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CABINET TO MEET IN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION: NEW DIFFERENCES BETWEEN U.S., ISRAEL; VANCE RETURNING HOME By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- The Cabinet will meet in extraordinary session tomorrow morning following the apparent breakdown of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's efforts to resolve the issues blocking an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty and signs of new differences between Israel and the U.S.

Vance himself announced last night that, on instructions from President Carter, he would be returning to Washington Friday. He confirmed again this morning that he would be ending his current mission in the region tomorrow to attend to pressing business at home that has nothing to do with the Middle East.

Vance met this morning with Premier Menachem Begin but their session appeared to have been unproductive. Begin told reporters afterwards that there were "differences of opinion between Israel and Egypt" and that the Cabinet would meet in special session tomorrow morning "and will take the proper decisions." But State Department spokesman George Sherman, who is accompanying Vance, told newsmen that in the American view, the differences were not just between Israel and Egypt but between Israel and the U.S.

As matters stand, it appears that Israel has rejected Egyptian demands for treaty revision conveyed by Vance and does not accept American proposals for a compromise that, reportedly, were acceptable to President Anwar Sadat. Egyptian demands concern the "linkage-time-table" and Article VI of the draft treaty -- the priority of obligations clause -- that Sadat wants changed.

New Demand By Sadat

Israeli officials were especially dismayed to learn that Sadat now wants to make the exchange of ambassadors with Israel conditional on the establishment of a Palestinian autonomous council on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He is understood to have told Vance the Third Annex to the draft treaty, "the protocol concerning relations between the parties," be amended to that effect. Vance reportedly asked Israel to accept the American compromise which would deal with these matters in "side letters" to accompany an Israeli-Egyptian treaty. Israel wants the treaty signed as is without amendments or accompanying letters.

Begin indicated that the impasse has not been broken when he told reporters yesterday that differences still exist with Egypt. He made that remark after a day of talks with Vance and brief consultations with the Ministerial Defense Committee. Vance had said earlier that "there are differences of views between us, but we will continue the discussion tomorrow morning." He appeared to be referring to differences between the U.S. and Israel.

Begin repeated Israel's readiness to sign the draft treaty as it stands. He said he thought the Dec. 17 deadline still could be met "but

there is no tragedy" if the signing is delayed beyond that date, he said.

The current impasse seemed to observers here today to be the most serious since the Camp David talks ended three months ago and chances of meeting the Dec. 17 deadline seemed virtually nil. Some policymakers here who are usually optimistic wondered aloud today whether a treaty ever will be signed. Others seemed more hopeful. They spoke of last-minute bargaining -- a tradition in the Levant -- and predicted that a peace treaty would be signed in a matter of weeks, though not by this Sunday.

Signal For The Two Parties

Meanwhile, Vance left for Cairo this afternoon, saying he would keep in close touch with the Israeli negotiating team and developments in the peace process. In his remarks to reporters at Ben Gurion Airport he gave no hint of a possible way out of the present impasse. "Diplomatic sources" here were quoted as saying that Vance's return to Washington tomorrow should not be interpreted as an end to the peace negotiations but simply a signal for the two parties to resume their talks.

Vance met before his departure with the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure Yitzhak Moda'i to discuss the future of the oil fields in Sinai and Israel's access to the oil after they are returned to Egypt. Moda'i said later that more progress was made on that subject than on any of the other issues that Vance discussed with Israeli officials. An American spokesman said, however, that the talks over the Sinai oil were of a business character and did not involve military or political issues.

In what appeared to be another demonstration of the current differences of views between Israel and the U.S., Vance spent some time this afternoon visiting the West Bank towns of Bethlehem and Beit Sahur. He reportedly conducted those tours without prior knowledge by the Israeli authorities, guided by the American consul in East Jerusalem. It was not known whether he met with any Arab notables.

Beit Sahur was the subject this week of a new controversy between Arab land owners and Israeli military authorities after the army closed down an area "for military purposes." Protests made by the Arab notables in the area were also sent to Vance himself, and his trip to the area was apparently in response to those protests.

CARTER CRITICIZES ISRAEL, ENDORSES EGYPTIAN POSITION

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- President Carter has come down hard publicly against Israel and has given a strong endorsement of Egypt's positions in their negotiations with the U.S. for a peace treaty that the President wants signed by this Sunday, Dec. 17.

In extemporaneous remarks last night at a dinner of the Business Council here, the President expressed himself as "very frustrated at this point" over the negotiations and voiced the "hope" that Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, who has been conferring in Cairo and Jerusalem for the last four days, "has better news from Israel for me than I

acquired from him at noon" yesterday.

Today, White House Press Secretary Jody Powell, responding to questions on the President's remarks, told reporters that the issue of a peace treaty is "essentially" up to Israel. He said Carter praised President Anwar Sadat of Egypt last night but had no words for Premier Menachem Begin of Israel because "the process (of a treaty) is already completed with Sadat."

Asked if that means the U.S. has endorsed the Egyptian position, Powell said, "obviously, our position is what the parties agree upon." He said that should Israel accept the terms that Vance gave to Begin after his talks with Sadat, "we will have peace."

But if Israel does not accept, Powell said he did not know what the next step will be. He appeared to rule out a new Camp David-type summit conference and spoke of the vast amounts of time the President and others in his Administration are spending on these negotiations. A State Department spokesman said later that he expected "a pause" in the treaty negotiations.

Vance is returning to Washington tomorrow after a meeting with Begin and a brief stopover in Cairo to inform Sadat of the results of his discussions in Jerusalem. Powell was not sure when Vance and the President would meet but indicated it would be shortly after the Secretary's return.

Terms Sadat 'Very' Generous'

In a long review of the Middle East issue last night, Carter said that the Israeli Cabinet had adopted the text of the treaty but rejected "the accompanying document which was an integral part of the mandatory agreement." This was a reference to the side letter Vance proposed that would link the treaty with Palestinian elections by the end of the coming year. "President Sadat then objected strongly to certain provisions of the treaty text itself," Carter said, "and made public statements that they could not accept them."

He added, "I sent Secretary Vance over to try to resolve this apparent impasse. He had very good success in negotiations with President Sadat. With some possible change, with which I am not familiar, President Sadat has accepted the text of the treaty. I don't believe there are any exceptions. And he has adopted a time schedule that was originally proposed by (Israeli) Foreign Minister (Moshe) Dayan himself, that a goal would be agreed of holding elections and the establishment of self-government in the West Bank/Gaza by the end of 1979."

The President said that "Earlier, they had talked about a much earlier date or even no date. But Sadat was very generous, in my opinion, in adopting basically an original Israeli position." Referring to Article VI of the draft treaty -- the priority of obligations clause -- Carter described it as "contrary to what any other nation has ever been asked to do." However, he added, Sadat has accepted the treaty text, "I understand."

Continuing, Carter said "There will be an exchange of letters between the U.S. and Sadat based on the opinions of international lawyers and the lawyers at the State Department about what this particular section means." The President followed that remark by saying, "Israel would not be required to endorse that language." He did not elaborate but informed sources here felt Israel would be under permanent U.S. pressure to agree to the language that the U.S. finally adopted with Egypt.

"So the essence of it is that at noon (Wednesday) the Egyptians had accepted the treaty text

completely and had adopted our proposal on the ancillary documents and my understanding is that the Israelis have some problems in accepting those ancillary documents, including the interpretation of what Article VI means about the priority of obligations," Carter said.

The President also said that Vance had told him that "the Israelis are reluctant to accept the goal, even for 1979, for the linkage element." He said "We pray that both nations will ultimately accept the same documents."

Powell was asked at his press briefing if the U.S. position is now a take-it-or-leave-it one or if Vance is returning with understandings that are still negotiable. Powell replied angrily, "God knows we've been negotiating." He said the President has spent more time on the Middle East issue "than any other two or three matters, including employment of our citizens, SALT and the budget." He emphasized again that "Sadat has been generous and forthcoming on various positions."

14 GROUPS IN COALITION FOR ERA

CHICAGO, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- Fourteen Jewish organizations have joined together to form a coalition of Jewish organizations to work for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in Illinois. Manuel Silver, executive director of the Chicago and Midwest Region, American Jewish Congress, convened the group to give impetus to the effort in Illinois to get it passed. Illinois is the only northern state in which ERA has failed to pass the State House and Senate.

The coalition includes: American Jewish Committee, AJCongress, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, B'nai B'rith Council of Greater Chicago, B'nai B'rith Women, Chicago Board of Rabbis, Emma Lazarus Jewish Women's Clubs, Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Jewish Labor Committee, Midwest Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, National Council of Jewish Women, Pioneer Women, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and Women's American ORT.

DAVID FLINKER DEAD AT 81

TEL AVIV, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- Funeral services were held yesterday for David Flinker, the veteran Jewish journalist and writer, who died Tuesday night at the age of 81. He was a leading figure among Jewish journalists in pre-war Poland. After arriving in Palestine, he wrote for Habaker and became a regular correspondent and writer for the American Yiddish newspaper, Day-Morning Journal, and recently, for the Algemeiner Journal. He was a prominent member of the Tel Aviv Journalists Association and an active member of the presidium of the World Federation of Jewish Journalists.

NEW YORK (JTA) -- The Labor Zionist Movement which is sponsoring the memorial meeting for Golda Meir at the New York Hilton Sunday comprises the Labor Zionist Alliance, Pioneer Women and the National Committee for Labor Israel.

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) -- The Argentine Zionist Organization and the Buenos Aires Jewish community held a special meeting to eulogize the late Golda Meir and announced that a public civic-religious memorial meeting will be held Dec. 19 at the main Conservative synagogue here. The Israel Embassy has opened a condolence book and many non-Jews have signed it.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- The government may elevate the administration of Arab affairs to the Cabinet level.

URGE BORDER SETTLEMENTS BE ARMED

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- Two military historians have urged that Israel's border settlements be heavily armed in order to serve as a first line of defense in wartime while the military reserves are mobilized. According to Prof. Yehuda Wallach, of Tel Aviv University and MK Meir Payil of the Sheli faction, the concept of regional defense based on border settlements was neglected after the Six-Day War in favor of fixed army positions. They believe the concept should be reinstated now that Israel faces the possibility of withdrawal to shorter lines in the event of peace treaties with its neighbors.

Wallach and Payil explained their views at a symposium on national defense held at Haifa University. Wallach said that in order to mount an effective defense against attackers, the border settlements should be supplied with the most modern and effective weapons such as field artillery, anti-tank rockets and heavy mortars.

Payil, who is a colonel in the reserves, suggested that the border settlements be prepared for mobile warfare by equipping them with helicopters, tanks, armored vehicles, missiles and communications systems. He said the settlements should have good shelters, good fortifications and better utilization of manpower.

Meanwhile, Israel's defense circles have shelved a plan for the reorganization of the nation's armed forces proposed by Gen. Israel Tal, one of the country's leading military planners. Tal had been assigned the task of surveying the present defense system on the basis of lessons learned in past wars. He concluded that the army should have a separate command for ground forces, thus allowing General Headquarters to serve as overall coordinator of all of the armed services.

At present, GHQ is responsible for the ground forces while the air force and navy are directed by separate commands. After nearly a year of discussion, the defense establishment decided against the reorganization plan despite major changes in deployment when Israel withdraws from Sinai and, possibly, other territories.

MRS. KING MEMORIALIZES GOLDA

ATLANTA, Ga., Dec. 14 (JTA) -- Mrs. Coretta Scott King, the widow of slain civil rights leader Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., today called the late Golda Meir one of the "most effective leaders" in the cause for human rights. Speaking at a memorial service for the former Israeli Premier sponsored by several groups, including the Jewish Community Center, the Israeli Consulate, Mrs. King declared:

"People who believe in and work toward human rights have lost one of their most effective leaders. Golda Meir was more than just a Prime Minister of a courageous nation. She was an inspiration to all who believe in peace and the dignity of humanity. She was a symbol of determination and perseverance. She was a beacon of strength and, at the same time, she was a leader who kept in touch with the needs of her people. It is not just Israel which has lost a leader. The world has suffered a loss of one of its most outstanding citizens...."

SCHINDLER RAPPED FOR CONVERSION VIEW

NEW YORK, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- Rabbi Simcha Elberg, chairman of the administrative committee of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada, denounced a recent

proposal by Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, that Reform Judaism actively recruit converts to the Jewish faith among "the un-churched," particularly among non-Jewish spouses in mixed marriages.

Elberg said, "Surely we Jews don't want non-Jews proselytizing us and by the same token Jews should not seek out non-Jewish converts. All this talk about 'saving searching souls' sounds suspiciously like all the other cults which are popping up faster than the same world can identify them."

Continuing, Elberg stated: "Certainly we do not quibble regarding the obvious threats which modern-day cults pose to Judaism. However, there is no logic in forming a cult to combat cultism, and this seems to be the Reform movement's best alternative. If Rabbi Schindler is sincere in his expressed desire to turn the tide of intermarriage then let him turn his flock toward Torah and halacha rather than turn them in the direction of mass conversions."

Noting that Schindler conceded that numbers of Reform Jews marry non-Jews, Elberg suggested "that before the Reform movement launches a campaign to hustle non-Jewish souls that Rabbi Schindler and his cronies should search their own movement's spiritual poverty."

JEWISH GRAVESITES IN USSR DESECRATED

NEW YORK, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- Four of the six mass graves of Jews massacred by the Nazis during World War II in the Zhitomer area of the Soviet Union were desecrated and destroyed earlier this month, it was reported here by the Al Tidom Association. In what the Association called the worst violence perpetrated on the Zhitomer burial area in several years, bones, remnants of garments and torn prayer shawls were left strewn amidst the graves.

The Jews interred at the Jewish cemetery on the outskirts of Zhitomer are the 20,000 victims systematically exterminated by the Nazis on Aug. 3, 1941. For 22 years afterwards, numerous requests by local Jews to be allowed to erect a proper fence and a monument at the sites fell on deaf ears. Then, in 1963, permission was granted for a wooden fence to be built and a small sign reading "Here lie buried residents of Zhitomer killed by the Nazis from 1941 to 1945." No recognition that the victims were Jews was permitted, Al Tidom said.

Meanwhile, the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry and Union of Councils for Soviet Jews reported that the Moscow "women's liberation group," composed of the wives of refuseniks, announced it will hold a gathering on Dec. 22 to mark the eighth anniversary of the 1970 Leningrad trial. Natasha Federova, wife of Yuri Federov, sentenced there to 15 years, will speak.

LOS ANGELES (JTA) -- The Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation Council's Western Area Council (WAC) has adopted two Soviet Jews, Prisoner of Conscience Anatoly Altman and refusenik Uli Kosharovskiy, it was announced by Dorothy Goren, WAC president. Altman was sentenced to 10 years in a strict regime labor camp in 1970 following the first Leningrad trial. Kosharovskiy first applied for an exit visa in 1971.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- The army has announced that there will soon be a call up exercise of several thousand reserve soldiers in order to test the efficiency of a call up system via radio, television and the press and to train soldiers in this method. No call up date was set in order to test the system of a sudden announcement.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES THE "BOAT PEOPLE" THROUGH JEWISH EYES

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Editor's note: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national interreligious affairs director for the American Jewish Committee, and a member of the Citizens Commission on Indochinese Refugees organized by the International Rescue Committee, just returned from a 10-day mission to Malaysia and Thailand to help bring relief to the growing numbers of Indochinese refugees.)

NEW YORK, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- In the harbor of Djakarta, the frail battered Vietnamese boat lay anchored listlessly, looking exhausted under the blistering noonday sun that scorched the Indonesian archipelago. I walked out on the rotting wharf and then jumped onto the boat, no larger than an oversized rowboat. There were 15 people aboard, jammed together in sweltering closeness. The man who greeted me was Nguyen Than, the father of several of the eight children on the boat, and "the captain" of this decrepit vessel. He was a Vietnamese Catholic from Saigon, a teacher educated in a mission school and competent in English.

I introduced myself as one of the 14-member U.S. Citizens Commission for Indochinese Refugees organized by the International Rescue Committee that was engaged in a fact-finding mission on the plight of Vietnamese boat people, Cambodian and other Indochinese refugees in Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore. I asked Nguyen Than to tell me his "story." While his diminutive wife and sisters-in-law were busy putting together a meal of rice and fish, and the children jostled each other in quiet play, Nguyen Than unfolded the tale of his exodus from oppression.

"The Communist government in Hanoi had ordered him and his family to the rural countryside for "reeducation" as members of the new collective society. Hanoi confiscated what little earthly goods they had, and worse still, they began to confiscate their freedom and dignity as human beings. Nguyen Than for example, was dismissed from his teaching job and commanded to become a farmer in a rural collective. Through bribes and stealth, Nguyen Than crossed through forests, reached the shoreline, and in the middle of the night escaped on a decayed fishing boat that he and his two brothers had purchased at what for them were astronomical costs.

They sailed for four weeks across the turbulent South China Sea. They were turned away by border patrols from the shores of Singapore and the Philippines. "By the third week," Nguyen Than told me, "we had no more food and water. We began to drink the sea water and eat seaweed. Our children became deathly sick and feverish and we were certain that we would die."

'Abandoned By The World'

And then this small man's face became fierce with anguish and he spoke these words which penetrated my heart. "Rabbi, you as a Jew will understand this better than most other people. As terrible as was the starvation, the physical pain in our bodies, the worst thing of all was the awareness that we were abandoned by the world, that our lives meant absolutely nothing to anybody, that human life has become worthless."

He looked intensely into my eyes and added, "I now understand what it meant to be a Jew in Nazi Germany in the 1930s, when all the world knew that your Jewish people were being destroyed

and you were abandoned." Abandoned. Not only were these 15 human beings turned away from haven by fellow Asians, but during their harrowing odyssey on the sea they were abandoned as well by people from the Western world.

"Twenty-three freighters passed us by -- we counted them -- 23 large ships carrying cargo, probably to Singapore. Most of them were great ships carrying Western or Japanese flags. We waved at them begging them to pick us up, at least to give us water and food. Nothing. A couple times some freighters slowed down and their crews came up on deck to watch us as if we were some entertainment. Some of the people even smiled or laughed at us. Our children began to scream in terror when they tried to sleep." As Nguyen Than spoke, I suddenly found his face and voice dissolving before me, and I was overwhelmed by other images.

The 'St. Louis' Episode

It was 1939, the boat churning in the turbulent ocean was the "St. Louis." The human cargo was 936 Jewish men, women and children, fleeing certain death in Nazi Germany. Like the Indochinese refugees, they too had to buy their way out of oppression, paying large sums for passage on the "St. Louis," and buying "official landing certificates" that was to guarantee them entry into Cuba. Some 730 of the Jewish refugees were also able to purchase American immigration quota numbers, just in case the Cuban haven should fall through.

On May 27, 1939, they docked at Havana's port. They were told their "official landing certificates" were invalid. Cuba's President Frederico Laredo Bru told them they could land if they could produce one million dollars within 24 hours. An impossibility. Despair. Abandonment. Several men committed suicide.

Cuban gunboats forced the ship back into the Atlantic Ocean. Frantically, desperately, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee pleaded with South American countries to provide asylum. Cables to Colombia, Chile, Paraguay, Argentina. "Regard these passengers as doomed if they are returned to German soil," said the cables. The reply came back -- no room at the inn.

Then incredibly, the United States government, under the "heroic" leadership of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull, rejected the refugees who possessed immigration numbers. Apparently, they did not want to meddle in the "internal affairs" of Nazi Germany.

The "St. Louis" returned to Europe. Belgium, Holland, France, and England each received several hundred of the Jewish refugees -- although the Nazis would later overrun Belgium, Holland and France, and all those who fled to those countries were massacred in the Nazi genocide.

That's why I joined novelist James Michener, civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, economist Leo Cherne, Ambassadors William Casey and Cecil Lyons and others, last February on that mission of saving human lives in Southeast Asia. Our Citizens Commission played a role in moving the U.S. Congress to adopt legislation to admit 25,000 Vietnamese boat people and 15,000 Cambodians to this land of freedom.

Since last January, when some 1500 Vietnamese refugees sought haven elsewhere, refugees have been fleeing that country at an increasing rate. About 10,000 escaped in October, and despite monsoons, there will be thousands more during the coming months seeking desperately a chance to live. Unless something changes, it is estimated that more than half of these refugees will drown in the sea.