

VANCE STILL HOPES FOR GENEVA TALKS THIS YEAR DESPITE DIFFERENCES WHICH, HE SAYS, REMAIN BETWEEN THE PARTIES

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 10 (JTA)—Secretary of State Cyrus Vance still hopes that the Geneva conference will be convened this year. Speaking at a press conference in Jerusalem today at the end of his two-day visit to Israel, Vance expressed that hope although admitting "he would have liked to make more progress," and that "sharp differences still existed between the parties." (See related story.)

It was evident from Vance's statements that the existing gaps on the key issues were not bridged during this visit. The best he could say on the positive side was that the visit was useful, in that "we have been able to get into much more detail on the substance of the issues."

Vance said: "We have found that in some cases what appeared to be irreconcilable differences, have disappeared. My hope is that if we can continue to deal more concretely with the specifics, we will find it possible to further narrow these differences, and isolate those key issues where it is impossible to narrow the gap." But he added, "the fundamental differences remain. The parties remain divided on the key issues—which must be resolved if progress must be made toward a settlement."

Main Point Of Contention

The main point of contention was the question of a Palestinian representation at the Geneva talks. So far, Vance said, there has been no change that indicates that the Palestine Liberation Organization is willing to accept UN Security Council Resolution 242 and specifically the recognition of Israel's right to exist. As long as this is not done, the United States will not talk to the PLO, he said. "If they recognize Israel's right to exist, we will talk to them," he added.

Vance did not rule out the possibility that when he meets with the foreign ministers of the Middle East countries in New York next month, the U.S. would also talk to the PLO assuming that by then the PLO would have changed its negative position on Resolution 242. In response to a question, he said the Israelis did not indicate that in that case, they would refrain from participating in the New York talks.

As far as the Israelis are concerned, "they have made it very, very clear to me that they oppose a Palestinian entity," Vance said. Therefore, he said, the question of Palestinian representation at the Geneva conference remains one of the unresolved issues. "I cannot predict how it will be resolved," he stated.

No Imposed Settlement

Vance said the U.S. did not intend to impose a settlement, but wanted to assist Israel and the Arab countries in reaching an agreement. Thus, the U.S. presented proposals which, Vance said, would narrow the procedural and substantive differences between the parties. "We have sought reaction of the various parties to these proposals and we have now set forward the basis which we believe should be the framework for the Geneva conference."

He said the U.S. would discourage any attempt to amend 242 as the PLO might demand. "Our commitment to the security of Israel is clear and unequivocal, and we will continue to furnish Israel with what is necessary to preserve its security," he said. Vance stated that he would meet with Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet Ambassador to the U.S., to inform him of his tour "and discuss how we, as co-chairmen, can proceed to Geneva."

BEGIN: NO U.S. PRESSURE ON ISRAEL

By Gil Sedan and David Landau

JERUSALEM, Aug. 10 (JTA)—Premier Menachem Begin ridiculed reports of an Israeli-American confrontation over the issue of having the Palestine Liberation Organization represented at the proposed Geneva talks and affirmed that there was no pressure whatsoever on Israel to accept the PLO at the talks.

Begin, who offered this assessment to reporters today at the end of the first round of talks with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, described his meetings with Vance as "excellent," conducted in a most friendly atmosphere and devoid of any "confrontation with the American Secretary of State." He added: "Sometimes I suspect people are standing with a stopwatch waiting for a confrontation."

But when pressed to react to President Carter's recent statements regarding PLO participation in Geneva talks if it accepted UN Security Council Resolution 242, Begin hinted his dissatisfaction by merely saying that he would refrain from criticizing the President. "Our stand toward the PLO has not changed. Under no circumstances will we negotiate with the PLO." Begin said the political momentum was continuing and that the next step in the process will be when the Middle East foreign ministers meet in the United States next month.

The Premier expressed confidence that the U.S. would neither propose nor agree to inserting changes in Security Council Resolution 242 along the lines demanded by the PLO that the resolution's call for "achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem" be modified to uphold the "Palestinian national entity."

Says Vance Scored 'Achievement'

Begin's optimism was also evident last night during a lengthy after-dinner speech at a state banquet in the Knesset when he claimed that things were "not as dark" as the press had painted them recently and praised Vance for having scored "a great achievement in the cause of peace" during his current Mideast mission. The Premier, however, did not reveal what that "achievement" was.

Nevertheless, Begin delivered to Vance a grim lecture on the aims and methods of the PLO and why Israel could never accept the terrorist organization as a negotiating partner. The Premier said the PLO's philosophy "is based on an Arabic Mein Kampf" and the PLO could therefore never be a negotiating partner "because such is its philosophy."

He cited sections of the "Palestinian National Covenant" to prove the point, adding: "It is a very serious matter to us, our dear friend, Mr. Secretary." He referred to the Holocaust in which the Jewish people had been "fertilized" and de-

clared that it was the duty of "the man who bears responsibility for the future of his country to learn from the experiences of the past."

Vance's reply was less specific, less dramatic and more generally couched, but it was clear that he did not necessarily accept Begin's argument. He urged Israel "to strike out down paths that are unfamiliar" in order to reach peace.

The peace process would involve "uncertainty and change" for the parties, Vance continued, and the U.S., acting in its role as catalyst, might proceed "with more activism than Israel would prefer." But he invoked the "mutual understanding" between the U.S. and Israel as the cause for hope of eventual success. The choice was between ever more destructive wars and "bold moves" towards peace, Vance said. "It won't be easy or brief."

U.S. Might Be Floating A Trial Balloon

The new U.S. statements by Carter in Plains, Ga. and by State Department officials with Vance, that if the PLO accepted Resolution 242 it could be admitted to Geneva, clouded the atmosphere during the first afternoon of talks between Vance and the Israeli negotiators. But Israeli sources maintained afterwards that the Secretary had not pressed Israel on this matter—perhaps because there had not been a positive response from authoritative PLO leaders.

Some observers opined that the American aim in making its new suggestion regarding the PLO was in effect to put up a "two-way trial balloon." If the PLO still responds favorably, then the U.S. will indeed back its presence at Geneva, in defiance of the Israeli stand. If, however, the PLO declines to moderate its position by accepting 242, then the U.S. and the moderate Arab states would be freer to move towards Geneva without the PLO.

All the Arab states which Vance visited have agreed, at any rate, to have their foreign ministers attend further talks with Vance in New York next month during the UN General Assembly. This itself, in the view of some Israeli sources, might have been the "achievement" to which Begin had referred.

VANCE MEETS WITH WEST BANK NOTABLES

TEL AVIV, Aug. 10 (JTA)—Secretary of State Cyrus Vance talked to six West Bank notables today during a garden party in his honor at the home of Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan. Vance later told newsmen he was happy to have had the opportunity to meet the West Bank representatives but refused to disclose what they said to him.

The West Bank notables were among the hundreds of guests who attended the party in the museum-like garden which Dayan has filled with archaeological findings. Vance was seen talking to Premier Menachem Begin and to Prof. Yigael Yadin, head of the Democratic Movement for Change.

Yadin later told newsmen that Begin had hoped to shift the Middle East peace talks into direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states. But now with proximity talks scheduled for New York the United States would again be the mediator and the situation was the same as it had been under the previous government, Yadin said.

ZOA CHARGES THAT THE U.S. IS PLANNING TO DEAL WITH THE PLO

CINCINNATI, Aug. 10 (JTA)—Rabbi Joseph P. Sternstein, president of the Zionist Organization of America, today accused the State Department of planning to back down on American commitments not to deal with the Palestine Liberation Organization until it recognizes Israel's right to exist.

Sternstein, addressing a meeting honoring

Dr. Alfred Gottschalk, president of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), charged that the PLO "has made it clear that even if they accept UN Security Council Resolution 242, it will not mean recognition, of the State of Israel." He noted the optimistic announcements being issued by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance during his present Middle East tour and criticized him for "bowing to Arab dictates and then puffing up a supposed new-found PLO moderation." The plan, continued Sternstein, "is to free the United States from its commitment to Israel not to deal directly with the PLO."

Sternstein criticized President Carter for suggesting it may be necessary for him to go directly to the American public if Israel is adamant. "It is an extremely dangerous threat," he said. "It is unacceptable. All public pressure dilutes America's position as an honest mediator and makes her a partner in the negotiations. This is contrary to all past American policy as well as being contrary to President Carter's own stated position."

The speech was made at a dinner sponsored by the ZOA's Cincinnati District and the local Jewish community, which is endowing an Alfred Gottschalk Department of Jewish Studies at the ZOA Kfar Silver Youth and Education Center in Israel. HUC-JIR is the Reform Rabbinical Seminary in America.

EFFECT OF DEFENSE BUDGET CUT

TEL AVIV, Aug. 10 (JTA)—Israeli industry will suffer the most by the IL 1.4 billion cut in the defense budget, according to details on the reductions outlined today by Defense Minister Ezer Weizman. But Weizman stressed the cuts will not harm the army's development and preparedness program as Chief of Staff Gen. Mordechai Gur said earlier this week. He said Gur agrees with the cuts.

The reduction in the defense budget includes a decrease of IL 622 million in military goods bought in Israel and a IL 153 million cut in construction costs. The new budget will also reduce purchases abroad by IL 550 million.

ERNST BLOCH DEAD AT 92

BONN, Aug. 10 (JTA)—Ernst Bloch, regarded as one of the most brilliant and controversial 20th Century philosophers, has died of heart failure at Tuebingen, West Germany. He was 92 years old. The son of wealthy parents, Bloch, regarded as a "utopian Marxist," studied in Berlin and, as an avowed pacifist, went into exile in Switzerland during World War I.

His first major work, "Der Geist der Utopie" (The Spirit of Utopia), appeared in 1918, reflecting a mixture of Christian mysticism, Jewish messianism and cabalistic ideas. Along with other prominent German Jewish philosophers such as Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse, Bloch emigrated to America in the 1930s where he wrote his main work, "Das Prinzip Hoffnung" (The Principle of Hope).

Later he settled in East Germany, lecturing at Leipzig University, but because of political differences with the ruling party later emigrated once again, to West Germany in 1957. Bloch held the post of philosophy professor at Tuebingen University until his death.

UNRWA GETS SPECIAL \$2 MILLION CONTRIBUTION FROM SAUDI ARABIA By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Aug. 10 (JTA)—The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) announced today that the

Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations had informed the UN Secretary General and the Commissioner-General of UNRWA of his government's decision to make a special contribution of \$2 million to the agency's programs in 1977.

This pledge is in addition to Saudi Arabia's regular contribution of \$1.2 million for this year. Saudi Arabian contributions to UNRWA since 1950 total over \$31 million. Both the special and the regular contributions are allocated to UNRWA's regular expenditure in 1977, presently budgeted at \$134 million.

UNRWA still faces the prospect of a deficit on this budget of \$13.8 million. In addition, the extraordinary one-time cost of housing the Palestine refugees displaced by the conflict in Lebanon is estimated at \$12 million, to which UNRWA itself is unable to allocate funds until the deficit on the regular budget has been covered. Of the \$12 million, a specially earmarked sum of \$3.3 million has been pledged.

CONSERVATIVE, REFORM DELEGATION TO MEET WITH BEGIN, ISRAELI OFFICIALS NEXT WEEK ON LAW OF RETURN ISSUE

By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, Aug. 10 (JTA)--The Rabbinical Assembly, the association of Conservative rabbis, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the Reform rabbinical association, reported today that a joint delegation will leave Sunday for Israel to meet Aug. 17 with Premier Menachem Begin and other government officials on the issue of a proposed amendment to Israel's Law of Return.

A six-member delegation of Reform and Conservative rabbis and laymen met with Begin here July 24 during the Premier's visit to the United States and urged him not to seek a change in the Law of Return in a way which would reject conversions by non-Orthodox rabbis. After the discussion, Begin invited the Conservative and Reform leaders to come to Israel to discuss the problem further, at a date to be determined.

The Premier told the delegation here that it was his personal conviction that the law should be amended to require conversions only "according to halacha," and that he intended to exert his best efforts to obtain such an amendment. This was in accordance with a personal commitment he made to the National Religious Party and the Agudath Israel bloc among concessions made to obtain their participation in a 63-member Likud-led coalition government.

The delegation, which will be in Israel for 10 days, will meet with Begin, Interior Minister Yosef Burg of the NRP and other officials in Jerusalem for the discussion. Under the label of "Who is a Jew," the matter has been in dispute in Israel for many years. On the question of Jewish identity, the Law of Return refers only to individuals who have a Jewish mother or who were converted to Judaism.

Orthodox elements have sought for years to have the words "according to halacha" added to the Law of Return. The Orthodox interpret the phrase to bar conversions under non-Orthodox auspices.

The delegation going to Israel is made up of Rabbi Eli Pitlichik, CCAR president; Rabbi Joseph Glaser, CCAR executive vice-president; Rabbi Stanley Rabinowitz, RA president; and Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, RA executive vice-president.

They were members of the delegation which presented Begin here with a statement declaring that "any unilateral attempt" to change a 1970 agreement which in effect gave full rights under the Law of Return to all persons converted to Judaism by

rabbis of their communities would be both "disruptive to harmony" and "harmful to prospects for aliyah." The statement also said world Jewry was "not a religious monolith."

PRESIDENTS CONFERENCE ASSAILS GREECE FOR SUPPORTING PLO ADMISSION TO ECWA

NEW YORK, Aug. 10 (JTA)--The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations has assailed the Greek delegation to the United Nations for supporting the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the UN Economic Commission for West Asia (ECWA).

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, chairman of the Conference, made public today a letter he had sent to George Papoulias, Greece's Ambassador to the UN, voicing "shock and dismay" at the vote of the Greek delegation to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) last month in favor of full membership status for the PLO in ECWA. Greece was the only Western nation to vote in favor of the successful PLO bid for full membership status.

Noting that UN bodies were composed of member-states, Schindler wrote: "To grant the PLO the status of a state makes a mockery of international law and further undermines the credibility of United Nations procedures. At the same time, it subverts efforts aimed at bringing about a full and lasting peace in the Middle East." The decision of ECOSOC "can scarcely be seen as other than a profoundly illegal and immoral act," Schindler said.

The vote in ECOSOC to grant member-status to the PLO was 27-11. Twelve countries abstained. The United States voted against the PLO, along with Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and the United Kingdom.

BEGIN WARNS AGAINST ASSIMILATION

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 10 (JTA)--Premier Menachem Begin declared in a taped message to the 52nd annual convention of the American Mizrahi Women, which ended here today, that the Jewish people "is losing tens of thousands of its sons and daughters through intermarriage and assimilation." He told the delegates that "your task is to prevent this process from continuing."

Begin also urged the delegates "to bring our young girls nearer to tradition, to instill into their hearts the love of the Jewish people" and of Judaism and "of our customs," including "lighting the Sabbath candles and attending synagogue services." He also said that "the second language of every Jewish youngster should be Hebrew."

Zvi Brosh, Israel's consul general in Los Angeles, told the delegates, at another session, that Israel had been strengthened by the election of "a government that, when it comes to negotiations for peace, speaks for the overwhelming majority of Israelis." Brosh also said that he felt there is "a better chance" now for progress toward Mideast peace than at any time during the past 30 years but he cautioned the delegates against optimism created by a press which "lauds every hint of Arab moderation." * * *

NEW YORK (JTA)--Three major Jewish organizations have announced they will keep a close watch on the way American companies respond to Arab boycott demands. The American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress and Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith said they plan to use their findings to recommend regulations for implementing the law enacted June 22.

SPECIAL INTERVIEW WITH DAVID MARKISH

By David Friedman

NEW YORK, Aug. 10 (JTA)--When David Markish was a child in Moscow his non-Jewish classmates taunted him with the demand that he go to Israel. But when Markish, the son of the martyred Soviet Yiddish writer Peretz Markish, grew up and sought to emigrate to Israel, Soviet authorities denied his wish for 14 years until 1972.

Markish, who is himself a writer and author of a novel recently published in the United States called "A New World for Simon Ashkenazy," which is about his family, was interviewed in the office of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry under whose auspices he is in the United States. He is here to mark the 25th anniversary of the murder of his father and 23 other Soviet Yiddish writers and poets on Aug. 12, 1952 on Stalin's orders. He will be making appearances in New York, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Chicago.

The 39-year-old Markish said that in Israel where he lives in Neve-Monason, a suburb of Tel Aviv, "I feel like a sabra." He said because of the anti-Semitism of his classmates in the Soviet Union he always felt Israel was his real home even before his father was arrested. He remembers seeing the Israeli flag flying from the Israeli Embassy in Moscow in 1948 and saying "that is my flag."

Markish said his non-Jewish friends in the Soviet Union called him "the Khazak from Jerusalem." (After his father's arrest, Markish, his mother, his brother and a cousin were exiled to Khazakistan where they stayed until after Stalin's death. They did not know of Peretz Markish's death until the government informed them in 1955.)

Tried To Emigrate In 1958

Speaking mostly in Hebrew and a little English, Markish said in 1958 he went to Warsaw in an unsuccessful attempt to emigrate. He returned to Moscow but the KGB knew he had visited the Israeli Embassy and from then on he was watched. He noted that when he tried to go to Mongolia to do research he was denied permission because of his Warsaw trip even though he pointed out the only place he could go was to China or back to the USSR. His brother, Shimon, got out of the USSR in 1960 through Hungary and went to Israel before accepting a university post in Geneva.

David Markish applied for an exit visa in 1971. His wife, Irena, was allowed to emigrate that year and Markish and his mother were given visas in November, 1972.

No Future For Jews In USSR

Markish believes that there is no future for Jews who want to remain Jews in the Soviet Union. He said a Russian on a bus or subway will say he smells something, meaning a Jew. With this type of anti-Semitism prevalent throughout the society many Jews who want to remain in the USSR decide to no longer be Jews, he said.

Markish said that the Soviet Union wants to stamp out Jewish culture. He said Hebrew is outlawed and because many young Jews want to learn Hebrew the Soviet authorities have been increasing Yiddish classes as a measure against Hebrew.

But Markish stressed that although Stalin himself was anti-Semitic, the arrest of his father and other Yiddish writers and the later "doctors' plot" was more a political act than anything else. He explained that in the 1930s Stalin's purges were aimed at wiping out the nationalist movements throughout the Soviet Union which were seen as a

danger to Russia. By killing the intelligentsia, Stalin destroyed the "tongue" of the various nationalities in the USSR, he said.

Markish said after World War II a new generation of intelligentsia had arisen and there was a "new wind" of nationalism sweeping through the various peoples in the USSR. He said Stalin aimed to wipe this out, too.

After the arrest of the Jewish writers and particularly during the "doctors' plot" period, there was great fear among the Jewish people, Markish said. He said the propaganda against Jewish doctors and engineers affected the ordinary people and some Jewish doctors and engineers were "lynched."

In 1955-56, things got better, Markish said. He noted this period was a "golden time" for all people in the USSR. Markish believes the present regime is again in fear of nationalistic feelings and while he said he didn't know whether it will lead to terror and killings again, he did say it is always a "possibility."

Markish, who returns to Israel Aug. 22, is working on a new novel about Bohemian life in the USSR. He writes in Russian and his works are translated into Hebrew, English and other languages. But Markish is proudest of one of his other creations, a three-year-old son born in Israel, named Peretz.

JEWISH CULTURAL GROUP CONCERNED ABOUT FUTURE OF JEWS IN THE USSR

NEW YORK, Aug. 10 (JTA)--The Congress for Jewish Culture, on the eve of the 25th anniversary of the execution of 24 Yiddish writers, poets and intellectuals by the Stalin regime, called upon Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin "to relay to your government our deep concern about the future survival of the Jewish minority as a cultural and religious entity" in the Soviet Union.

This request to Dobrynin, in a telegram signed by Dr. Israel Knox, president, and Hyman Bass, executive director of the Congress, also stated that the execution constituted a "miscarriage of justice under the Stalin regime" which "resulted in the liquidation of all Jewish cultural institutions and schools."

The telegram added: "We consider the denial of the cultural right and the continued prohibition to re-establish the cultural institutions which Soviet Jewry enjoyed until 1948 as a great injustice and reflecting a policy contrary to the position of the Soviet government after the October Revolution.... We urge the restitution to Soviet Jewry all cultural rights guaranteed by the Soviet constitution to national minorities."

The Congress, which was formed in 1948, promotes Yiddish publications and cultural activities in this country and Israel. It publishes the Yiddish literary magazine, *Zukunft*, and sponsors an annual H. Leivick Award. It also tries to collect and restore Yiddish literature destroyed during the Holocaust.

WASHINGTON (JTA)--State Department officials Wednesday declined to comment on the request by Sen. James Abourezk (D-SD) that the United States investigate whether any Israeli military aid for Christians in southern Lebanon under Palestinian attacks involves U.S. equipment. Abourezk wrote President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance that any transfer by Israel of U.S. supplied weapons to a third party without the President's prior consent would violate the Arms Export Control Act.