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DAYAN OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PEACE TALKS

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, speaking in Hebrew and English with reporters today, appeared optimistic that the talks with Egypt are progressing well.

"On the really tough issues, we are about to solve them," Dayan said. However, he warned that compromise is essential by both Israelis and Egyptians for an agreement to be reached. "I hope everybody understands" he said, "that unless we come to these negotiations with open hearts and open minds and ready to change positions and give up our opening position, there won't be compromise."

Dayan made his remarks after meeting with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance this morning at the State Department. He indicated that "substantial progress" was made in his conversation with Vance. But he made it plain that the issue of Israeli settlements on the West Bank was not involved in their conversation.

In a meeting he had last night with Egyptian Defense Minister Kamal Hassan Ali and Acting Foreign Minister Boutros Ghali, Dayan said "some differences remain but there was some closing of gaps."

Status Of Trilateral Meetings

Referring to the United States' cancellation of trilateral meetings since the settlements issue broke open last Thursday, Dayan said that such meetings are essentially up to Egypt. If the Egyptians want one it will be held, he said. Otherwise, bilateral meetings will continue between Israel and the U.S., the U.S. and Egypt, and Israel and Egypt. Dayan said if a trilateral meeting is held it will be more than symbolic because it will deal with substantive issues.

Asked about whether the U.S. role is now on two different planes as a result of the settlement issue, Dayan said, "I can only tell you what they are doing in the talks (at Blair House) and they are very constructive. But I don't know what they (the Americans) are saying in other places or to their own people." This was obviously a reference to the discussion that Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders had with Palestinians and Jordanians while in the Middle East recently.

Later this afternoon, some confusion arose as to how the U.S. and Egypt regard the results of the separate meetings held last night and today among the Israelis, Egyptian and American delegations at Blair House. George Sherman, official spokesman for the conferees, said "I personally do not disagree" with Dayan's characterization of progress made at his meeting with Vance this morning. It could not be determined why Sherman injected the word "personally" instead of speaking directly for the delegations.

Pressed on the settlements issue, Sherman said "The ultimate impact of the settlements remains to be seen in the draft treaty text." He denied a reporter's suggestion that the settlements issue is "essentially" a difference between the U.S. and Israel. "I do not agree with your characterization (that) it is a bilateral issue," he said.

Vance was quoted on an ABC-TV interview yesterday as saying that the settlements issue has "deferred" the chances for a quick resolution in the Egyptian-Israeli treaty talks. But neither Sherman nor the State Department's chief spokesman, Hadding Carter, would expand on Vance's point today. The conclusion drawn by some observers is that the Israelis are under pressure from both Cairo and Washington.

CABINET SETS UP TWO COMMITTEES TO STUDY ISSUES LINKED TO PEACE TALKS

JERUSALEM, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- The Cabinet met in special session today to hear the latest reports on the state of peace negotiations with Egypt in Washington. It sat as a ministerial security committee, meaning that the proceedings were classified. This situation has drawn fire from the press. A committee of editors of Israel's daily newspapers met in Tel Aviv last night to protest the increasingly frequent invocation of security to prevent news of Cabinet deliberations from reaching the public.

The editors charged that this procedure was "anti-democratic" and deprived the public of the necessary information needed for intelligent debate on the peace talks. They said that the information being censored was not of a military or security nature.

No details were released on the substance of today's Cabinet session. However, the Cabinet announced the establishment of two ad hoc ministerial committees to study specific issues linked to the peace talks. One concerns the oil wells drilled by Israel in Sinai and the other the nature and extent of U.S. financial assistance for Israel's military pull-back from Sinai.

It was understood that some ministers feel the American aid commitments have not been sufficiently firm and expect Premier Menachem Begin to raise the issue with President Carter if they meet during Begin's visit to the U.S. this week.

(Meanwhile, in New York, the National Council of Churches said today that due to a possible error in the office of Premier Begin, the National Council of Churches was reported as the group presenting the "Family of Man Award" jointly to Begin and President Anwar Sadat of Egypt on Nov. 3. A Council spokesman said the organization presenting the award is the New York City Council of Churches.)

GOVERNMENT FIRM ON WAGE POLICY

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- The labor relations outlook darkened yesterday after the Cabinet resolved to stand firm in its policy of a 15 percent wage ceiling for civil servants. Ministers explained after the Cabinet session that this was the only way to fight inflation. But Histadrut warned that there could be no further negotiations on the basis of the Cabinet's decision. Histadrut Secretary General Yehoram Meshel said of the Finance Minister, "If (Simcha) Ehrlich wants strikes he'll get them."

Teachers, doctors, engineers and many other government employees are threatening to strike in support of wage claims which, on the average, are in the region of 30-40 percent. Immigration Minister David Levy and Health Minister Eliezer Shostak are understood to have urged the Cabinet to soften

its stand and agree to up the 15 percent ceiling by 5-6 percent. But Ehrlich recommended a tough and unyielding stand and was firmly backed by Premier Menachem Begin and a majority of the ministers. A determined-sounding Ehrlich assured reporters after the Cabinet meeting that he was prepared to face a wave of strikes if that was the only way to "make the economy healthy again."

Meanwhile, the head of the Manufacturers Association, industrialist Avraham Shavit, called on the government and the Knesset yesterday to revoke their decision declaring Nov. 7, municipal election day, a national holiday. In huge advertisements in the press Shavit argued that the day off work would cost the economy IL 750 million, as much as it costs, he noted, to build a highway from Beersheba to Mitzpe Ramon deep in the Negev.

A top Labor Party economist, MK Gad Yacobi, announced immediately that he supported Shavit's appeal and would press his party to endorse it in the Knesset.

Accentuating the country's economic troubles has been the effect -- and the predicted further effects -- of last weekend's hike in fuel prices. Economists predicted yesterday that the fuel price rise of between 18 and 25 percent would trigger an eventual rise of some 3.5 percent in the overall cost of living rate. Electricity prices were also raised by 14 percent.

At the same time, the government plans to slash subsidies on a string of basic commodities, starting shortly and continuing in a pattern of one commodity each few weeks. This policy, too, will have an immediate impact on the cost of living index as will the likely imminent rises in the prices of cigarettes, alcohol and coffee.

ZAMBIA WOULD NOT OBJECT IF TORAH SCROLLS WERE TAKEN BACK TO ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- Zambia would have no objections to the removal to Israel of unused Torah scrolls and other Jewish religious articles now in that country. Zambia's President, Kenneth Kaunda, made this clear to Israel's Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren in a letter to Goren this week.

Kaunda spoke highly of the contributions made to his country in the past by the small Jewish community that used to live there. He assured Goren that Jews would always be welcomed back to Zambia. And meanwhile he had no objection if the scrolls were taken to Israel.

Kaunda was one of a number of African leaders who wrote to Premier Menachem Begin last month congratulating him on the outcome of the Camp David summit conference. There are hopes here that after the signing of a peace treaty with Egypt some of the more moderate African countries will resume their diplomatic ties with Israel severed in 1973. (By David Landau)

PARLEY ON U.S. POLICY IN MIDEAST

NEW YORK, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- The National Committee on American Foreign Policy will hold a round table conference in Washington on "American Policy in the Middle East After the Camp David Summit" at American University, on Wednesday, Nov. 8. Dr. Mordechai Hacohen, chairman of the organization's symposium committee, announced today.

The all-day conference, which will be chaired by Prof. Hans Morgenthau and Joseph Sisco, will discuss, in two sessions, "The New Balance of Power in the Middle East" and "The Future of the Middle East After the Camp David

Summit."

Panel members will include: Gen. George Keegan, USAF, former head of Air Force Intelligence; Dr. Joseph Churba, former head of U.S. Air Force Intelligence of the Middle East; Bernard Lewis, professor at the Institute of Advanced Studies at Princeton University; Edward N. Luttwak, research professor at Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies; Richard Pipes, professor in the Department of History at Harvard University; and Uri Ra'anani, professor at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Hacohen said the National Committee, which was founded in 1974 to stimulate interest in American foreign policy, is a broadly based organization of individuals from all areas of American life who take an interest in foreign affairs.

LEONARD COHEN DEAD AT 74

GENEVA, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- Leonard Cohen, a leader in the European Jewish community, died here suddenly yesterday at age 74. A descendant of rabbinical families on both paternal and maternal sides, Cohen was born in England and went to work before the age of 16. As his career developed, he took part in major industrial development and finance, both in Britain and abroad.

In his years of service to Jewish life, Cohen served as treasurer of Youth Aliya in England, as well as vice-president of the Magbit, the Israel Bonds Organization and the World ORT Union (WOU) in Switzerland. He also served on the WOU finance committee and on the board of the Weizmann Institute. Shortly after World War II, Cohen was made a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor in recognition of his services to the French government.

Max A. Braude, director-general of the WOU in Geneva, said that Cohen's death constitutes a deep loss to leadership of the Jewish community here and abroad. "Leonard Cohen was a modest man who preferred action to words, and anonymity to publicity," Braude said, and pointed out that Cohen's "involvement with Jewish causes was always on the level of maximum service, primarily to youth."

ALIYA FROM USSR IS INCREASING

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- Leon Dulzin, chairman of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization Executives, reported that Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union would top the 3000 mark this month and the upward trend is likely to continue in the months ahead. But "neshira" (drop-outs) -- Jews who opt to go to countries other than Israel after arriving in Vienna -- was over 66 percent in September and is also expected to remain high, he said.

Dulzin said that efforts were continuing to reduce this phenomenon. He reported that Jewish Agency officials are presently inspecting the facilities in Vienna and Rome, the two way-stops for Jews leaving the USSR, and are holding consultations with other interested parties with a view to reducing the drop-out rate. The issue is under dispute between the Jewish Agency on one hand and the Joint Distribution Committee and HIAS which aid the drop-outs while they wait to immigrate to the countries of their choice, mainly the U.S.

Dulzin reported that overall immigration figures for 1978 showed a 20 percent increase over last year. There were 18,350 immigrant arrivals in Israel during the first nine months of this year compared to 15,095 during the corresponding months of 1977. Despite the drop-outs, the increase is mainly in the number of Jews from the Soviet Union.

STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN RETRACTS REPLY: THAT BEGIN WAS A TERRORIST

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- State Department spokesman Hodding Carter swiftly retracted an affirmative reply he gave to a reporter at today's press briefing as to whether Premier Menachem Begin of Israel has ever acknowledged that he committed a terrorist act. He did so after he was challenged by another reporter and the question and reply were expunged from the official briefing record.

The question was posed by a reporter for a far left publication whose questions frequently reflect an anti-Israel slant. When Carter said "yes," another reporter, known for his pro-Israel sentiments, demanded to know where and when Begin ever made such an acknowledgement. The State Department spokesman said "in his book," apparently referring to Begin's autobiography, "The Revolt."

The reporter insisted that the book contained no such admission nor had Begin ever acknowledged a terrorist act in an interview. Carter replied, "It's a matter of interpretation" and added, "I retract it, the whole series of questions and answers dealing with Begin."

Some Answers To Hussein's Questions

Meanwhile, the State Department acknowledged that columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak were "accurate" in their report today of replies given by the United States to questions posed by King Hussein of Jordan on the future of Jewish settlements on the West Bank and matters relating to East Jerusalem. But the Department continued to refuse to make public the texts of the 14 questions posed by Hussein or the American responses to them.

According to Evans and Novak, Hussein asked, "'Will there be any (settlements) after the end of the five-year transition'" on the West Bank, and, "'What is the U.S. position' on whether the self-governing authority to be created on the West Bank includes East Jerusalem 'both in terms of territory and people.'"

The American reply to the first of these questions was, "'Whatever number (of settlements) that might remain beyond the transitional period... would presumably be agreed to in the negotiations concerning the final status of the West Bank and Gaza.'" To the second question, the response was, "'The U.S. will support proposals that would permit the Arab inhabitants of East Jerusalem who are not Israeli citizens' to vote in the elections leading to self-rule. Further, these Jerusalem Palestinians could share 'in the work of the self-governing authority itself.'"

DANGER TO ISRAEL SHOULD EGYPT ABROGATE ANTICIPATED PEACE TREATY

TEL AVIV, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- If Egypt were to abrogate its anticipated peace treaty with Israel, it would take the Egyptian army some 12 hours to occupy part of the demilitarized zone in Sinai and 36 hours to move six to eight full divisions to the international border for the purpose of attacking Israel, according to the Tel Aviv University Center for Strategic Studies (CSS).

This is insufficient time for Israel to mobilize and deploy all its reserve forces, according to the research project on the question, written by Brig. Gen. (Res.) Aryeh Shalev. He outlined a list of security considerations the CSS recommended in addition to those agreed to at the Camp

David summit.

The CSS recommended that Israel demand the stationing of United Nations observers not only within its own limited forces area but also in the Egyptian limited forces area along the Suez Canal and Gulf of Suez, particularly at the crossing bridges. The CSS said the UN presence would deter Egyptian violation of the proposed treaty and provide an early warning to Israel of a possible attack.

The CSS said Israel should oppose Egyptian construction of any new air bases in Sinai and insist that the Egyptian air force not be allowed to use the existing air bases in this limited forces area or at best not to station combat planes there. The CSS study also recommended that no Egyptian military flights be allowed over the demilitarized zone.

The CSS also proposed that Israel insist on delaying evacuation of the Etzion and Eitam air bases in Sinai until construction is completed of alternate airfields in the Negev, which it estimated would take five to seven years. To further safeguard free passage through the Strait of Tiran, the CSS recommended that Israel should also insist that the area west of Sharm el-Sheikh be demilitarized and not on the Egyptian limited forces area as the Camp David accords seem to stipulate.

SYMPOSIUM IN BAVARIA ON PASSION PLAY

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Oct. 30 (JTA) -- The American Jewish Committee announced that a leading Catholic academic institution in Bavaria, West Germany, would sponsor a symposium of Catholic and Jewish scholars in Munich next month on the relationship of the Oberammergau Passion Play to the development of anti-Semitism in Germany and in Christian culture. The symposium, which will be held Nov. 10, will be sponsored by the Catholic Academy of Bavaria in cooperation with the AJCommittee's Interreligious Affairs Department.

Announcement of the symposium was made by Miles Jaffe, chairman of the AJCommittee's Interreligious Affairs Commission, at the annual meeting of the Committee's National Executive Council. Last July, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, AJCommittee national director of interreligious affairs, and William S. Trosten, AJCommittee's director of development, met with Dr. Franz Henrich, president of the Catholic Academy of Bavaria, on the Oberammergau Passion Play issue. At that time, the AJCommittee leaders suggested that a dialogue among Catholic and Jewish scholars on the historical and theological issues represented in the Passion Play could prove helpful, and the Academy subsequently decided to sponsor a symposium on the subject.

Tanenbaum will present one of the major papers at the symposium. He has also been invited to speak in the village of Oberammergau following the symposium on the religious and historical factors that have contributed to anti-Semitism in Germany and elsewhere. It is believed that never before has a Jewish spokesman been invited to address a public gathering in Oberammergau on anti-Semitism and Jewish-Christian relations.

Outlining the significance of the symposium, Jaffe pointed out that this will be the first time in the history of the Oberammergau Passion Play, which dates back to 1634, that a German Catholic group of such prestige has taken the initiative in cooperation with a Jewish body to examine the root causes of anti-Semitism engendered by certain accounts of Jesus' death, including Passion Plays. More than 20 years ago, the AJCommittee made an exhaustive analysis of the script then used in the play's performance and concluded that it was a highly anti-Semitic document.

SAN FRANCISCO FEDERATION HEADS LIST OF 1978 WINNERS IN THE CJF PUBLIC RELATIONS COMPETITION

NEW YORK, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- The Jewish Welfare Federation of San Francisco heads the list of winners with five first-place awards in the annual CJF Public Relations Competition, according to an announcement made by Nat Kameny, chairman of the Awards Committee. Jewish Federations in New York and Denver each won three awards in the annual competition which honors outstanding community programs and materials.

Official presentation of certificates to all winning communities will be made at the CJF General Assembly which takes place Nov. 8-12 in San Francisco.

A special award has also been voted by the committee to the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith for "outstanding assistance to North American Jewish communities" through publication of "The Record--The Holocaust in History," carried by numerous newspapers as a special supplement prior to the NBC-TV program last spring.

The San Francisco public relations efforts which received top honors in this year's competition include the categories of "Best Thematic Continuity" for 1978 campaign materials; "Exceptional Effort" for its Israel Independence Day and Young Adults Division programs; "Best Direct Mail" for the Jewish Welfare Federation brochure and an advance gifts invitation; "Other Print Media" for a special 1978 campaign poster and an Israel Independence Day poster, and "Best Photos."

Other Citations, Awards

The citations to the Allied Jewish Federation of Denver were given in the categories of "Best Special Publication" for an annual report; "Best Thematic Continuity" for use of the campaign theme, "The Ultimate Guarantee," and "Best Newspaper--Non-Advertising" for Lifeline.

The three awards to the UJA/Federation of Jewish Philanthropies Joint Campaign, New York, are for its 1978 campaign materials using the theme "Do a World of Good," its television program, "Trial in Heaven," and for "Best Photos."

In the category of "Best Special Event," which honors outstanding community programs sponsored and organized by Jewish Federations, this year's winners include the Jewish Federation-Council of Los Angeles for its "Six Decades of Oppression" exhibit on Soviet Jewry; a special program on "Judaism Through the Arts" put on by the Jewish Federation of Greater San Jose and a "Conference on the Holocaust" sponsored by the Tulsa Jewish Community Council.

Special citations in this category will be awarded to a number of communities for their Israel 30th Anniversary celebrations. These include programs sponsored by Jewish Federations in Pittsburgh, Boston, Chicago, Miami, Southern New Jersey, Columbus, Hartford and Minneapolis/St. Paul.

Community Newspapers Cited

Eight community newspapers, in addition to the one in Denver, were cited as outstanding including Currents, published by the Associated Jewish Charities & Welfare Fund of Baltimore; the UJF Reporter, a publication of the United Jewish Federation of Greater San Diego; Hakol, published by the Jewish Federation of Allentown; Jewish Community News, a publication of the Jewish Welfare Federation of Palm Springs.

Also, JUF News, published by the Jewish

Federation of Metropolitan Chicago; the Jewish Community Council of Ottawa's Jewish Bulletin and Review, the Savannah Jewish News, sponsored by the Savannah Jewish Council, and the Jewish Review, a publication of the Jewish Federation of Portland, Ore.

Other winning community Federations include: "Exceptional Effort" -- San Jose, Peoria and Allentown; "Thematic Continuity" -- Memphis and Nashville; "Best Audio/Visual Presentation" -- Montreal, Boston and Columbus; "Best TV and Radio Program" -- New Haven and Oklahoma City; "Best TV and Radio Spot Announcements" -- Miami and Detroit.

Also, "Best Newspaper Advertising" -- Toronto, Cincinnati and Springfield, Ill.; "Best Direct Mail" -- Buffalo, North Jersey, Pittsburgh and Norwalk; "Other Print Media" -- Akron and Waterbury; "Best Special Publication" -- St. Louis, Philadelphia, St. Paul and Harrisburg; and "Best Photos" -- Ottawa.

QANTAS DENIES BARRING JEWS FROM ITS WEEKLY FLIGHTS TO DAMASCUS

By David Friedman

NEW YORK, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- Qantas, the Australian national airline, denied today a report that it had barred Jews from its weekly flight to Damascus. A spokesman for the airline's New York office, said the report, which has led to an investigation by the Australian government, was due to erroneous reading of the company's regulations by a travel agent in Britain.

The spokesman explained that the Syrian government requires planes that fly over its air space to land in that country at least once a week as a result of which Qantas stops in Damascus weekly on its Canberra-London run. Jews and passengers with Israeli passports or visas had been advised that Syrian law prohibits Jews from entering the country and that they might run into a problem even in transit, the spokesman said. But he stressed the decision was always left up to the passenger.

However, the spokesman said that after the incident in which a woman was told by a British travel agent that Jews were barred from the flight to Syria, the Syrian government advised Qantas that there would be no problem for any of its passengers. The airline has now discontinued the policy of advising persons of the potential problem, he said. After the initial report, the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies in Victoria, Australia demanded the ban be lifted.

ABEL SHABAN DEAD AT 70

JOHANNESBURG, Oct. 30 (JTA) -- Abel Shaban, the former chairman of ORT and OSE in South Africa and member of both organizations' world executives, has died here at the age of 70. Born in Krakina, Lithuania, Shaban began his writing career on the Kovno Yiddish Shtimme as one of its provincial reporters. After his arrival in South Africa in the late 1920s, he worked as a journalist on various publications and also published a novel, "Homeless Days." Shaban left journalism for business during World War II and amassed a fortune. He was instrumental in helping procure arms for the Haganah in the last stages of the British Mandate in Palestine.

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JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Israel television was blacked out Monday night as the result of a job action by communication workers who also threatened to disrupt postal and telephone services. The action followed Sunday's Cabinet decision to place a 15 percent ceiling on wage increases for public employees.