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BEGIN WELCOMES IDEA FOR PRELIMINARY MEETING OF MIDDLE EAST FOREIGN MINISTERS TO PREPARE GENEVA TALKS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 3 (JTA)—Premier Menachem Begin said today that he welcomed proposals for a preliminary meeting of Middle East Foreign Ministers under American auspices this fall "to prepare the ground" for reconvening the Geneva conference.

The proposal was unveiled by President Anwar Sadat at a press conference in Alexandria yesterday following two days of talks with U.S. Secretary of State Vance. The Egyptian leader reportedly rejected certain American proposals regarding the nature of a Middle East peace and the pace of Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories.

Begin, interviewed by Israel Radio, described the idea of a foreign ministers' meeting as "very constructive." He said that he had, in fact, made the very same suggestion during his visit to Washington last month but would not criticize Sadat for claiming credit. Now that Sadat has agreed that Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy and Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan would sit at the same table, "This is something to welcome," Begin said.

Will Try To Remove Obstacles

Sadat's idea was accepted by Vance who appeared with the Egyptian President at their televised news conference. Vance said he would try to persuade Syria, Jordan and Israel to join Egypt in a working group that would meet under his auspices in Washington and New York next month. Vance indicated that the task of these meetings would be to remove the obstacles to the Geneva conference.

The most formidable of these appears to be Palestinian representation. Israel has categorically rejected PLO participation in any peace talks. Sadat, who has said he had alternatives in mind to deal with this issue, disclosed that during his talks with Vance he received a message from PLO chief Yasir Arafat reminding the Arab states that they had agreed at their 1974 summit meeting in Rabat that the PLO was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The PLO executive committee, meeting in Beirut Monday night, issued a statement demanding independent representation for their group at all Arab and international levels dealing with the Middle East and the Palestinian issue.

The proposed meeting of foreign ministers would by its very nature exclude the PLO since it would be limited to sovereign states. Observers here and abroad said today that chances for such a meeting hinged on its acceptance by Syria. Vance flew to Damascus today after a brief stopover at Beirut for a meeting with President Elias Sarkis of Lebanon. He is expected to discuss Sadat's proposal with Syrian President Hafez Assad.

Background Of Idea

The idea of preliminary talks to work out the basis of a peace agreement to be reached at Geneva originated with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger during his Middle East diplomatic efforts in 1975. Begin's "peace plan," which he presented to President Carter at their White House meetings July 19-20 and later made public in part, suggested three

alternatives to resume the political momentum in the Mideast.

These were: resumption of the Geneva conference—Begin suggested Oct. 10 as a likely date—bilateral talks to be held in Middle East capitals or on neutral ground along the lines of the 1949 Rhodes Armistice talks or "proximity talks" in New York where Israeli and Arab delegates would negotiate indirectly with the U.S. in the role of intermediary.

The latter suggestion would seem to most closely approximate the proposed meeting of foreign ministers except that the ministers would meet face-to-face. It would coincide with the presence of foreign ministers in New York attending the opening sessions of the UN General Assembly. But Sadat's proposal and Vance's endorsement of it did not imply a UN role.

President Carter has himself suggested a meeting of foreign ministers while the General Assembly is in session but he has also expressed optimism that the Geneva conference could be reconvened this fall. However, the tone of Sadat's and Vance's remarks in Alexandria seemed to indicate that a Geneva meeting in the near future was unlikely.

Sadat Presents His View

Sadat flatly rejected Vance's proposal that a Geneva agreement incorporate normalization of relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors, a key point in Carter's delineation of the nature of a Mideast peace, as well as the idea that Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories be conducted in gradual stages over a period of five years. The Egyptian leader was said to have insisted that the Israeli pullback be completed within six months of signing a treaty.

Sadat said that while he was "willing to sign a peace agreement with Israel tomorrow" ending the state of belligerency between the countries, the question of diplomatic and trade relations with Israel, cultural and tourist exchanges, could be considered only after a peace settlement was concluded at Geneva.

Nevertheless, Sadat was conciliatory on other matters. He said he had no objections to Fahmy sitting at the same table with Dayan. He was also moderate in his remarks about Begin's various proposals. "To be frank, there are some positive elements, but also negative elements and we should work all of us to bring the whole thing together," Sadat said. The Jordanian newspaper Al Ahbar reported today that representatives of Egypt, Syria and Jordan will meet later this month to work out a joint position regarding the latest political developments.

In Beirut today, Vance was reported to have offered Lebanon \$25 million in U.S. military sales credits to help rebuild the Lebanese army badly mauled in that country's civil war. He also reportedly sounded out Sarkis on proposals to station United Nations forces near the Israeli border in southern Lebanon.

INS PROMISES TO MOVE AGAINST EX-NAZIS

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 (JTA)—The U.S.

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), under heavy Congressional pressure to speed the investigation and deportation action against more than 100 alleged Nazi war criminals living in the United States, said today it is on firmer ground now to expedite proceedings against them.

The promise to do so came at a House subcommittee hearing that followed an investigation started last April by the General Accounting Office (GAO), whether officials of the Justice Department, the parent agency of the INS, or other U.S. officials deliberately blocked action against the alleged Nazi criminals. The GAO is an arm of Congress.

Under questioning by Rep. Joshua Eilberg (D. Pa.), who described the INS role over the past 25 years as "disgraceful," the new INS commissioner, Leonel J. Castillo, told the subcommittee that the files of the Nazis will be opened both to the GAO and to the subcommittee's own personnel.

Castillo testified that new procedures had been set up that will bring "all existing files and materials connected with the Nazi war criminal program" from New York and other district offices to the central office in Washington. "From now on," he said, "the review of these files will be accomplished by attorneys rather than investigators."

Says Sound Procedures Developed

In addition, the subcommittee received a statement submitted by the State Department's Deputy Administrator for Security and Consular Affairs, John H. DeWitt, that "sound standard procedures and effective working relations have now been developed" to obtain testimony. DeWitt said that the "Soviet government has made a serious effort to be cooperative and helpful" although "the Soviets do not have a full appreciation of our evidentiary requirements."

The hearing before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship and International Law, of which Eilberg is chairman, was informed that INS investigators have been in Israel, meeting with 45 witnesses regarding 10 cases. Efforts also have been made to obtain testimony in Rumania and France.

Cites Obstacles In Getting Records

Earlier in the hearing, Victor L. Lowe, director of the GAO's general government division, charged that "our progress on this assignment" of reviewing the INS investigations "has been severely hampered by problems and delays in getting access to needed records." Despite the subcommittee's support, he said, "we have not been given proper access to investigative files and other records. Without proper access to a basic information for our work we cannot independently develop or verify information and the Congress cannot have adequate assurance as to the completeness of our work."

Nevertheless, Lowe told Rep. Sam Hall Jr. (D. Tex.) that before "12 months are up we'll have a report on each one of these cases" for the subcommittee. Delays in the completion of investigations, Lowe testified, were caused by court actions and legal conflicts, among other things.

This exasperated Rep. Harold O. Sawyer (R. Mich.) who exclaimed: "I've seen complicated things, but not one that goes on for 24 years. There is more than legal complication in this." Sawyer was apparently referring to the case of former Croatian Interior Minister Andrija Artukovic who has been successfully avoiding deportation or extradition to Yugoslavia since 1953. He is living in California.

Rep. Elizabeth Holfzman (D. N.Y.), long an outspoken critic of official foot-dragging on ferreting out and taking action against the war criminals, questioned Castillo and INS general counsel David Crosland why "not even all the witnesses" have yet been questioned in the case of Bishop Valerian Trifa although proceedings were instituted 27 months ago. Trifa is the former Rumanian Iron Guard leader who is living in a Detroit suburb. Castillo, a President Carter appointee, said, "I don't know why we didn't move more vigorously" against the Nazis, when he was asked by Eilberg for a reason for the delays.

DMC-LIKUD TALKS FOUNDERED; DMC TO REMAIN IN THE OPPOSITION RANKS

By Yitzhak Shargil and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 3 (JTA)--Coalition talks between the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC) and Likud have foundered and the party headed by Prof. Yigael Yadin will remain in the opposition ranks although its leaders have made it clear that it will act independently and will not form a Knesset bloc with the Labor Alignment.

Yadin said after breaking off negotiations last night, "We resumed the talks after we had received promises. These promises were not kept by the Likud." The DMC Central Committee was due to convene this evening to vote, on the basis of Yadin's recommendations, whether or not to join the Likud-led government. But the decision apparently already has been made and rejection is virtually certain.

The Labor Alignment's Knesset faction was elated by the news. But the DMC's No. 2 man, Amnon Rubinstein, promptly ruled out a union or any other form of "artificial bloc" with Labor. He noted that there were several areas of agreement between the Alignment and the DMC but also many areas of disagreement, especially on economic issues.

Rubinstein said on a radio interview: "We shall function in accordance with our principles, placing the good of the State above all considerations. We shall not be a hostile opposition." But on the other hand, the DMC will not soften its line against Likud on the possibility that it might join the coalition at some future time. He said his party would act in a "decisive but matter of course style of opposition."

As if to underline its independence of the Labor opposition, the DMC voted in the Knesset today for the government's proposed budget because, in Rubinstein's words: "we think it is good for the State."

Move Is A Blow To Begin

The break-off of talks was a blow to Premier Menachem Begin who had hoped to increase his narrow Knesset majority with the DMC's 15 seats. Begin reportedly offered various "compromises" to Yadin at their meeting last night but could not guarantee that his coalition partners, the National Religious Party (NRP) and the Aguda bloc, would accept them.

As matters now stand, the Knesset is almost evenly divided between a relatively large opposition in which "doveish" views predominate and a rightist, religious-oriented government coalition.

The coalition talks with the DMC, which have been going on almost from the day the Begin government took office, broke down partly because

the two parties could not agree on Cabinet portfolios and partly because the religious partners, notably the tiny Aguda, feared that the DMC's demands for electoral reforms would eliminate it from the political scene. The religious parties also demanded that the DMC vote along with the coalition on religious issues. The DMC insisted on freedom to vote as it chooses on those matters.

Begin now has the task of filling the government portfolios that had been left open for the DMC. These are the Welfare Ministry, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications and the Ministry of Justice. The Premier is expected to announce his appointments in the next few days.

ISRAEL PROTESTS FRANCE'S DECISION TO RESCIND ANTI-BOYCOTT MEASURE By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 3 (JTA)--Mordechai Gazit, Israel's Ambassador to France, has formally protested in Paris against the French government's decision to exclude Arab-imposed restrictions on trade with Israel from the anti-boycott law passed recently by the French Parliament. Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan revealed this step yesterday to the Knesset when he called the French move "a hostile act." (See separate story from France.)

"We cannot but consider this a hostile act against Israel," Dayan declared, "and we expect the French government to act without delay to correct it." But the Foreign Minister told the Knesset to think "seven times" before it decided on taking measures against France that "will only be self-defeating and self-humiliating."

Responding to three urgent motions on the French action, Dayan said he had doubts about which aspects of the problem should be discussed publicly. He spoke in support of "quiet diplomacy" when several MKs suggested that world Jewry should be mobilized in an anti-France boycott. The Knesset agreed to Dayan's suggestion to refer the matter to the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

ISRAELI, FRENCH OFFICIALS IN PARIS SEEK TO AVERT SPLIT OVER BOYCOTT By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Aug. 3 (JTA)--Mordechai Gazit, Israel's Ambassador to France, met here this afternoon with the Secretary General of the French Foreign Ministry, Jean-Marie Soutou, for "a clarification" of the French government's decision to rescind the recently approved law outlawing economic boycotts when based on race, religion or national origin as it applies to the Arab boycott against Israel.

While both France and Israel are angered over the French government's directive and Israel's reaction, both sides decided to treat today's meeting as "a clarification" and not an official protest.

Israel has been angered by the government's directive which has been rapped by members of Israel's Parliament and the Israeli press as an unfriendly gesture. The French government has, paradoxically, been irked by the Israeli protests, which sources here said used the incident to "re-launch former anti-French propaganda campaigns." The French sources also said privately that Israel "seems to forget recent improvements in Franco-Israeli relations."

Moves To Placate Each Other

After the Gazit-Soutou meeting, both sides went out of their way to express the hope that relations will not be worsened and that Israeli Prem-

ier Menachem Begin's official visit to France will take place as scheduled. France last month renewed the invitation it had extended to Begin's predecessor, Yitzhak Rabin, to pay an official visit to Paris. No date has been fixed for the visit which will be the first official one by an Israeli Premier.

The current incident was sparked by a French government directive last month instructing the state-controlled Foreign Trade Insurance Commission to underwrite French exports to the Arab states even if, and when, the contracts provide for anti-Israeli boycotts. The government directive explained that French exports to "oil-producing states" must be considered "a national priority." This directive is seen as a de facto cancellation of the June 7 anti-boycott law which was approved by the Parliament.

Jewish organizations in France are continuing to protest the government's directive. The French press has also been generally critical of the government's decision.

KNESSET APPROVES IL 123.9 BILLION BUDGET By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 3 (JTA)--The Knesset voted 70-34 with one abstention today in favor of the government's IL 123.9 billion budget for the current fiscal year. At the request of Finance Minister Simcha Ehrlich it was referred to committee which will re-submit it to the plenum later for the required final readings.

The voting was characterized by a sharp split between the two major opposition factions, the Labor Alignment and the Democratic Movement for Change. The DMC cast its 15 votes with the government coalition which also received the single vote of MK Samuel Flatto-Sharon. Kalman Kahane of the Poale Agudat Israel, a coalition partner, abstained.

The budget envisages an IL 4 billion deficit despite sharp cuts in government expenditures, including an IL 1.4 billion slash in the defense budget. Ehrlich insisted that the army's fighting ability would not be affected by the cut. He said the budget took into account the substitution of the value added tax (VAT) for the sales tax, a change that he claimed would yield double the revenue this year.

Labor Alignment economist Adi Amora criticized the budget for its cuts in government construction. He said it would cause an economic slowdown and unemployment because the construction industry is a key factor in Israel's economy and would exacerbate the housing shortage. But Meir Amit of the DMC, former head of Histadrut's Koor Industries, supported the budget. He said Israel's economic problems resulted from her desire to live like Europeans and work like Levantines.

LONDON (JTA)--Dr. Isaiah Friedman, one of the foremost historians of the Zionist movement, will take a post in Israel in the autumn after working for a number of years in Britain and the United States. He will be the visiting research professor at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Beersheba, where he will teach modern Jewish history and carry out research into the late David Ben Gurion's relations with the British government and the Arabs. Friedman, formerly of Dropsie College, Philadelphia, is also the author of a forthcoming volume, "Germany, Turkey and Zionism 1897-1918." His best known work is "The Question of Palestine, 1914-1918, British-Jewish-Arab Relations."

ZIONISTS PLANNING WAYS OF MARKING ISRAEL'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY WORLD-WIDE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Aug. 3 (JTA)—While the public debate rages here over the government's plan to hold a military parade as the focus of Israel's 30th Independence Day celebrations, a committee of World Zionist Organization Executive members chaired by Avraham Shenker is quietly planning less controversial ways of marking the event throughout the Jewish world.

Shenker, chairman of the WZO's Organization and Information Department, says it is still premature to speak of specifics—especially since his committee has not yet discussed its ideas with representatives of the government.

(Cabinet secretary Aryeh Naor has been appointed by Premier Menachem Begin "coordinator" of Independence Day preparations. The issue is scheduled for discussion at the first meeting of the government-WZO joint board which Begin has pledged will meet regularly every two months.)

Ideas On The Drawing Board

In general terms, Shenker outlined the following ideas that have been mooted:

- * The opening of the 29th Zionist Congress, slated for Feb. 20, 1978, will serve as the official opening of Israel's 30th anniversary celebrations both in the country and around the world.

- * Coincidentally with the Zionist Congress, a world Jewish identity event would be organized, with all the major Jewish organizations participating. Begin asked to arrange for groups of their members to attend. These "solidarity groups" would be invited to the Zionist Congress public sessions.

- * Travelling caravans purveying the message of Israel and Zionism would be sent out to some 150 Jewish communities throughout the world. The caravans would be rented in the various countries, and they would be manned by singers, dancers, scholars, speakers, and the latest in audio-visual aids. They would head for medium and small-size communities and would spread the word in the languages of the target communities. The communities would cooperate by arranging for public appearances by the various members of the caravan teams.

Will Involve Total Zionist Movement

- * Parallel to the Zionist Congress, but not necessarily simultaneously, a world congress of Jewish youth would be held in Jerusalem. Communal and synagogal bodies worldwide would be expected to cover the cost of sending young delegates to this congress.

- * An international quiz, along the lines of the traditional Independence Day Bible Quiz, on the subject of "One Hundred Years of Aliya and Hityashvut" (settlement), to coincide with the centenary next year of Petach Tikva, the first Jewish agricultural settlement will be held.

- * The number of seminar-tours of Israel organized by various overseas Jewish organizations should be "doubled and trebled" during the 30th anniversary year, Shenker said. The WZO must act as an encouraging factor in precipitating this.

- * A travelling exhibition on 30 years of Israel to tour the world, is being mounted, especially on campuses.

These are ideas involving the "total" Zionist movement, Shenker noted. But within the WZO each department is already at work readying its own projects, in its own particular ambit.

KIDS, TOY STORES URGED TO 'DISARM'

TEL AVIV, Aug. 3 (JTA)—Abie Nathan, who flew a private plane to Egypt in a one-man effort to make peace before the Six-Day War, has undertaken a private "disarmament campaign" aimed against the sale and use of toy weapons and military games. Nathan, who advertises his crusade over his "Voice of Peace" radio station which he operates offshore in the Mediterranean, has offered to buy the complete stock of war toys from any shop which agrees not to sell such games in the future.

One chain of toy stores agreed to Nathan's proposal and has sold him its complete stock of "arms." Nathan has also invited children to bring their toy guns, tanks, planes and submarines to a collection point, where the toy weapons are destroyed. The children's compensation is a special scroll with a quotation from the Bible: "And they shall not learn war anymore...."

GENOCIDE TREATY STALLED AGAIN

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 (JTA)—Efforts to secure Senate approval for United States ratification of the international genocide treaty have failed again, as Senators supporting the 28-year-old treaty agreed yesterday to postpone a debate on the issue, conceding they do not have enough votes to overcome the opposition.

The treaty, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, outlaws genocide, which it defines as acts "intended to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group" by killing or otherwise abusing its members.

The U.S. was a leading supporter of the treaty drafted in the aftermath of the Holocaust, but remains one of the few major countries still to ratify it. Being an international treaty, the President cannot sign it without a resolution of consent and approval from the Senate.

Although President Carter has gone on record as supporting U.S. ratification of the treaty, opponents have successfully lobbied against it. Conservatives, right-wing groups, and some constitutional and international law experts have opposed ratification, asserting that it could subject Americans, possibly even soldiers in combat, to extradition and trial in foreign countries, for alleged violations of the treaty.

Although its supporters generally concede it is mainly of symbolic value, they maintain it is morally incumbent on the U.S. to sign it. They said they would continue trying during the Senate August recess to line up the needed votes for Senate approval.

ADL RECEIVES \$100,000 GRANT TO SET UP HOLOCAUST INFORMATION CENTER

NEW YORK, Aug. 3 (JTA)—The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has received a \$100,000 grant from the Bruner Foundation, Inc. of New York, in support of the League's establishment of a Holocaust Information Center. The center, according to Nat Kameny, chairman of ADL's national program committee, is to serve as a major depository of audio-visual and teaching materials on the Holocaust. These materials and ADL technical assistance will be available to educational institutions and organizations interested in Holocaust studies. Theodore Freedman, ADL's national program division director, will serve as project coordinator.