The National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) has learned that applicants from Moscow, Vilnius, Leningrad, Kishinev and other cities have been refused visas because the Helsinki agreement, which provides for the reunification of families, would be "violated." Refusals have recently petitioned for written refusals but a high Soviet official in a recent meeting claimed that the ovir does not have to give any reason for one's refusal.

Meanwhile, harassment against prominent Soviet Jewish activists continues across the USSR, the NCSJ reported. Lev Ovsischer of Minsk was recently cited in a newspaper account and accused of "anti-Soviet activities." The paper appealed to the "voice of the people" saying that Ovsischer's activities must be stopped and it was time to "finish with him." At the same time, it was learned that Mikhail Mager staged a hunger strike earlier this month to protest against his continued denial of a visa and plans to continue the strike indefinitely.

HADASSAH PLEDGES \$2,100,000 FOR NEW JNF PROJECT IN NORTH ISRAEL

NEW YORK, Feb. 27 (JTA)--Hadassah has pledged \$2,100,000 over a three-year period to the Jewish National Fund toward the cost of developing the mountainous wilderness above the Galilee in northern Israel into an area of industrial complexes, Fannie Cohen, national JNF chairman, reported to the Hadassah Mid-Winter Conference here.

Recently returned from Israel, she said: "The wilderness around Tefen is coming alive as the ground is prepared for the seven industrial complexes which will be built around an administrative core covering thousands of acres. Tefen is designed to reaffirm and to protect the Jewish presence in this exposed corner of Israel--which is just a few miles from Maalot. Mrs. Cohen said that eventually there will be a rubber products factory, one for electrical batteries, a shoe manufacturing plant and many others. Five new settlements--moshavim and kibbutzim--also based on industry are already on the drawing boards.

NEW RABBI FOR GUR HASIDIM

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27 (JTA)--The thousands of Gur Hasidim in Israel and abroad have a new rebbe. On the seventh day after the death of Rabbi Israel Alter at the age of 82, his brother, Rabbi Simha Bunim, was today appointed at a dramatic acclamation ceremony in Jerusalem. The move for the appointment began last night when a delegation of 10 leading Hasidim urged Bunim to take over. Bunim, 80, said in good health, reluctantly agreed, but stressed that he would be needing the help and support of all the Hasidim who, he knew, were as shattered as he by the death of Alter.

This morning, the "beit midrash" was full of thousands of worshippers, many of whom had flown in specially from abroad during the week of mourning. After the service Bunim gave out cake and wine to all present and they drank "leheim"--the Hasidic tradition on the last day of the "shiv'a."