

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## DAYAN BLAMES EGYPT FOR IMPASSE; SAYS ISRAEL PREFERENCES DIRECT TALKS WITH EGYPT RATHER THAN THROUGH U.S. MEDIATION

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan blamed Egypt last night for the current impasse in peace talks with Israel and said his country preferred direct negotiations and practical discussions of mutual proposals with the Egyptians to the present contacts through an American intermediary.

Addressing the 29th World Zionist Congress, Dayan claimed there are no direct negotiations with Egypt now because the Egyptians do not want or cannot conduct such negotiations without the participation of Jordan and other Arab countries. He also accused Cairo of toughening its stand and backing away from original positions.

He said the current negotiations through American mediation was contrary to the understanding reached by Premier Menachem Begin and President Anwar Sadat at their Christmas Day meeting in Ismailia last year. According to Dayan, the Egyptians promised then to present counter-proposals to Israel's peace plan for Sinai and the West Bank, but so far they have not done so.

"It is hard to tell whether the Egyptians believed at the beginning of negotiations that they would eventually reach a separate agreement with Israel," Dayan said. At the moment, he told the Congress delegates, negotiations are concentrated on the Palestinian issue and the future of the West Bank and there is no discussion of bilateral matters between the two countries.

Dayan said Israel did not object to President Carter's Jan. 4 Aswan formula that called for Palestinian Arab participation in determining their own future. "Israel is willing to sit with them and to discuss with them their future," Dayan said. He claimed, however, that "it is quite obvious that when they speak of their future they mean that they will determine our future." He said Israel would never allow the Palestinian Arabs to determine the future of its settlements in the occupied Arab territories.

## WEIZMAN WARNS GUSH SETTLERS AT SHILOH TO EXCAVATE OR EVACUATE

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Defense Minister Ezer Weizman warned the Gush Emonim settlers at Shiloh on the West Bank today to start digging or they will be forced to leave the Biblical site in central Samaria. The Gush created an international furor last month when they occupied Shiloh. The government claimed that the group, which includes infants and toddlers and men who commute daily to jobs in Israel, were "archaeologists" in search of antiquities.

But Weizman, briefing the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, said they were there without permission from his ministry and he was ready to dislodge them unless they began archaeological excavations immediately. He acknowledged, however, that he has not received Cabinet approval for such an act.

It was learned, meanwhile, that the "archaeologists" at Shiloh have yet to be given formal approval by the special committee on excavations, the authority that issues permits for archaeological digs. The committee is expected to meet in the next few days.

## SAUNDERS PLACES ISRAEL LAST ON LIST OF SIX FACTORS THAT COMPRISE CURRENT U.S. THINKING ON THE MIDDLE EAST

By Joseph Palakoff

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28 (JTA)--A State Department official today listed six factors that comprise the current U.S. "perceptions" toward the Middle East of which the Israeli factor ranked "last but not least." According to Harold H. Saunders, the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, the U.S. must take into account "terrorism," the "support around the world for Palestinian nationalism" and Israel's position on the "world scene" when considering the Arab-Israeli conflict.

But Saunders, addressing a panel discussion of the first national Young Leadership Council of the United Jewish Appeal at the Shoreham-Americana Hotel, indicated priority for five other factors.

He listed these, in order, as the possibility of an "accidental confrontation" between the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the Middle East; the fact that the U.S. gets 20 percent of its oil supply from the area; the oil revenues and capital holdings in the region which can have a "sharp impact" on "the global economic order"; the fact that Saudi Arabia and Algeria are "organizers of the poorer nations" and the possibility that the Middle East conflict could breed another oil embargo.

## Shift in U.S. Perceptions

Saunders, who had been director of the State Department's Intelligence and Research Division for the past two years, acknowledged that there has been a shift in U.S. perceptions on the Middle East during the last 15 years but that it "does not have to work against the interests of any nation." He said that 15 years ago the Middle East was "important but not vital" and there was a need to prevent Soviet dominance there. In the 1970s, he said, the region was "more nearly vital to our interests" because of the oil requirements of the U.S. and its friends and the needs of Israel.

"Today, the perceptions are quite different," Saunders said, growing out of the "changed circumstances" since the mid-70s, the "major shift of many Arabs" toward the West in the last few years and the fact that the Middle East is one of the most rapidly growing markets in the world, which is being felt in America by Americans and "not only governmentally." He characterized an Arab-Israeli peace as "crucial" in the "hard calculus" of American interests in the area. He stressed that the U.S. role is that of "a catalyst, not an imposer" of a peace settlement.

The panel was also addressed by Rita Hauser, an international lawyer and former U.S. representative to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, who characterized Saunders' presentation as "a perfectly good academic summary of current U.S. policy going astray." Hauser said American policy in the Middle East should be for peace in the area.

without the Soviet Union's intrusion. "That was true in 1945 and remains true today," she said.

#### Israel Termed Island Of Stability

Sen. Edward Brooke (R., Mass.) last night described Israel as "an island of stability in the sea of chaos" in the Middle East and "no U.S. policy can be effective without that stability."

The Senate's only Black member stressed that U.S. "fundamental commitment to Israel is a test of our own values" and that what appears to be "a firm basis of relationship today" with Arab nations "may disappear in the vortex of Arab politics tomorrow."

Taking issue with the Carter Administration's move to sell "sophisticated lethal weapons" to Saudi Arabia, Brooke said "such a decision is not in our interest and should come, if at all, when there is a settlement" in the Middle East.

Attacking the concept of a Palestinian state, Brooke said such a state "would be a dagger pointed at the heart of Israel" and Israeli Premier Menachem Begin "has rightly rejected the idea of a West Bank-Gaza Palestine state." He added, "We have become painfully aware" that the Carter Administration is engaged "in pressuring tactics" to achieve a settlement in the Mideast.

#### Warns Of 'Peace Of The Graveyard'

Israeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz, addressing another session of the conference, described the Mideast settlement proposals by Egypt and Jordan as "pre-made prescriptions of take it or leave it" and warned that their peace terms "would be the peace of the graveyard" for Israel.

The approximately 1000 business and professional men and women from across the country attending the three-day meeting applauded Dinitz when he stressed that "Israel cannot give a state for a state visit." The state visit referred to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's trip last November to Jerusalem.

Dinitz was also applauded when he asked, in an allusion to Jordan's seizure of the West Bank in 1947 when Palestine was being partitioned, is "non-acquisition of territory by force applicable only from 1967 and afterwards and not applicable to 1947 and afterwards?" He also defended Israeli settlements in the occupied areas as "legal, moral and right because they are there to protect Israeli lives." Dinitz stated that the settlements issue was being used by Sadat as "a complete diversion" to achieve his terms "not by accommodation but imposition with the help of the United States."

#### SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL DELEGATION SAYS IT MADE HISTORICAL BREAKTHROUGH IN JEWISH-ISLAMIC RELATIONS IN EGYPT

By David Friedman

NEW YORK, Feb. 28 (JTA)--A 12-member delegation of the Synagogue Council of America (SCA) which returned Sunday night from a two-week visit to Egypt and Israel believes it made an "historical breakthrough" in Jewish-Islamic relations in Egypt. The delegation, headed by Rabbi Saul I. Teplitz, the SCA's president, and Rabbi Henry Siegman, executive vice-president, said the visit to Egypt was the first "by an official delegation representing the Jewish religious community in modern times."

The SCA said today that the delegation's visit in Egypt from Feb. 13-20 enabled it "to develop new religious and cultural relations" with Islamic leaders "that will help heal wounds caused by generations of alienation and conflict. While

these relations are no substitute for political agreements, they constitute the human and spiritual infrastructure which can speed the day of peace and, when it comes, give it moral content and endurance."

The delegation found it accomplished more than it expected, according to a spokesman. Dr. Soufi Abou-Taleb, president of Cairo University, agreed to have visiting professors in various fields of Jewish studies offer courses at the university while Egyptian Islamic scholars will be made available as visiting professors for American Jewish institutions of higher learning.

Cairo University, the largest in the Arab world, has also agreed to hold by next year a Moslem-Jewish interreligious dialogue similar to the dialogues that have been held for the last 10 years between world Jewry and the Vatican and the World Council of Churches. The university will organize participation by Moslem scholars from Al Azhar University and other Egyptian schools as well as Cairo University.

#### Agreement On Scholarly Activities

The delegation reported that Egyptian government officials agreed to allow Jewish scholars to survey and catalogue manuscripts, synagogues, cemeteries and other Jewish institutions in Cairo and in other locations in order to take the necessary measures for their preservation and if possible, restoration. Deputy Foreign Minister Boutros Ghali suggested the establishment of a Jewish museum in Egypt and agreed to the SCA's proposal that an international Jewish committee, as a first step, seek to restore and preserve the ancient synagogue and study of Maimonides in Old Cairo.

The SCA obtained permission both from the Egyptian government and the leaders of the Karaite community to bring to the U.S., on loan, for an exhibit and analysis a collection of ancient Karaite manuscripts and ceremonial objects. Egyptian authorities agreed that some 40 Torah scrolls that had been confiscated by customs officials several years ago would be returned to the local Jewish community.

#### Met With Egyptian Officials

An SCA spokesman noted that the delegation in its talks with Egyptian leaders, including President Anwar Sadat and Vice President Hosni Mubarak stressed the unswerving dedication of American Jews to the welfare and security of Israel. During an hour-long meeting with Grand Imam Dr. Abdul Halim Mahmoud, Sheikh of Al Azhar University, the delegation members also expressed their strong objections to use of Zionism as an epithet by Moslem leaders.

They pointed out that to differentiate between Zionists and Jews as the Arabs do is false since all Jews are Zionists "in the sense that attachment to Eretz Yisrael is a profound expression of Jewish religious belief and hope, linking a people, a faith and a land in an indissoluble unity."

The delegation made the same point to Sadat while also being firm in its expression that only Israel can define its security needs and Americans have neither the moral right or ability to do so. The delegation said it was impressed with Sadat's genuine desire for peace although he was firm in his insistence that the Israeli settlements in the Sinai were an obstacle to peace.

The delegates said they told Sadat they were confident Israeli leaders would do everything possible to achieve success in the peace negotiations and urged Sadat to do the same.

## ANGER MOUNTING IN CONGRESS OVER U.S. SALE OF PLANES TO ARABS AND ISRAEL

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28 (JTA)--The Carter Administration is facing rising anger and concern in Congress over its proposed sales "package" of war planes to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Formidable opposition to both the timing and content of the \$4.8 billion deal was evident in both Houses during the past few days although formal presentation of the package to Congress is not expected before early April.

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance is expected to be questioned sharply when he appears before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Thursday to testify on the Administration's plans. Vance strongly defended the deal at a hearing last Friday before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations which scrutinizes all U.S. foreign assistance funds.

Asked by subcommittee chairman Clarence Long (D.Md.) what the Administration would do if Congress approved the allotments of aircraft for Israel but not for Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Vance replied: "I think the only thing one could do under such circumstances would be to withdraw the package if all the pieces were not in it."

The Administration has proposed to sell Israel 15 F-15 fighters, said to be the best aircraft of its type in the world, and 75 of the less advanced F-16s. For Saudi Arabia it proposed 60 F-15s and for Egypt 50 of the less sophisticated F-5Es. The latter would be the first "lethal" weapons ever sold to Egypt by the U.S.

### Strong Attack By Stone

Sen. Richard Stone (D.Fla.), chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, claimed yesterday that Carter's explanation for supplying F-15s to Saudi Arabia "does not seem to square with the facts we are getting from other sources." He said "the President is being misadvised and the information being given" to Congress does not "jibe" with information from some Administration "experts" on the U.S. supply of Hawk anti-aircraft missiles and their placement at the Saudi air base at Tabuk within short flying distance of Israel.

"At a time when all moderate parties are reaching toward peace, it is paradoxical that either through insufficient information or faulty briefings, the President and the Congress might be led to make an ill-advised decision about these arms sales," Stone said. As an example of misinformation, he cited Carter's remark that Saudi Arabia never participated in Arab wars with Israel when in fact Saudi Arabia did send a brigade of soldiers to the Golan Heights to fight Israelis in the 1973 war and they remained until 1976.

However, he said, "the more important question is why should the U.S. assist or possibly induce Saudi Arabia to mount an offensive risk to Israel now through the Hawk missiles stationed at Tabuk and the F-15s? If Saudi Arabia has not, in the past, been deemed a substantial offensive threat to Israel, why should the United States upset that concept now?"

The Senator also recalled that in 1974 the U.S. agreed to provide Saudi Arabia with F-5E aircraft that were then generally used as a defensive weapon. But the Pentagon sold Saudi Arabia F-5Es that were modified to be capable of carrying sophisticated offensive weapons, he said, observing that "this leads me to question whether"

the Congress or the President is getting "all the facts."

Another sharp attack on the Administration's package proposal was delivered by Rep. Benjamin Rosenthal (D.N.Y.), Deputy Majority Whip last Thursday. He told the House that the proposed sales came "at a critical time and in a way that can only encourage a hardening of positions on both sides" in the current Mideast peace process. He claimed that if the package goes through as the Administration proposes, Saudi Arabia would have a 3-2 advantage over Israel in F-15s by 1981.

Long, in a withering blast at the Administration's proposed planes sale package, told Vance at the hearing last Friday that "there is no way you can convince me you can somehow get peace in a section of the world in which you are pumping vast arms. We have become the merchants of slaughter in this world."

### LABOR DISPUTES ERUPT IN ISRAEL

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Magistrate courts throughout Israel were closed today as the magistrates met at a special meeting to demand the 50 percent wage increase a special committee had recommended that Israeli judges should receive. District courts, however, were operating but the district court judges sent representatives to the meeting. A resolution was adopted at the meeting closing both courts for three days next week.

The judges are not calling their action a strike although this is the first time that judges in Israel have absented themselves from work in a labor dispute.

The 50 percent increase was recommended in order to allow the judges to live on their salaries without having to seek outside income. It has been approved by Justice Minister Shmuel Tamir as well as the Cabinet. But the government fears that if it gives such an increase to the judges, other government employees will ask for similar wage hikes.

The magistrates called their job action today after the Finance Ministry said it wanted to defer action on a raise for the judges until after an agreement is reached on a new contract with the Civil Servants Union.

The problem over the magistrates' salaries is only one of many labor disputes going on in Israel. Violence broke out at the Central Bus Station here when striking salaried drivers of the Egged Bus Cooperative tried to prevent buses from leaving the station. The buses have been driven for the last two days by members of the cooperative while their wives replaced them at their office jobs. Several persons were injured at the bus station and several people were arrested. Police also clashed with striking drivers at the Histadrut headquarters.

### HYMAN BESSIN DEAD AT 68

JERUSALEM, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Funeral services were held here yesterday for Hyman Bessin, the immediate past president of the Canadian Zionist Federation, who died Sunday at the age of 68. Born in Ottawa, he was the president of the Jewish community there for a number of years until 1961.

Bessin was also, over the years, chairman of the United Israel Appeal in Canada, president of the Canadian Friends of Bar Ilan University and a member of the Mizrahi Executive. At the time of his death he was a deputy member of the World Zionist Organization Executive, and a member of the World Executive of the Religious Zionist Movement.

## **UJA SAYS PRESS REPORTS ABOUT MISMANAGEMENT, RIFT ARE UNFOUNDED**

NEW YORK, Feb. 28 (JTA)--The national United Jewish Appeal moved today to clear up what it termed "a number of rumors and charges about the management of the UJA" which have been circulating for some time in Israel and the United States. Israeli press reports alleged that, among other things, a committee of inquiry had been set up by Frank R. Lautenberg, UJA president, to investigate "mismanagement."

Some of the press reports, which claimed to have based their articles on a "secret report" by top UJA officials, also claimed that there were recriminations among the officials over both the committee of inquiry and the purported "charges of serious mismanagement in the UJA."

### **Joint Statement Issued**

Without referring directly to the Israeli press reports, a joint statement issued by Leonard R. Strelitz, UJA general chairman, and Lautenberg, affirmed that for more than three years the UJA "has retained the services of a financial consultant to study the internal operations of the organization." The study, according to the statement, was initiated "to update management practices, and is designed to improve the effectiveness and productivity of UJA in carrying out its annual national campaigns."

On the basis of this study, the statement continued, "the consultant has submitted a series of reports to the officers of UJA which contain recommendations for changes and improvements in technical, personnel and financial operations. A number of recommended changes have already been implemented and are being reviewed and studied further."

"In the course of the review, some differences arose concerning methods of implementation. These procedural differences have now been resolved and the review is proceeding in an orderly fashion, conducted by a committee responsible to the Board of Directors of the UJA. The officers of UJA, together with the professional staff, are united in support of this procedure. While this review is taking place, we will proceed with full strength in the conduct of our 1978 fundraising campaign."

### **Report Was 'Totally Inaccurate'**

In a statement issued earlier this month, Lautenberg said that a report in Haaretz Feb. 17, "purporting to be a factual report" of a UJA Board of Directors meeting Feb. 15 was "totally inaccurate." The meeting, Lautenberg said, was called to deal with "a number of rumors and charges about the management" of UJA which had been circulating "for some time" in the U.S. and Israel.

Lautenberg asserted that during his term in office as UJA general chairman, just prior to Strelitz, he recommended "the retention of the services of a financial consultant to take a broad look at the organization's management practices. This procedure was not instituted in response to any charges of mismanagement" but as an ongoing effort "to assure the highest level of financial responsibility."

But, Lautenberg continued, before the information in the consultant's findings could be brought before the Board of Directors, "selected information was extracted from them and criticisms developed about some UJA management practices," thus leading to the "rumors and charges."

In view of these circumstances, he said, he appointed a management review committee comprising Board of Directors members and UJA chairmen: Board members who were asked to serve with Lautenberg are, he said, Melvin Dubinsky, Max M. Fisher, Sylvia Hassenfeld, Jerold C. Hoffberger, Joseph Meyerhoff, Donald M. Robinson and Paul Zuckerman. National chairmen are Joel S. Breslau and Stanley L. Sloane.

Lautenberg said the review committee's appointment was approved by a vote of 17-3 by the full Board at its Feb. 15 meeting. The first article in the Israeli press appeared in Haaretz two days later. Since then other Israeli papers have carried similar reports.

## **CALIFANO APPROVES GRANT**

NEW YORK, Feb. 28 (JTA)--A \$44,000 grant for a program in a Bronx school district which was rejected earlier this month as ethnically unbalanced was approved yesterday by Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph A. Califano Jr. The grant had been rejected after one of three HEW evaluators had given the program a sharply lower score by charging that "all the people cited as resource management seem middle class (Jewish in ethnicity)."

Califano ordered Dr. Ernest L. Boyer, U.S. Commissioner of Education, to investigate after Rep. Mario Biaggi (D.N.Y.), the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress and District 11 superintendent Nicholas Cicchetti, protested the grant's rejection. The district has a heavy concentration of Jews and Italians.

In a letter to Cicchetti, Califano said that Boyer had reviewed the grant application and concluded that the ethnic criteria were "inappropriately applied. We regret any suggestion of bias that may have been suggested in the District 11 application." Boyer was reported to have said that in view of the incident, the criteria used in the award of education grants will be reviewed and rephrased. The funding proposal for the school district had involved preparation of educational material free of sexual stereotypes.

## **SHLOMO. YOSEF. ZEWIN DEAD AT 93**

JERUSALEM, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zewin, doyen of Israel's rabbis, was buried today in Jerusalem. He died last night at the age of 93. Rabbi Zewin, one of the most prominent Jewish scholars and halachic writers of our time, was the editor-in-chief of the Talmudic Encyclopedia and the president of Yad Herzog Academy in Jerusalem.

Born in Kazimortov, Russia, he was a rabbi in several Russian cities and was a member of the Ukrainian Parliament in Kiev in 1918. He came to Palestine in 1938. Rabbi Zewin was regarded as the creator of a new halachic Hebrew style. He won the Israel Prize for religious literature in 1959, and the Jerusalem municipality's Rabbi Kook Prize for religious literature, for the 10th volume of the Talmudic Encyclopedia.

Until he was hospitalized three weeks ago, he used to work until 2 a.m. on his halachic studies, only to get up early in the morning for prayer. He was the most respected among the Habad rabbis, and kept close contact with the Lubavitcher Rebbe. He spent considerable time writing on halachic issues in popular language. In his works he tried to synthesize halacha and hasidut.