

# JTA daily news bulletin

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Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency / 165 West 46th Street / New York, New York 10036

Vol. XLV - 61st Year

Wednesday, November 1, 1978

No. 208

## SPECIAL TO THE JTA SAUNDERS SAYS HE WAS SPEAKING FOR CARTER DURING HIS MIDEAST TRIP

NEW YORK, Oct. 31 (JTA) -- Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East and South Asian Affairs, told Jewish leaders here yesterday at a closed off-the-record meeting that the attacks against him by Israel following his visit to Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the West Bank were entirely unjustified, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned.

In the two-hour meeting with the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Saunders emphasized that his entire trip was undertaken on behalf of President Carter and that he was not speaking for himself but for Carter when he met with Arab and Palestinian leaders.

### Was Restating U.S. Policy

He stressed repeatedly that what he told these officials was merely to restate American policy in the Mideast and that his expressions in no way contradicted the agreements reached between Israel and Egypt at the Camp David summit. Saunders asserted that the statements on the future of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which caused a furor in Israel, represented long-standing U.S. policy and had the official approval of Carter.

During his meeting with Premier Menachem Begin of Israel and other Israeli leaders, Saunders was rebuked for having told King Hussein of Jordan, Saudi officials and West Bank personalities that the U.S. continues to view as illegal Jewish settlements on the West Bank and for saying that the U.S. did not recognize Israel's "annexation" of East Jerusalem after the Six-Day War and East Jerusalem should therefore be returned to Arab sovereignty.

The JTA learned that an invitation to Saunders to meet with the Presidents Conference had been extended last July by Theodore Mann, Conference chairman, when they were together in Israel during the visit there by Vice President Walter Mondale. Saunders accepted the invitation and was due to address the Presidents Conference two weeks ago but had to cancel to undertake his Mideast visit.

## U.S. DISPLEASURE WITH ISRAEL'S WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS STAND SEEN AS FACTOR IN SLOWING PEACE TALKS

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31 (JTA) -- The Carter Administration's apparent displeasure with Israel's refusal to give ground on the West Bank settlements issue continued to slow the negotiations for an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty despite the trilateral plenary meeting at Blair House today, the first in 10 days.

In contrast to optimistic comments from Israeli and Egyptian leaders about the possibility that a treaty could be signed Dec. 10, in Oslo, when the 1978 Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to Israeli Premier Menachem Begin and President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, the official spokesman for the Blair House conferees, George Sherman, had little cheer to offer.

"The overall negotiations continue to move forward" and they are "serious and systematic," Sherman said after the plenary session. He could not say, however, when another session will be held. He observed that with Begin's arrival in New York tomorrow to begin a private visit to the U.S. and Canada, the Israeli ministers at the Blair House conference will want to greet him. Sherman would not discuss why President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance will not be meeting with Begin. (See separate story.)

He disclosed that the U.S. has presented a "clean draft" for the bilateral treaty but stressed that it was "a mechanical device" to take into account Egyptian and Israeli changes and not a third draft in the sense that the two previous drafts introduced by the U.S. were new. He said the U.S. has not introduced "new concepts" into the negotiations. While describing the settlements issue as "one part of the larger framework" agreed to at Camp David, he said that "in a general way, the impact" of that issue on the Blair House negotiations "remains to be seen."

### Issues Prolonging Treaty Talks

Apart from the settlements issue, another event that may lengthen the Blair House conference, now ending its second week, is the Arab League meeting in Baghdad starting Thursday on how to block the Israeli-Egyptian peace movement. A factor in that conclave is the agitation by Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization to expel Egypt from the 22-nation Arab League.

These developments plus national elections in the U.S. Nov. 7 appears to have sobered the zeal with which the Carter Administration has sought to satisfy Jordan, the Palestinian Arabs and Saudi Arabia at Israel's expense. That the Administration chose this time, when Israel and Egypt are nearing a peace agreement, is believed to be based on opposition by the Carter Administration to a separate Israeli-Egyptian peace although it would not acknowledge this publicly.

Reliable sources, therefore, see progress towards an Egyptian-Israeli treaty on all points of the nine articles in the draft, the preamble and the three annexes to keep the momentum going. But the timing for a conclusion is uncertain. So is the ultimate compromise on linking the bilateral treaty with the West Bank-Gaza Strip proceedings that presumably will remain hazy pending developments in Baghdad and a possible Carter-Begin meeting.

The difficulties over the treaty's completion, according to these sources, lie not with the Egyptians who are prepared for a quick writing of a peace pact at Blair House but with the Carter Administration whose Middle East specialists want to move toward a "comprehensive" agreement before the Egyptians sign with the Israelis and thereby deprive the Carter Administration of diplomatic leverage on Israel.

## CONVERSION OF AULCIE PERRY BY BROOKLYN RABBI TERMED INVALID

By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, Oct. 31 (JTA) -- Officials of two major American Orthodox rabbinical organizations maintained today that the conversion of Black basketball star Aulcie Perry, now a member of the Maccabi team in Israel, by a Brooklyn rabbi was invalid. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported

from Jerusalem that the dispute might lead Agudat Israel to leave the Begin coalition unless Perry's nationalization certificate is rescinded by the National Religious Party-directed Ministry of the Interior.

The latest dispute in the ongoing controversy over the validity of conversions outside of Israel was touched off by officials of the Tel Aviv Hapoel Club, inveterate rivals of the Maccabi. The Hapoel officials wrote to the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada (UOR) asking about the validity of Perry's conversion.

The issue this time was not the customary Reform-Conservative versus Orthodox dispute but the validity of the conversion performed by Rabbi Haim Rabinowitz, who heads a rabbinical court (Beth Din, "Tifereth Israel," in Brooklyn and who describes himself in advertising in a local English-Jewish weekly as Dean of the Rabbinical Academy of America.

Along with the letter, the Hapoel officials sent the UOR a photocopy of Perry's conversion certificate. The document listed Rabbi Rabinowitz as the head of the Beth Din and was signed by the Beth Din.

The text of the reply by the UOR, made available to the JTA here, signed by Rabbi Haim Zvi Kruger, chairman of the UOR family law commission, dated Oct. 28, read:

"In reply to your letter of Oct. 5, 1978, regarding Aulcie Perry, as to whether he is considered a ger halachah (convert according to Jewish religious law), we wish to reply that in general all conversions of the man who converts and his Beth Din which is mentioned in the certificate hereby enclosed (the photocopy of the Perry conversion certificate from Rabinowitz) has no validity whatsoever and you cannot rely on them in anything. And we do not recognize Aulcie Perry as one who entered the Jewish religion by the officiation of the man who converted him and his Beth Din aforementioned."

#### Seeks Probe Of Conversion Court

Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren, discussing the dispute, said in Jerusalem that the Perry conversion court would have to be investigated to determine whether its members conformed to Orthodox requirements, adding the touchstone should be whether they were recognized by the Rabbinical Council of America, reportedly the largest Orthodox rabbinical organization in the United States.

Yediot Achonot, the Israeli afternoon daily, reported from New York that Rabbi Louis Bernstein, a former president of the Rabbinical Council, said the Tifereth Israel Beth Din was not recognized by any Orthodox organization and that there was no way of knowing how valid its conversions might be.

Rabinowitz told the JTA he had been a rabbi for 52 years and that he had been ordained by the late Rabbi Avraham Aaron Yudelovich, whom he described as a one-time Chief Rabbi of New York. He said he was not a member of the UOR or any other Orthodox rabbinical group.

#### Felt Perry Qualified For Conversion

Rabinowitz said he had examined Perry's knowledge of Jewish lore and concluded he was qualified to become converted. Since Perry had already been circumcised, a ceremony was performed symbolic of a ritual circumcision and Perry underwent immersion in a mikveh, as re-

quired for conversion. Rabinowitz said Perry's conversion took place Aug. 14.

Rabinowitz challenged the rejection of his rabbinic authority to perform conversions and related religious rites, adding that such critics would have to challenge successfully the validity of his ordination. When it was pointed out that Yudelovich was long since dead, Rabinowitz said Yudelovich's reputation was an accepted fact.

Rabbi Shalom Rivkin, coordinator of the Rabbinical Council Beth Din, said, in commenting on Rabinowitz's statement to the JTA, that he did not wish to get into any dispute over the validity of Rabinowitz's ordination. He said what was important was the validity of religious ceremonies performed under Rabinowitz's auspices.

Rivkin said Jewish religious divorces and conversions performed by Rabinowitz are not accepted by "any authentic rabbinic court in the world" and that the Rabbinical Council had documentation to support that declaration. According to the JTA Jerusalem report, the fact that Perry was Black was adding to the embarrassment, and that Maccabi officials said they feared the incident would be interpreted abroad as one of racial prejudice.

#### PERES AGREES ISRAEL SHOULD THICKEN SETTLEMENTS BUT NOT AT THIS TIME

By David Friedman

NEW YORK, Oct. 31 (JTA)--Shimon Peres, leader of Israel's opposition Labor Alignment, said here last night that while he believed Israel should "thicken" some of the settlements in the occupied territories, the government should have been "sensitive" that peace negotiations were going on with Egypt and waited until they were completed before making the announcement.

Peres, Defense Minister and Acting Premier in the last Labor government, said Israel lost standing "unnecessarily" in world public opinion by the announcement last week of the government of Premier Menachem Begin that it planned to "thicken" existing settlements on the West Bank and Golan Heights. He said sometimes more harm results from "declaring than doing."

Answering questions from Dr. William Berkowitz, rabbi of Congregation B'nai Beshurun, before an overflow crowd at the Manhattan synagogue's opening session of its annual "Dialogue" series, Peres asserted that the settlements in occupied territory are not illegal and Israel will win support for them as long as it bases its position on security needs rather than religion.

Asked about Begin's claim that the West Bank belongs to the Jewish people by Biblical right, Peres said while he believes Israel has a Biblical right to the West Bank, there must be a distinction between rights and realities in making policy. The Bible, he added, speaks not only about territory but also refers to such things as peace and "respect for your neighbors."

Peres said he believes the West Bank should be demilitarized whatever eventually happens to it, that Israel should be selective in establishing settlements and that these settlements should not be in the midst of heavily populated Arab areas. But he said Israel cannot continue governing more than 700,000 Arabs with the highest birthrate in the world and remain a Jewish State. He said that he wants an "Israel that is both Jewish and democratic."

Earlier, Peres had noted that he has received many letters from American Jews complaining about what they called the "shocking" debates in the Knesset. "I prefer a real country with real democracy [even with 'shocking' debates]," Peres stressed.

When he was asked about Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders' reported remarks that Israel must relinquish sovereignty over East Jerusalem, Peres declared that all Israelis and Jews agree that Jerusalem must remain a united city, the capital of Israel. He said Israel has a right to disagree with the U.S. just as the U.S. can disagree with Israel "and still remain friends."

Peres admitted that he had opposed the idea of Camp David because the "less summitry the better off you are." He said Israel and Egypt should have been able to reach an agreement without heavy U.S. involvement. He said with three parties negotiating, it usually turns into two against one and he didn't believe Israel was "one of the two."

But he said he and his party supported the Camp David agreements because "we prefer a real peace based on an imperfect plan rather than a perfect plan with no peace."

Asked whether he trusted Egyptian President Anwar Sadat on his declaration that he wanted peace, Peres said his basic trust was in the strength of Israel. But, he added, "I would trust his (Sadat's) decision on peace because I can see the reasons for it." He explained that Egypt was concerned about Soviet penetration in the Middle East and Africa, it had decided it could not defeat Israel militarily and it needed peace to deal with its economy which was in trouble.

#### ABC FILM ON PALESTINIANS DRAWS OVERWHELMINGLY NEGATIVE RESPONSE By William Saphire.

NEW YORK, Oct. 31 (JTA) -- The American Broadcasting Co. acknowledged today that telephone response to its "News Closeup" program, "Terror in the Promised Land," aired in most of the country last night, was overwhelmingly negative. But an ABC spokesperson told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that there was strong evidence that most of the protests were part of an organized campaign, probably encouraged by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith which has branded the broadcast a "totally one-sided pro-Arab terrorist film."

According to Mary Fifield, director of public relations for ABC News which produces the "Closeup" series, some 1500-plus negative phone calls were received by ABC in New York and other cities before the program was aired. She said most of these callers read from what appeared to be "prepared scripts" and that many of them were children.

Ms. Fifield said she took a number of calls from children last night. She said that when they were asked why they called, some replied, "because my Hebrew school teacher told me to" or the "rabbi told me to." She said she thought the ADL was responsible.

#### Protest Calls From All Over

Ms. Fifield said a similar number of calls were received during and after the hour-long program which was aired from 8-9 p.m. Eastern Standard Time and that these seemed "more bona fide." She said ABC in Washington received 45 calls praising the program and 46 against.

"Terror in the Promised Land" was aired in the Los Angeles area Sunday night in a different time slot. According to Ms. Fifield, the majority of protest calls there were received before the broadcast began. The hour-long documentary, made by ABC staff writer-producer Malcolm Clarke, carried no commercial advertising.

The usual commercial breaks were filled with public service messages broadcast free of charge. Fifield said that the ABC sales department had decided, on the day of broadcast, to "pull" all advertising because of the controversy generated by the broadcast. She explained that sponsors of Closeup buy the entire series as a package and that there was no time to advise advertisers of the controversy.

When reminded that the program had been scheduled months ago, Fifield maintained, nevertheless, that many advertisers were not aware of its content and that it was the decision of the sales department not to involve them with controversial material without their foreknowledge.

She could not say whether or not ABC lost revenue as a result or in what amount. She said the program drew a 10.7 rating and 16 share in New York and about the same in Chicago and Los Angeles. She said she believed this was average for a news documentary broadcast in prime time.

In a statement issued yesterday, ADL general counsel Arnold Forster said the ADL "was denied its request to preview the telecast." Fifield said it was ABC policy not to preview shows for "special interest groups" unless an endorsement was being sought. It was previewed for the press, including the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

#### NEITHER CARTER NOR VANCE PLAN TO MEET WITH BEGIN

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31 (JTA) -- Carter Administration spokesmen said today that neither President Carter nor Secretary of State Cyrus Vance plan to meet with Premier Menachem Begin when he visits the U.S. this week. Begin will arrive in New York tomorrow and will be in the U.S. for about a week before starting an official visit to Canada.

White House Press Secretary Jody Powell told reporters this morning that "there is no particular reason for the heads of government to meet at this point." He said a report that Begin had asked for a meeting with Carter "is incorrect."

(This was confirmed in Jerusalem today by Yehiel Kadishai, chief of the Prime Minister's Office, who said that Begin had not requested a meeting with Carter. He was responding to reports that a meeting had been arranged between the two leaders but that Carter cancelled it because of the Israeli Cabinet's decision to strengthen Jewish settlements on the West Bank.)

At the State Department today, chief spokesman Hoddging Carter said "I have nothing to offer at this time" about a possible meeting between Vance and Begin. Asked when the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty might be ready for signing, Carter said he could not provide a projection of a date.

In another development today, the Pentagon confirmed that a high-level American military team that is preparing to go to Egypt and Israel to study the military requirements of both countries from the U.S. has postponed its trip. No reason was given. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Tom Ross said the mission, headed by David E. McGiffert, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, has been put off for the time being.

Both Ross and Hoddging Carter denied that the postponement of the McGiffert mission was a signal of displeasure by the Carter Administration with Israel's policy on the West Bank settlements. Carter said the postponement is not a form of pressure on Israel, adding, "We won't use our military supply relationship with Israel as a means of pressure on Israel, political or otherwise."

**MASSACRE IN YORK COMMEMORATED**

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Oct. 31 (JTA)--The most notorious massacre of Jews in medieval England was commemorated today in York at a service attended by the Archbishop of York, Dr. Stuart Blanch, and the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Immanuel Jakobovits. A commemorative plaque was unveiled at Clifford's Tower, where in 1190 about 150 Jews committed mass suicide rather than be caught by a mob, which had already murdered several Jews in their houses.

The service was arranged by the Jewish Historical Society of England to honor the memory of the victims and to strengthen Jewish-Christian reconciliation at a time of renewed anti-Semitism.

The incident at York was the climax of a wave of anti-Jewish outbreaks which swept England at the beginning of the Third Crusade, led by Richard the Lion Hearted, King of England. The York pogrom began with the murder of a Jewish family; the rest of the community then took refuge in the Royal Castle.

On suspecting that the Castle governor was preparing to hand them over to the mob, the Jews refused to admit him and he called in the local sheriff's troops to force an entry for him. The Jews resisted, but seeing the position was hopeless, their leaders, Josce of York and Rabbi Yomtov de Joigny, said they should kill one another rather than surrender.

**Massacre Shocked Jews Throughout Europe**

All but a handful took part in the mass suicide. The others surrendered after agreeing to embrace Christianity, but were themselves killed on leaving the Castle. Although the community was revived a few years later, it never regained its former preeminence. News of the massacre shocked Jews throughout Europe, evoking a number of elegies. One, by Rabbi Joseph of Chartres, contains the lines: "In place of their herds they offered up their children, and they slaughtered their first strength before their eyes."

The death of Yomtov de Joigny was especially tragic as he himself, 20 years earlier, had composed an elegy about Jews massacred in Blois, France. He had been brought over to England from France to join other leading scholars at York, where there was an important Jewish academy. He is the author of "Omnam Ken," one of the poems in the Ashkenazi eve of atonement prayer book.

According to the famous historian, the late Dr. Cecil Roth, rabbinical scholarship in England had previously been developing to a marked extent. But the massacre in York on March 16, 1190, was a blow from which English Jewry never wholly recovered. Exactly a century later, in 1290, the Jews were expelled from England where their position had become untenable. It was not until 1656, three-and-a-half centuries later, that Cromwell readmitted them, thus beginning the present Jewish community.

**Jews Warned to Remain Alert  
Regarding Carter Administration**

DEARBORN, Mich., Oct. 31 (JTA) -- Mark Siegel, the former deputy assistant to President Carter who resigned over disagreement with the Administration's Middle East policy, called on American Jews last night to look forward to the "great hope and opportunity" implicit in the Camp David agreements. But, at the same time, he urged them to maintain their alertness and "not

to keep silent when our people's life is at stake."

Siegel spoke to 600 delegates at the opening night of the 12th national board conference of Women's American ORT. The conference continues through Thursday.

Chiding the Carter Administration for what he termed past "one-sided" hostility against Israel, Siegel cited examples ranging from the Administration's "lukewarm" attitude toward Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem last year to the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia this spring which led to his resignation. But he urged American Jews not to "belabor" the past but to concentrate on the present and look toward the future.

"All parties won at Camp David," Siegel stressed, adding that Carter, Sadat and Israeli Premier Menachem Begin all modified previous positions. He praised Carter for displaying a "willingness to respect private diplomacy" and halting the rhetoric against Israel. He stressed that although the State Department has again resorted to "inflammatory and provocative statements" as evidenced by the recent remarks of Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders, "peace efforts have gone too far ahead for the parties involved to turn back."

Siegel added that the American Jewish community may find itself again confronting the Administration, specifically over the issue of Jerusalem, which he declared "will never again be divided." He said American Jews must be united in their determination to ensure the survival of Israel.

**YOUNG: U.S. TO BOYCOTT PALESTINE DAY**

NEW YORK, Oct. 31 (JTA) -- The United States will boycott United Nations ceremonies marking International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on Nov. 29, it was stated here today by Andrew Young, the U.S. Ambassador to the UN.

In a letter made public by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Young said he had informed UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim that the United States regarded the work of the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People as a "misuse of UN funds." He added: "We will continue to urge other member states to support this position."

Young's statement was issued following a meeting he held last week with the UN Task Force of the Presidents Conference, in which the Conference called the UN campaign--which includes a pro-PLO film starring Yasir Arafat--"an effort to distort the history of the Middle East, to justify the terrorist slaughter of innocent women and children, and to canonize Arafat as a great hero of national liberation."

Young's statement was released as a letter to Senator Abraham A. Ribicoff (D.Conn.), a member of the U.S. delegation to the current UN General Assembly session. Last week, Ribicoff had written to Young urging that the U.S. "not participate" in the Nov. 29 ceremonies, "not send a message to be read at the meeting" and "make clear its strong opposition to this misuse of the United Nations."

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NEW YORK (JTA) -- Israeli Finance Minister Simcha Ehrlich, and Irwin Field, national chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, will be among featured speakers at the Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly Nov. 8-12 in San Francisco. Ehrlich will speak at the GA opening plenary Wednesday, Nov. 8 together with C.J.F. president Jerold C. Hoffberger. Field will appear along with GA Scholar-in-Residence David Hartman of Hebrew University, Thursday, Nov. 9 at the second plenary session.