

WEIZMAN MEETS WITH GAMASSY IN EGYPT

CAIRO, Dec. 20 (JTA)--Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman flew to Egypt today for a meeting with Egyptian Minister of War Gen. Mohammed Gamassy in Alexandria, the official Middle East News Agency announced. The announcement was made to newsmen covering the Cairo conference over the loudspeaker at Mena House, the hotel outside Cairo that is serving as conference headquarters.

Weizman, who was greeted by Gamassy at an air base near Alexandria, became the first Israeli minister to visit Egypt. His visit precedes by five days that of Premier Menachem Begin who will meet with President Anwar Sadat at Ismailia this Sunday. According to the announcement, Weizman requested the meeting with Gamassy. Some sources claimed that Weizman and Gamassy were discussing security arrangements in Sinai and the West Bank. (See full story P. 3.)

EFFECT OF PEACE ON ISRAEL'S ECONOMY UNDER CONSIDERATION

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Dec. 20 (JTA)--Government economists and private industry in Israel have begun to give serious consideration to the effect that peace in the Middle East would have on Israel's economy. The private sector envisages an important market for Israeli goods in the Arab countries, especially Egypt. Efraim Dovrat, economic advisor to the Finance Ministry, said today that a special ministry team is already studying the economic repercussions of peace on the budget.

According to Dovrat, it is agreed that there would be no reduction in defense expenditures for the first few years after a peace settlement. He noted that Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories would require additional investments to transfer bases and installations and for the acquisition of new equipment. Another team is preparing plans for possible mutual development projects to be undertaken jointly by Israel and its Arab neighbors.

In the private sector, the Israeli irrigation corporation, Tahal, says it is prepared to assist Egypt and other countries to develop their water resources. Aryeh Gissin, director general of Tahal, observed that "they know very well who we are and what our achievements are."

The electronics industry is convinced that it can market many of its products in Egypt and other countries once peace is established. The Tadiran and Amcor Companies each believes the refrigerators it makes would appeal to the Egyptians and other producers see a lucrative market for all kinds of electrical appliances in Egypt.

The Ti'us Co., which manufactures medical equipment and appliances, says it is ready to export thermometers, hypodermic syringes and stethoscopes to Egypt. It also sees a market there for its plastic goods, suitcases and travel kits. Israel's textile industry presently has all the orders it can fill but is ready to expand production to meet anticipated demands from Egypt. The food industry meanwhile has begun a study of Egyptian eating habits. They assume that appet-

izers and Italian-style pasta made in Israel would be welcomed by Egyptian consumers.

GOLAN HEIGHTS, JORDAN VALLEY SETTLERS EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT THEIR FUTURE

TEL AVIV, Dec. 20 (JTA)--As Israel moves toward a peace settlement with Egypt and, possibly, its other Arab neighbors, settlers on the Golan Heights and in the Jordan Valley are becoming increasingly concerned about their future. Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Zipori faced a barrage of criticism when he visited several Golan Heights settlements this week.

The settlers demanded that he explain a published interview that quoted him as saying that it was not impossible that some Golan settlements would find themselves under Syrian sovereignty if a peace treaty is signed with Damascus. Zipori claimed his statement was not correctly interpreted. He said the government entertains no such ideas and, in fact, plans to invest large sums on the Golan Heights.

Zipori said a new settlement would be established shortly on Mt. Dov overlooking the old "Fatahland" once a terrorist stronghold. He said it would be a Nahal (para-military) settlement under the auspices of Hashomer Hatzair, the Mapam settlement movement.

Meanwhile, Labor Party leaders called on Jordan Valley settlers to make sure they have a say in determining the fate of their region. They were told that they should follow the example of the Golan Heights settlers whose presence was a factor in establishing the present demarcation lines there.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

MOUNTING DISCONTENT FACES BEGIN

By Yitzhak Shargil, Tuvia Mendelson and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 20 (JTA)--As Premier Menachem Begin was returning home tonight from London where he met with Prime Minister James Callaghan, there was mounting discontent within his coalition Cabinet, his Likud Party and, most significantly, his loyal Herut followers over the reported features of his peace plan and his alleged failure to keep the Cabinet and Knesset fully informed of major political developments. Sharp differences between Begin and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan have also emerged and, in an ironic political twist, Labor Alignment leaders are now attacking Begin for being too "soft."

The Premier, who meets with President Anwar Sadat of Egypt at Ismailia this Sunday, has encountered the most serious criticism over his offer of "home rule" to the Arab populations of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Hard-liners of Herut, La'am (State List) and the Greater Israel Movement, the hard core of Begin's constituency, have publicly expressed anger, amazement and disbelief over published reports of Begin's proposals. Many are charging that they are tantamount to approval of the eventual creation of a Palestinian state.

The critics, admittedly, are reacting mainly to media rumors and speculation by commentators here and abroad. Begin, appearing on the CBS-TV "Face the Nation" program Sunday, referred in very broad terms to "home rule" for Palestinian Arabs while maintaining Israeli security in the occupied territories. He reiterated that Jerusalem would

remain the united capital of Israel and spoke of the right of Jews to settle anywhere in what he called the land of Israel.

But details of the plan the Premier conveyed to President Carter at their Washington meetings and which were relayed to Sadat remain closed in secrecy. Only a small group of senior Cabinet ministers were made privy to Begin's proposals before he left for the U.S. last Thursday.

Yadin Urged Withholding Criticism

One of them, Deputy Premier Yigael Yadin of the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC), told a press conference here today that Begin's peace proposals should not be criticized until they are published in full. He said that there was no justification for criticism and that published reports of the Begin plan were partly incorrect and partly incomplete. "It is difficult to make a responsible opinion on the proposals without knowing the details," Yadin said.

He assured the newsmen that Begin would not commit Israel to any plan without getting full authorization from the Knesset. Begin will convene the Cabinet in special session Thursday apparently to get its endorsement of his proposals before meeting Sadat. Most observers believe that despite the grumbling among some ministers, Begin will win the unanimous approval of his government.

(Begin told reporters at London Airport after meeting with Callaghan and Jean-Francois Poncet, a special envoy from President Valery Giscard d'Estaing of France that his proposals for the West Bank were only part of the overall package he would be taking to Sadat. He said his full peace proposals would be made public only after his meeting with the Egyptian President. "I can say that they are fair and conducive to peace," Begin stated. Asked whether he anticipated any major changes from Sadat to his proposals, Begin said: "We will meet like friends. He is my friend and I am his friend. We have an understanding....")

Herut Faction Troubled

Meanwhile, the Herut-La'am Knesset factions met in Tel Aviv last night to discuss the latest developments. Most speakers expressed shock that their leader was ready to give up the imposition of Israeli sovereignty over the Judea-Samaria regions. MK Yossef Rom said he was convinced that the media reports were inaccurate. "I believe the published reports were confused and confusing," he said.

Moshe Shamir, the writer, an ardent member of the Greater Israel Movement within La'am, said that if the reports were true "the situation is very bad for Israel, for Zionism, for security and for peace because it is a time bomb which will lead to the next war." Amnon Linn and Yigal Cohen of La'am said they may not vote for Begin's proposals when they come before the Knesset.

Earlier, MK Gula Cohen, one of the most outspoken Herut "hawks," said she was disappointed by Begin's remarks on "Face the Nation." She said she was shocked to hear the Premier mention Israeli rule on the West Bank in the same breath with Turkish, British and Jordanian rule when he discussed the history of that territory. She also complained that when Begin spoke of "home rule" for the Palestinians he was, in effect, approving of a national home for them. "I never believed he would utter such a sentence," she said.

Differences Between Begin, Dayan

Meanwhile, it was learned that Begin and Dayan have basic differences over the future of the

West Bank. Dayan has been speaking of a "functional compromise" meaning, apparently, a degree of autonomy for West Bankers linked in some form to Jordan. The reported Begin plan makes no mention of a Jordanian connection and treats the West Bank as a separate entity.

Dayan reportedly is worried that the absence of a Jordanian link to the West Bank would open the way to establish a Palestinian state. Observers here believe that the disagreements between Dayan and Begin are more likely to grow in the coming weeks than be resolved. According to one report, Dayan has been meeting privately with members of the coalition and opposition to convince them to accept Begin's plan only on condition that any settlement on the West Bank is connected with Jordan.

Labor Alignment Shocked

The Labor Alignment Knesset faction expressed shock and dismay today at Begin's "disregard for the parliamentary process." It also echoed Herut concern that the Begin plan paved the way for a Palestinian state. Alignment leader Shimon Peres said it was "outrageous" that Begin saw fit to brief American Senators and the British Prime Minister on his peace plan, but not the Knesset. Former Premier Yitzhak Rabin said Begin was not clear on the exact nature of his proposals but from what could be gathered from news reports, he is aiming at the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The only Alignment members to favor Begin's proposals—as reported in the press—were the leaders of Mapam, long one of the most bitter political opponents of Likud. Another supporter was the tiny leftist Sheli faction which has always advocated Israel's return to its 1967 borders and self-determination for the Palestinians.

Hammer Raps Begin On Secrecy

Within the coalition, Education Minister Zevulun Hammer, representing the more militant wing of the National Religious Party (NRP), spoke out yesterday against the Premier's alleged secrecy. He told the Jerusalem Press Club that until now Begin has disclosed only part of his political strategy to the full Cabinet. He also said he was not quite sure what was behind Begin's offer of "self rule" to the West Bank Arabs.

Hammer said he approved of autonomy with a link to Jordan only if Israel's sovereignty was not abolished, Judea and Samaria are not divided and no other political or security concessions are made. Spokesmen for the Orthodox, ultra-nationalist Gush Emunim also expressed concern and said the most they would support was municipal autonomy for the West Bankers.

Begin faces an arduous task of fence-mending when he meets with the Likud Knesset faction tomorrow or Thursday. But there is one big plus on his side. While controversy rages among the politicians, all the latest opinion polls show that Begin enjoys immense support from the public at large. The results of one poll, published today, indicated that a majority of Israelis agree that concessions on the West Bank are necessary for peace.

ARGENTINE PRESIDENT URGED TO GRANT IMMEDIATE AMNESTY TO POCS

NEW YORK, Dec. 20 (JTA)—Representatives of the three major faiths jointly appealed to Argentine President Jorge Rafael Videla today for an immediate amnesty to "prisoners of conscience" now being detained without charge in government

facilities." In a letter to Argentina's Ambassador to the United States, Jorge A. Aja Espil, the three human rights leaders noted "your government's pledge to President Carter that the human rights situation in Argentina would show marked improvement by Christmas."

The statement, further observing that the spirit of Chanukah and Christmas was a time of freedom and good will to all, was issued by Thomas E. Quigley, advisor for Latin America, international justice and peace, U.S. Catholic Conference; Rev. William L. Wipfler, human rights director, National Council of Churches; and Rabbi Morton M. Rosenthal, director of the Latin American affairs department, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Human rights groups here have expressed growing concern over the unexplained disappearance of thousands of Argentine citizens. Reports tell of men dressed in civilian clothes, reputed to be security agents, taking people out of their homes in the middle of the night. Some are never seen again, according to these reports, others are detained, frequently for long periods of time, without explanation.

The joint communication today asked the Argentine government "to make public the names of all prisoners held on political charges so that the anguish of uncertainty may be lifted from thousands of Argentine homes." While the total number of such incarcerations is unclear at present, it is known that during the visit by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to Argentina in November, a computerized list containing some 7500 names was delivered to the Foreign Ministry.

WEIZMAN VISIT TO EGYPT GIVES RISE TO NEW FLOOD OF SPECULATION By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Dec. 20 (JTA)—Defense Minister Ezer Weizman's flight to Egypt today for a meeting with Egyptian War Minister and Deputy Premier Mohammed Gamassy was the latest event in the swiftly accelerating pace of Middle East developments that have taken Israel and the entire world by surprise. It has given rise to a new flood of speculation, coming only five days before Premier Menachem Begin's meeting with President Anwar Sadat at Ismailia Sunday.

Weizman's trip was first announced in Egypt. It was learned later that the Defense Minister left Ben Gurion Airport before noon in an American civilian aircraft and landed at the Egyptian Air Force base at Jankalis, 14 miles south of Alexandria, where he met with Gamassy. Kol Israel radio reported today that Weizman met with Sadat at his Ismailia retreat before going to Alexandria. There was no confirmation of that report from any other source.

There were reliable—but unconfirmed—reports that two senior army officers accompanied Weizman. This seemed strange, inasmuch as the chief strategist of the army, Gen. Avraham Amir, head of the planning branch at General Headquarters, is a member of the Israeli delegation to the Cairo conference. The delegation had another day off today, occupied in part with a visit to Sadat's home village in the Nile delta. The Israeli spokesman in Cairo had no comment on Weizman's visit to Alexandria.

Question Of Sinai, West Bank Security

The main topic of speculation is what Weizman and Gamassy talked about. The consensus here is that the Israeli defense chief made his visit because Sadat has accepted in principle at least

part of Begin's peace proposals and security issues between Israel and Egypt are therefore now open for discussion.

According to some sources, Weizman and Gamassy discussed security arrangements both in Sinai and on the West Bank. The sources said that in Sinai the subjects would include demilitarization of all or part of the peninsula, the installation of early warning systems and the possibility of manning them by Israelis. West Bank questions would include Israel's demand for a continued military presence along the Jordan River or on the mountain range paralleling the river.

The Egyptian announcement stressed that Weizman had requested the meeting with Gamassy. But there are strong indications that it was planned well in advance, possibly even during Sadat's visit to Jerusalem last month. Observers recall that, apart from Begin, Weizman was the only Cabinet member with whom Sadat met privately.

During his visit, Sadat conceded that Israel had legitimate security problems but refused to link them to the question of total withdrawal from the occupied territories. But two weeks later, Gamassy admitted, in an interview with Israeli journalists in Cairo, that Israel has security problems with respect to the Kalkilya-Tulkarem region where the West Bank bulges perilously close to Israel's coastal city of Netanya. In short, there is a feeling here that the Egyptians have an understanding of Israel's security needs and some of these matters may have been thrashed out at Weizman's meeting with Gamassy.

According to one report, Weizman will stay in Egypt for 1-2 days, spending the nights at Ismailia. His talks with the Egyptian War Minister are expected to have a serious bearing on the upcoming Begin-Sadat discussions. It was rumored that Weizman may accompany Begin at his meeting with Sadat. Earlier, it was reported that Begin would be accompanied by Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan. Sources here said today that the possibility that both ministers would accompany Begin could not be excluded.

INCREASE IN NEO-NAZI ACTIVITIES

BONN, Dec. 20 (JTA)—The Jewish community in the north German city of Hanover has officially complained in a letter to the District Attorney about a major increase in neo-Nazi activity. The incidents complained of included regular Saturday meetings of members of extreme right-wing organizations in the city's shopping center for "agitation and distributing provocative literature"; "disturbing" telephone calls to members of the Jewish community; and repeated appearances of a group of men dressed in black clothes with a skull emblem which has created a "state of fear." A Jewish businesswoman was recently visited by such a group which threatened her. In another incident, a similar group assaulted a Jewish student. The letter also referred to incidents earlier this year in which more than 200 Jewish tombstones were desecrated and anti-Semitic slogans painted on the walls of public buildings.

The letter disputed the repeated assertion by Roetger Groess, Interior Minister of the state of Lower Saxony that such activities are the work of a small group of outsiders and are politically irrelevant. The letter said that because of the dangers of left-wing extremism in Germany, the danger from right-wing extremists is being "played down."

SPECIAL REPORT**SYNAGOGUES AFFECTED BY CITY CUTBACKS**

By Ben Gallob

(Part One Of A Two-Part Series)

NEW YORK, Dec. 20 (JTA)—The sharp cutbacks during 1974 and 1975 in basic New York City services, particularly in police and fire protection, forced many synagogues in the city to cancel night worship and service programs. A Jewish Telegraphic Agency survey also found that vandalism and synagogue closings have reflected continuing deterioration of neighborhoods, rather than the reduction in city services.

The JTA made the survey over a period of several weeks recently after the city made some restorations of the service cuts, starting in mid-1976, and it became possible to assess the impact of the cuts.

To determine how the synagogues have been affected and whether reported synagogue shut-downs were known to be related to the cutbacks in municipal protection services, the JTA submitted questionnaires to the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues; the New York Metropolitan Region of the United Synagogue of America; the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America; and the National Council of Young Israel, an association of Orthodox congregations. Each has more than 100 synagogue affiliates in New York City.

The principal impact of growing crime on New York City streets seems to have been a reduction of evening programs at the synagogues, the responding executives agreed. Some synagogues have started to provide escort services for worshippers. But agreement was general that such problems had been developing before the city service cutbacks and will probably continue as the city begins to restore police and fire protection to some degree.

City-Wide Report

The most detailed report came from Rabbi Stuart A. Gertman, director of the Reform synagogues federation, who indicated he had undertaken "a limited survey" of affiliated congregations. He offered a borough-by-borough report.

In Manhattan, he reported, synagogues have not been affected by the service cutbacks and there have been no significant indications of burglaries or vandalism, no abandonments and "no significant changes in synagogue procedure or program." One exception was the Fort Washington Synagogue, which was closed last August. The Hebrew Tabernacle, while not reporting vandalism, did report that elderly congregants complained about crime.

Gertman said The Bronx was "a disaster area" for Reform congregations. Tremont Temple and Sinai Congregation closed within a six-month period, both merging with other congregations. He reported that while it was impossible to conclude that the closings were inevitable, he felt that the total atmosphere of "inhospitableness" would have led to the eventual closing of the synagogues but, he added, the municipal service cutbacks were "the final straw." In decreasing the local Jewish population and synagogue program possibilities.

Not counting a congregation at Co-op City, there are two Reform congregations left in The Bronx, whose officers and members have expressed fears of vandalism. The officers find it impossible to schedule evening programs, Gertman reported.

He said Reform synagogues in Queens have been largely unaffected by the city service cutbacks. Some Queens Reform congregations have

organized escort services because of general fear of street crime, but there have been no reports of arson or vandalism against Reform synagogues in Queens, he said.

In Brooklyn, three Reform synagogues have been vandalized in the recent past, two in Flatbush and one in Bensonhurst. Gertman said Reform synagogues in Brooklyn generally find there is no purpose in offering programs at night because congregants are unwilling to travel after dark. Those synagogues report a lower level of participation in general by severely victimized groups, specifically the elderly. Synagogue officials report an exodus of the middle class from Brooklyn areas where the crime rate is rising. He said no problems were reported by Reform congregations on Staten Island.

General Deterioration Cited

Gertman said that, given the situation of the neighborhoods where problems have been reported, he did not think the synagogues had been singled out for attack. "Rather," he commented, "a general deterioration is inevitably followed by the deterioration of a community that can support a synagogue and therefore to the deteriorating of the synagogue itself."

Gertman suggested that the situation in such communities "has been deteriorating for years and one cannot separate that deterioration from the specific decrease in municipal services." He added that increasing police and fire protection would not solve the problem "but will merely postpone the inevitable, unless we begin to think about the root causes."

On the more hopeful side, Gertman reported, there has been "increased membership and increased religious school enrollment in most of our synagogues, even those in deteriorating neighborhoods," where there is a determination to refuse to give up.

(Tomorrow: Part Two)

JEWS TO HELP CHRISTIANS ON XMAS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20 (JTA)—The Washington Jewish community will hold a "Christmas Open House for the Homeless" on Christmas day at the Luther Place Lutheran Memorial Church and provide services in areas normally staffed by Christians on that day, the Rev. John F. Steinbrück, the pastor, announced yesterday. Members of the church have provided services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, such as standing vigil for Soviet Jewry opposite the Soviet Embassy and participating in support of Soviet Jews.

Steinbrück, a familiar figure at the Soviet Embassy vigils, noted "a tradition of mutually supportive cooperation has been growing in recent years between Jewish and Christian communities" and that as "an integral part of their Christmas observance," members of his church will also attend the Soviet vigil on Christmas day.

TEL AVIV (JTA)—Dr. Yitzhak Arad, chairman of the Yad Vashem Memorial Institute, and Tzvi Schner, director of the Ghetto Fighters Kibbutz Holocaust Museum, said they were warmly welcomed in Poland where they had attended meetings dealing with the erection of a pavilion in memory of the Holocaust at the former Auschwitz death camp. The two Israelis, who returned here this week, said the meetings included discussions on ways and means of exchanging information and data on the Holocaust. They said they were asked to provide documents and help generally in setting up the pavilion.