

PUZZLEMENT BY SADAT'S CRITICISM OF ISRAEL'S DELEGATION TO CAIRO

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 5 (JTA)—Israeli officials appeared puzzled today by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's apparent concern that Israel's delegation to the Cairo conference will be on the level of "experts" rather than top Cabinet policy-makers. The Egyptian leader implied that he was disappointed with the composition of the Israeli team when he told an American newsmen at his home yesterday that the Israeli "experts might bog down the talks with details rather than focus on major political issues."

Observers here noted that it was Egypt's letter of invitation to Israel last month that determined the diplomatic level of the forthcoming Cairo talks. The letter, addressed to Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, invited him "to appoint your representative." "Clearly, the Egyptians did not expect Dayan to appoint himself or Premier Menachem Begin as his "representative," the observers said, but were themselves thinking in terms of officials rather than ministers.

It was Begin who named his top political aide and confidant, Elishav Ben-Elissar, Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, to head the Israeli team in Cairo. Given Begin's highly centralized style of governing, Ben-Elissar is expected to reflect the views at the very top level of government in Jerusalem. He will be in constant communication with Begin during the Cairo conference.

Even so, observers did not rule out the possibility that at some point in the conference, secret talks at the highest level might take place between Israel and Egypt, probably in the Sinai buffer zone far from the news media gathered in Cairo. Such talks were considered likely in the event that a major substantive breakthrough or a deadlock in the Cairo talks seemed imminent.

Working On 'Draft Peace Treaty'

Meanwhile, Ben-Elissar and Israel's second negotiator, Meir Rosenne, legal advisor to the Foreign Ministry, were reportedly at work on a "draft treaty for peace with Egypt" which they hope can serve as a starting point for the Cairo conference.

The original draft was worked out earlier this year by Rosenne and Attorney General Aharon Barak and was submitted to the neighboring Arab states through the U.S. It is designed to serve as a prototype for peace agreements with each confrontation country. Officials here note that Egypt never formally rejected it. Reports from Cairo say Egypt is preparing a draft of its own.

The Israeli draft is said to concentrate in detail on the "components of peace" and relies heavily on precedents set by other peace treaties of comparatively recent date. It is intentionally vague on the territorial issues which are expected to be stressed by the Egyptians.

Some officials here admit that Israel does not know what to expect in Cairo since there is no prearranged agenda for the talks. The Israeli delegation, therefore, must be prepared for all

possibilities. Israel's negotiating position is expected to get final approval at next Sunday's Cabinet meeting after Begin's return from his visit to Britain.

Doves Holding Back

Cabinet doves, mainly members of the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC), but believed to include members of other coalition factions as well, have reportedly decided not to press the government at this stage to declare its readiness in principle for territorial concessions on the West Bank. They are said to believe that such pressure now would weaken the hand of Israel's negotiators and defeat their own purpose. The doves insist that they will act when the time is right if they feel the Begin government is not being sufficiently flexible.

Preparations are in full swing here for the technical and organizational aspects of the Cairo conference. An inter-ministerial committee is organizing the manpower which will consist of dozens of communications technicians, security personnel, secretaries and translators. Only men are being selected in deference to the customs of the Egyptian hosts.

In Tel Aviv, a Defense Ministry "think tank" headed by Defense Minister Ezer Weizman is working on strategic options related to an agreement with Egypt in Sinai. They are concentrating on the questions of free navigation through the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Suez, early warning systems, demilitarization and other "on-the-ground" arrangements.

Composition Of Egyptian Team

Cairo announced yesterday the composition of the Egyptian negotiating team. It will be headed by Ahmed Esmat Meguid, Egypt's Ambassador to the United Nations. His colleagues will be Osama el-Baz, foreign affairs advisor to Egyptian Vice President Husni Mubarak, and Gen. Taha Magdoub, who participated in the 1973 cease-fire negotiations and in the negotiations that led to the Sinai interim agreements of 1975.

Meguid recently walked out of the General Assembly when the Syrian Ambassador delivered a bitter attack on Sadat's peace initiative. El-Baz was a top advisor to former Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy who resigned after Sadat's trip to Jerusalem.

VANCE TO VISIT MIDEAST, INCLUDING CAIRO AND JERUSALEM, TO EXPLAIN U.S. SUPPORT FOR CAIRO CONFERENCE

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Dec. 5 (JTA)—In a renewed flurry of U.S. diplomatic activity in the Middle East, the State Department confirmed today that Secretary of State Cyrus Vance has been directed by President Carter to visit five and possibly six Middle Eastern countries, beginning Friday, to explain U.S. support for the forthcoming Cairo conference and to reassure the non-participating countries that the U.S. continues to favor a "comprehensive settlement" of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Vance will go to Cairo Dec. 9 and will be in Jerusalem Dec. 10-11. Later he will go to Jordan and Lebanon and will end his trip in Saudi Arabia on Dec. 15. He has not been invited to Syria.

State Department spokesman Hodding Carter said Vance will be accompanied by Assistant Secretary

of State for Near Eastern Affairs Alfred L. Atherton and Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Philip Habib. Habib, the State Department's third ranking official, is presently in Moscow consulting with Soviet Mideast experts. He left on his mission unannounced last Friday.

Carter said that Atherton would return to Cairo before Vance completes his Middle East rounds to attend the conference as the U.S. representative. The Cairo talks are expected to open Dec. 14 between Israel and Egypt. A United Nations observer will be present.

Concern In Israel Over U.S. Pressure

(Concern was expressed in Jerusalem today that because Vance's trip is intended to bolster the Cairo conference he is likely to press Israel for greater flexibility in order to increase its chances of success. Israeli observers saw the trip, coupled with Habib's visit to Moscow, as an indication that the U.S. intends to resume a central role in the Mideast peacemaking process after belatedly giving its blessings to the Cairo talks.

(They believe Washington is now actively supporting the strategy of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and will make a last minute attempt to persuade Jordan to attend the Cairo conference and to reassure Saudi Arabia which has been less than enthusiastic over Sadat's initiatives but has not openly criticized them.)

Not A Negotiating Trip

At today's State Department briefing for reporters, chief spokesman Hodding Carter recalled President Carter's assertion at his press conference last Wednesday that the Cairo meeting is "a very constructive step on the road to peace" and to a comprehensive settlement later in Geneva. He said Vance will be exchanging views with Middle East leaders at the highest levels since "surely significant events" have taken place in recent weeks.

The State Department spokesman stressed that "the present Egyptian-Israeli initiatives have our full support" and insisted that Vance's journey "is not a negotiating trip. He is not carrying U.S. proposals at all," Carter said. "He is carrying an accurate sense of how we feel" and will try to get the views of Middle East leaders in "face-to-face talks" with them, not only regarding the Cairo talks but also thereafter.

He said the absence of a Syrian invitation was due presumably to President Hafez Assad's presence in Tripoli, Libya where he joined a "confrontation" slate of Algeria, Libya, South Yemen and the Palestine Liberation Organization in opposition to Sadat.

Asked if Vance's purpose was to enlarge the Cairo conference, Carter said the Secretary was going to "explain why Cairo is useful" and to express "his hope that they (the non-participants) keep an open mind on it."

"Frankly," Carter said, "it is not the objective of this trip to get them to change their mind. Primarily it is not realistic to expect change to take place" by the time the Cairo meeting opens. He said that Habib had no "expectation" that the Soviet-Union would change its mind about going to Cairo. He denied, in reply to a question, that Habib went to Moscow to reassure the Soviets that the U.S. initiative was not a take-over of the Mideast negotiating process. At another point, Carter insisted that Vance's trip was not an attempt "to seize the stage in any way or undermine" the Cairo meeting, but simply to "see how the other parties feel."

A White House Initiative

He said the initiative originated in the White House and "we asked the parties if it would be useful." He said the trip was welcomed by Egypt and Israel. Asked about reports from Tripoli that the PLO said it would have no part of the Geneva conference or UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and thus, apparently, has pulled out of the realm of negotiations, Carter said it was difficult to make an assessment without more "authoritative reports."

With respect to PLO participation in negotiations, Carter reiterated: "We have an absolute requirement of adherence to 242 and 338." He said the U.S.-Israeli working paper on Geneva conference procedures was "still a valuable tool" and that a Geneva conference later this winter was still possible. With respect to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim's proposal for a pre-Geneva meeting of all parties to the Middle East conflict at UN headquarters, Carter said, "We are waiting for results from the other parties before making a decision."

Egypt Breaks Diplomatic Ties

(Meanwhile, Cairo announced today that Egypt has severed diplomatic relations with Syria, Libya, Algeria, Iraq and South Yemen and ordered their diplomatic missions out of Egypt within 24 hours. The report, by the official Middle East News Agency, came after four Arab countries, meeting in Tripoli, Libya, agreed to freeze relations with Egypt in protest against President Anwar Sadat's peace initiative. Earlier, Egypt recalled its ambassadors to the opposition countries for consultations. Today, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry ordered all Egyptian diplomatic personnel home.)

MENDES-FRANCE, SARTRE URGE ISRAEL TO RECOGNIZE THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Dec. 5 (JTA)--Two prominent French personalities, former Premier Pierre Mendes-France and philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, appealed yesterday to Israel to recognize the Palestinian people. Mendes-France, who was in Israel last month during the visit of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, said in an interview with the Socialist weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur* that Israel should grant the Palestinian people the same rights Israel has.

The French Jewish elder statesman urged Israel not only to make concessions but to "make them fast." He said this was necessary to enable Sadat to tell other Arab countries, "I am advancing. I am obtaining something." He noted that "it might be difficult for Israel to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization but can accept to let the Palestinians freely express their desire. Israelis want to be free citizens, they cannot refuse this to others."

Sartre, a near recluse who has not appeared or spoken in public for several years, made his appeal to Israel to recognize the "Palestinian nation" on the front page of *Le Monde*. Sartre, who never uses his academic titles and who turned down the Nobel Prize, signed an appeal "to my Israeli friends" with his title of Honorary Doctor from Hebrew University to emphasize that his words were said on Israel's behalf. The need for a Palestinian state, he stressed, "is to enable the Palestinians to live" as a people and to determine their own future. Sartre concluded that since Sadat's visit to Israel "everything has become possible."

BRITAIN PROMISES TO OPPOSE EEC INTERFERENCE IN MIDEAST PEACE TALKS

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Dec. 5 (JTA)—The official portion of Israeli Premier Menachem Begin's visit to England ended last night with a promise by Britain to oppose interference by the European Economic Community (EEC) in Middle East peace negotiations. The pledge, in an after dinner speech by Prime Minister James Callaghan, followed an appeal by the Israeli leader that the European nations should not make proclamations and suggestions which might endanger Israel's population.

Instead, Begin urged, they should give the forthcoming negotiations between Israel and Egypt a chance to succeed. He asked Callaghan, who was going to Brussels today, to assure his EEC colleagues that Israel would do her best to make an agreement possible.

In reply, Callaghan told Begin he would tell his EEC partners that at this moment, countries which were not directly concerned in the Arab-Israel conflict, should refrain from "stridently advancing solutions."

Callaghan's positive reaction set the seal on what both the British and the Israeli participants acknowledged as an outstandingly successful visit. Begin had not only overcome many historic tensions in Anglo-Israeli relations, he had also convinced Britain of Israel's good faith in seeking a comprehensive settlement of the conflict with the Arabs.

The mood was reflected at last night's dinner given by Begin and his wife, Aliza, both in the speeches and in the guest list. Besides other members of the British Cabinet and opposition leaders, it included two former British Prime Ministers, Edward Heath and Sir Harold Wilson. The men all wore yarmulkas as Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits kindled the first Chanukah candle and led the singing of Maaz Tzur.

Amity Between Begin, Callaghan

Begin's speech called for a revival of the spirit of the Balfour Declaration, explained Israel's over-riding need for security, recalled Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and looked forward to the day when the Middle East would be at peace.

Callaghan, referring to the "special intimacy" between Israel and Britain, said that the day of talks he had held with Begin was one of the most hopeful he had spent in many years in discussing the Middle East. So often in the past he had come away "baffled by procedure," he said, and now at last, they were discussing the substance of the Arab-Israel conflict.

Praising Begin for his "charm, single-mindedness, tenacity and faithfulness to your people," Callaghan noted that there were also "painful memories" in Anglo-Israeli relations. But the British people had always shown a remarkable capacity for reconciliation, he said.

Begin, recalling the formation by Britain—at the request of Zeev Jabotinsky—of the Jewish Legion during World War I to fight for the liberation of Palestine and the impact which it had had all over the Jewish world, said: "Let us renew the spirit of those days." Today, too, Britain and Israel shared common ideals of parliamentary democracy, individual liberty and social justice, Begin said. The free world, to which they both belonged, was shrinking. "Let us defend it together," he said.

Begin today began a round of intensive en-

gagements with the Jewish community, political groups and the media. This morning he briefed about 80 Jewish leaders from Britain and Ireland on prospects for peace following the Sadat visit to Jerusalem. He then toured the House of Commons, and later initiated a world-wide Soviet Jewry week by kindling Chanukah lights at Saint John's Wood Synagogue.

He told the audience at the synagogue that world Jewry would continue to campaign on behalf of Soviet Jews who want to emigrate to Israel. Recalling the origin of Chanukah, the persecution of Jews over the centuries and the Nazi Holocaust, Begin declared: "Now that there is a land of Israel, the rulers of the Kremlin should hear that we Jews will not rest until every Jew in the Soviet Union who wants to do so is allowed to go to Israel to live in freedom with his brethren...." In the evening he was guest of honor at a Joint Israel Appeal dinner.

LARGEST CHANUKAH MENORAH LIT

NEW YORK, Dec. 5 (JTA)—A Chanukah menorah, 30 feet high by 24 feet wide, was lit last night in Manhattan's Grand Army Plaza at 59th St. and Fifth Ave., one of the city's busiest crossroads. Several thousand people were present to watch the lighting ceremony. The Lubavitch Youth Organization, sponsor of the menorah, said it was the largest ever built. A Lubavitcher representative was hoisted by a cherry picker crane to light the one-foot high candle which is enclosed in glass to enable it to burn through the night.

Rabbi Shmuel Butman, director of the youth group, said the purpose of the project was to give the people of New York "the opportunity to enjoy the flavor and spirit of the Festival of Lights." The menorah will be lit every night during Chanukah with an additional candle being added each night until all eight candles are lit.

DINITZ AND GHORBAL—LIKE OLD FRIENDS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 5 (JTA)—Egyptian Ambassador Ashraf Ghorbal and Israeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz, who have been representing their countries to the United States for several years without communicating with each other, conversed like old friends and toasted each other at a private dinner last night.

"It's a genuinely warm kind of evening," an official of the American Broadcasting Company which arranged the dinner at the Madison Hotel told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. He declined, however, to provide any quotations, noting that "it is our intention to have a private off the record function."

The dinner, hosted by ABC-Television commentator Barbara Walters, was attended by about 50 persons, including Iranian Ambassador Ardeshir Zohedi, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, House Speaker Thomas O'Neill (D.Mass.), House Majority Leader James Wright (D.Tex.), Sen. Abraham Ribicoff (D.Conn.), Hamilton Jordan, President Carter's chief political advisor and Evan Deboll, the State Department's chief protocol officer.

Zohedi was the only other ambassador present. Jordan and Deboll were the highest ranking officials from the White House and State Department. Reporters were barred from the dinner area.

PARIS (JTA)—Solidarity Week with Soviet Jewry was launched here Sunday night at a mass meeting of some 2500 United Jewish Appeal campaign workers. Jewish communities in West Europe will also mark this week their solidarity with Soviet Jews.

SEPHARDI LEADER SAYS BEGIN PLEDGED TO DEAL WITH SOCIAL GAP IN ISRAEL

NEW YORK, Dec. 5 (JTA)--Nessim Gaon, president of the World Sephardi Federation (WSF), reported here last night that as a result of the Federation's intervention with Israeli Premier Menachem Begin, the Israeli leader gave his "commitment to convene, during the year 1978, a world Jewish conference to deal specifically with the problems of poverty and social inequality in Israel." Gaon, of Geneva, addressed the opening session of the three-day meeting of the Federation's Presidium at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

Addressing some 150 leaders of Sephardi communities from Israel, Europe, Latin America and the United States, Gaon urged the Israeli government, in the event that the Geneva conference should resume, to include on its negotiating team "diplomats or specialists who have lived in Arab lands and who can serve as a bridge to a more fruitful dialogue among the nations of the Near East."

Stresses Role Of Sephardim

Citing alarming statistics of what he termed "de-Judaization" in the diaspora, Gaon called for concerted Sephardi efforts to build more Jewish schools, especially in France, and to have Hebrew universally adopted as a second language among all Jews, in addition "to bringing our young people closer to the sacred principles of our Jewish faith."

Gaon also stated: "It is not good for Israel to become a nation like any other. We must intensify our efforts to bolster the State of Israel through contributions, aliya and any measure to counter the prejudice and ostracism that some of our communities have experienced there."

While praising the improvement of the Sephardi status in Israel since the Begin government came to office, Gaon was sharply critical of the World Zionist Organization, claiming that "it is not normal that we should be represented on the Zionist Executive by only one out of 22 people." He called for special effort during the forthcoming World Zionist Congress to have Sephardim assigned to key positions in the youth and education departments.

In her introductory remarks, Liliane Levy-Winn, president of the American Sephardi Federation (ASF), emphasized the significance of having this conference in the United States "in order to rally the political and economic power of U.S. Jewry to our cause." She blamed the Sephardim for being remiss "in allowing the American Jewish community to remain oblivious to the Sephardi role in the rebirth of Israel, to Sephardi needs in Israel and to the fractionalization of the social and economic fabric of the Jewish State."

Warns Of Polarization

In a similar vein, Gaon told a luncheon meeting last Thursday of the United Jewish Appeal-Federation of Jewish Philanthropies Joint Campaign of Greater New York that ending the social gap in Israel must not be underestimated. He warned that if the gap is allowed to continue, it will result in a "highly polarized society."

He stressed to the audience of UJA-Joint Campaign officers and New York Sephardi leaders that "this polarity would constitute a grave threat to Israel's very existence. We cannot, must not, sit back and allow the problem to grow." Gaon said some 500,000 people in Israel are living in substandard conditions. "These people are underprivileged socially, economically and education-

ally," he said.

Gaon said that Begin has promised to eliminate this problem and his government has pledged \$600 million towards that end if diaspora Jewry raises an equal amount. He urged the UJA to follow the example of Keren Hayesod which recently pledged to double its contribution during the next two or three years.

His appeal was reinforced by Robert H. Arnow, chairman of the Joint Campaign and chairman of the board of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, who pledged that the UJA will double its efforts and "not tire of this most important activity."

The WSF Presidium meeting will be highlighted by a dinner tonight at which some 600 leaders of the American Jewish community are expected to attend. The dinner, which is being co-sponsored by the ASF and the American Associates of Ben Gurion University, will be addressed by Yosef Tekoah, university president and former Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations. Gaon is chairman of the university's Board of Governors and a member of the board of the JTA.

CARTER TO RECEIVE CHANUKAH TORCH FROM ISRAEL IN WHITE HOUSE FETE

NEW YORK, Dec. 5 (JTA)--The long journey of a flame, kindled yesterday on the eve of Chanukah in Modi'in near Jerusalem, will end Wednesday afternoon when, for the first time, the President will receive a burning torch as part of a unique and innovative White House Chanukah ceremony.

The torch will be brought to President Carter by representatives of Masada, the Youth Movement of the Zionist Organization of America. The ceremony is part of the world-wide celebrations sponsored by the Masada affiliate in Israel, Young Maccabees. Following the handing over of the torch to Carter, Rabbi Joseph P. Sternstein, president of the ZOA, will use the flame to light four candles on an eight-branch Chanukah candelabra, thus celebrating the fourth day of the eight-day holiday.

The torch began its journey from Modi'in, birthplace of the Maccabees, when it was lit from a flame marking a shrine to the Maccabees, the Jewish heroes who in 168 BC led a struggle for religious and spiritual freedom and established a Jewish Commonwealth in Israel.

The torch bound for the White House will arrive at Kennedy Airport tomorrow afternoon. After being run in relays into Manhattan, it will be received in a special ceremony attended by Israel Consul General in New York, Uri Ben Ari, Chaim Herzog, Israel Ambassador to the United Nations, ZOA leaders and representatives of city and state government.

On Thursday afternoon, the torch will again be used in official ceremonies when the Chanukah candelabra set up at City Hall is lit. Attending will be Mayor Abraham Beame and other city officials. The lighting of the torch in Israel signifies the start of the official celebrations of Israel's 30th anniversary year. This is the 11th year the ZOA Masada Youth Movement has been sponsoring the torch ceremonies in the U.S.

JERUSALEM (JTA)--Deputy Premier Yigael Yadin chaired his first Cabinet meeting Sunday in the absence of Premier Menachem Begin who is in London. An avid pipe smoker, Yadin, unlike Begin, permitted smoking during the two-hour session. Officials said Yadin has moved into Begin's office for the duration of his absence.