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SADAT AND BEGIN REAFFIRM THEIR COMMITMENT TO PEACE

By Barbie Zelizer and Gil Sedan

HAIFA, Sept. 6 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem Begin and President Anwar Sadat reiterated their pledge to peace in the Middle East at a state dinner conducted in their behalf last night.

"We shall not be discouraged," Begin told some 150 persons assembled in the Dan Camel Hotel, many of whom had attended the larger and more lavish dinner the night before. "We signed a great, international document, a peace treaty. We will carry it out in good faith, in cooperation, in understanding, in friendship, for the good of our peoples and of the region and of the world."

Noting the need to "set an example of how understanding between nations can be achieved and how they live together in peace," the Premier observed ironically that in contrast to days past, when "war was attacked as a tragic, horrifying phenomenon," now peace is being condemned "in international conference halls, by official communiques, by various spokesmen... what a damaging action. What has always been a praiseworthy cause for joy and rejoicing has become in certain circles a cause for alarm."

Palestinian Problem Mentioned

In turn, the Egyptian President firmly expressed his commitment to a comprehensive peace. "We are determined to take the road (of peace) no matter what the obstacles might be. We made a firm commitment to our peoples and all the nations of the world to pursue the noble goal of peace and reconciliation. This is not merely a line of policy. It is a sacred mission that started the day I visited Jerusalem."

Likening the road of negotiations to a road followed by the Prophets and great reformers throughout history, Sadat, in a slightly less temerarious tone than the night before, observed that "a humane and thoughtful approach to the Palestinian problem can perform miracles. Reconciliation between Israel and the Palestinian people is the shortest route to a new era of peace and happiness," Sadat added; "You have your legitimate concern. Similarly, they (the Palestinians) have their legitimate rights and aspirations. We want these ends to meet."

Critical Of Arab Countries

Meeting today with Israeli editors, Sadat said the peace treaty with Egypt no longer depended on him only. "Egypt is no longer a one man country, but a democratic country." He said the majority of the Egyptians supported the peace treaty in the referendum that took place after the signing of the treaty, and therefore there was no fear that his successor might change the peace policy.

Sadat repeated the pledges he made in his Knesset speech two years ago that there will be no more war after the Yom Kippur War, and that any settlement would take into consideration the security needs of Israel.

Sadat was very critical of other Arab countries, noting that most of them suffered from internal instability, and could therefore hardly be taken seriously when they opposed the peace

treaty. This proves that Egypt took the right path when it engaged in the peace initiative, he said.

Sadat argued that the peace process has proven fruitful for Egypt: she had retrieved El Arish and shortly will regain the oil fields, and at the same time she is negotiating autonomy for the Palestinians.

On the other hand, the other Arab countries are troubled with internal strife: "Saddam Hussein (the new Iraqi President) had to remove his President, and kill his very intimate friends.... In Syria the situation is deteriorating." He mentioned the tragedy in Lebanon, and the conflicts between Algeria, Morocco and Libya. Even Saudi Arabia suffers from instability with the King staying for extended periods in Switzerland. In the midst of all this, Egypt is an island of peace and love, Sadat said.

He again repeated his belief that by the end of this year other countries, in the first place, Jordan, would join the peace process. Furthermore, Sadat said, at this stage there is no real need for the Palestinians to join the talks, although if they wish to do so they would be welcome. But after three years of the existence of autonomy, the Palestinians will have to participate because their participation will be vital for their destiny.

"Let us stick together to the cornerstone of the whole comprehensive settlement, that is Camp David and the Egyptian-Israeli treaty. Everything after that will be solved easily.... Differences of opinion? Yes. But conflicts -- I don't think we shall have any conflicts between us."

Discloses Archaeological Find

To wind up the news conference, the Egyptian leader was asked what he would write about the Haifa summit, if he were a journalist.

"I am not a journalist any more," he said. "It is a very difficult job for me.... I wonder if it is only coincidence that a few days before I arrived here, my archaeologists found the ancient city of Iton, where Joseph lived, married and studied. We have found the houses of the priests. My archaeologists are now doing their best to locate the house of Joseph. I have told my friend (Deputy Premier Yigael) Yadin (a noted archaeologist) yesterday to come and join.... But write this: whenever we find the house of Moses, I shall refuse any Israeli claim of territory. The 3000-year-old site of Iton near Gato was also once the home of Moses and where Plato studied. It was the world cultural capital at the time."

Sadat also told the editors that he was deeply moved by the warm reception he and his family received from the people of Haifa. He invited Haifa residents to come and spend their vacations in Alexandria. "In Alexandria every summer we have one-and-a-half vacationers. Well, we can add the whole population of Haifa," he said.

Prior to the state dinner last night, Sadat initiated a meeting with a four-member delegation of the Peace Now movement where he thanked them for their contribution to the peacemaking process. During the 15-minute meeting he invited the delegation to Egypt, although no exact date was set. The delegation, in turn, expressed appreciation to Sadat for the initiative he took which set the peace process in motion.

Sadat left Israel this afternoon by plane from Ben Gurion Airport. Before leaving, he declared: "We came to Haifa with a message of love and friendship. We leave today with a renewed sense of hope

and confidence in the future. The sentiments expressed by every Israeli throughout our visit were overwhelming. I take this not only as a message for the Egyptian people but also as a word of confidence for the prospects of peace. . . . I am very pleased with the ever-growing friendship between our peoples. Very soon our relations will reach a new era for our common benefit." He concluded in Arabic: "Peace upon you and God's blessings."

Begin, in response, expressed the gratitude of Israel for Sadat's visit and declared: "This was a momentous visit and provided positive results. Again it was proved that the warmth of the hearts of our people as that of the Egyptian people bring them, with every visit you paid to Israel and I paid to Egypt, nearer and closer. We have very serious discussions. During this visit again close intimate friendship was established between the representatives of our countries, which in our time is a treasure to be guarded, cherished." Begin concluded: "We do not say goodbye. We say au revoir."

SPECIAL ANALYSIS

SUMMIT: SUCCESS, BUT NO BREAKTHROUGH

By Gil Sedan

HAIFA, Sept. 6 (JTA) -- The summit between President Anwar Sadat and Premier Menachem Begin was a success, analysts agreed today. It was a success -- although there was no breakthrough on the issues of dispute between the two countries -- because of the atmosphere that characterized the talks. In the words of Sadat: "Differences -- yes. Conflicts -- not any more."

Although quite a few Israelis questioned the wisdom of playing into the Egyptian insistence on not holding the summit meetings in Jerusalem, Haifa proved to provide the right setting for a successful meeting: a comfortable hotel, in the midst of greenery, overlooking the magnificent view of the bay of Haifa; the warm welcome of Haifa residents; the charm of Jihan Sadat and Maha Sadat, the Sadats' oldest daughter; and a pleasant late summer climate. It was small wonder, therefore, that Sadat's optimism struck the Israelis as well.

The practical aspect of Sadat's optimism was his conviction that Jordan, and perhaps other Arab states, would join the peace process before the end of the year.

On the bilateral plane, the most important achievement was the agreement to set up joint Israeli-Egyptian patrols to supervise the Sinai withdrawal. The problem of a suitable multinational force was created when the Soviet Union, in the United Nations Security Council, refused to go along with extending the mandate of the UN Emergency Force followed up by Washington's failure to step into the breach. Now Sadat and Begin have taken the bull by its horns, thereby serving notice on the super-powers that things can happen at this part of the world without their agreement.

Israel's main gain in the talks was the Egyptian promise to provide Israel with sufficient oil after the withdrawal from the oil fields -- although the question of price has still to be resolved. Israel agreed for an early withdrawal from Santa Caterina, but it was agreed that Israelis could go on visiting the area, and the field school operated by the Israel Nature Protection Society would continue to operate.

The Debit Side

On the debit side, the gap on Jerusalem is as wide as ever. Although Sadat did concede that

whatever happened, the city must remain united. Nor did there seem to be much progress on the autonomy issue. Sadat repeatedly stressed the need to solve the Palestinian problem, although he said that for the time being this could be done without the Palestinians themselves.

Summing up, the summit served the same function as the earlier, only more so. Israel is slowly withdrawing from Sinai, a process which Sadat answers by a few gestures about normalization -- and lots of smiles. Sadat clearly feels that time is on his side, as he gradually regains back the land which is so important for him.

The instability in the Arab world around him has given him the self-confidence which earlier this year seemed to be shaken. Many Israelis still wonder what will be the nature of Israeli-Egyptian relations once the withdrawal has been completed and if there was no progress on the Palestinian issue. For better or worse, the only answer to that at the moment is the optimism which radiated from Sadat in the Haifa summit, and the hope that the "chariot of peace" can no longer be reversed.

SOMETHING WASN'T KOSHER

By Yitzhak Shargil

HAIFA, Sept. 6 (JTA) -- While Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Israel ran smoothly, for the most part, one segment of it turned out not to be kosher -- his food. The Mashgiah, who supervises kashrut at the Dan Camel Hotel where Sadat stayed, was shocked when he spotted the Egyptian President's personal cook in the kitchen preparing one of Sadat's favorite dishes -- mutton. The meat was brought from Egypt and thus not kosher.

The mashgiah was faced with a dilemma since the meat would be placed on hotel dishes which were being used for the two banquets given for Sadat. He could have declared both dinners treifah. But first he checked with the head of the Haifa Kashrut Department, who in turn consulted the city's two chief rabbis. Their solution was that the dishes used by Sadat would not be used by the hotel any longer. Everyone was happy, including the Egyptian cook who could take the dishes back to Egypt with him as souvenirs.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

COMRADES IN ARMS

By Yitzhak Shargil

HAIFA, Sept. 6 (JTA) -- The famous wartime question, friend or foe, was superfluous here as Egyptian and Israeli sailors fraternized in the relaxed atmosphere of the spacious Mount Carmel auditorium on the crest of the mount amid resplendent eucalyptus trees overlooking the Haifa Bay. It was obvious that as the sailors mingled and talked to each other there were no foes, only friends. In fact, it was difficult to tell Egyptians and Israelis apart as all were wearing snow white uniforms.

Admiral Mouhamed Ali Mouhamed, commander of the Egyptian navy, and Rear Admiral Zeev Almog, commander of the Israeli navy, made this clear as they addressed the hundreds of sailors in the auditorium: "Looking at the faces of my men I can see that they are happy, satisfied and enjoying every minute of their stay," Ali Mouhamed said.

Almog beamed as he said: "You have completed the rainbow of peace. Just as after a storm at sea there is a rainbow that indicates calm weather, so is there a rainbow that comes after a war to indicate peace. One end of this rainbow appeared when Israeli naval landing crafts sailed through the Suez Canal and saluted your President at Ismailia. Today you have completed the rainbow with your visit to Haifa."

Almog had a special reason for saluting this occasion. He was twice before involved in encounters with Egyptians, but under less auspicious circumstances: once during the Six-Day War when he commanded a flotilla that tried to evade Soviet-made missiles fired from Port Said, and once during the Yom Kippur War when he was commander of operations in the Red Sea area.

For Ali Mouhamed, this visit to Israel was by chance. When he came to say farewell to President Anwar Sadat as he was sailing for Haifa to meet with Premier Menachem Begin, Sadat asked the Egyptian naval officer to join him on his trip. He did.

Almost Didn't Happen

But for the hundreds of sailors and officers comprising the crews of the presidential yacht El Houriyeh, the Elfatih (not the terrorist organization) destroyer and two Soviet-made missile boats, the visit to Haifa was almost a disappointment. As the ships approached Israel's shore Tuesday an order was issued by Egyptian authorities that there would be no shore leave because this was Sadat's visit, not that of the Egyptian navy. The Israeli navy, which was to host their counterpart and had already made preparations for the sailors' visit on the basis of a prior understanding that there would be shore leave for the Egyptians, was instructed to cancel the function.

However, when Sadat emerged from his yacht and was asked about the cancellation of shore leave, he immediately instructed that the sailors be granted leave. The sailors cheered their President. Bus loads of Egyptian sailors were taken on a tour of Haifa and then to kibbutzim nearby. In the evening Israeli and Egyptian officers and sailors exchanged greetings, pleasantries and food in the Mount Carmel auditorium and all of them were entertained by a group of performers.

A Swinging Affair

Lilith Najar, an Israeli singer who can bounce out a tune with equal ease in either Hebrew or Arabic, was one of the performers as well as the m.c. But it was the Oriental orchestra of the Israel Broadcasting Service headed by Zuzu Mousa, and his singers, that made the evening a swinging affair. Egyptians and Israelis joined in the rhythm of the orchestra and all clapped hands in sheer delight.

Almog told the Egyptians: "Your visit here symbolizes more than everything else our handshake of peace. I feel as if we are the ones who are implementing the peace agreement. We met today for the first time and started to talk, and it looks now as if we have known each other for years, as if we are brothers."

During intermissions, Egyptians and Israelis tried to establish personal contacts and friendships. When Arabic or Hebrew was not understood by either of two people talking to each other, English was used to communicate. Towards midnight, when it was time for the Egyptians to return to their ships, one Egyptian officer summed up the evening by saying: "It was enjoyable, memorable." And one by one the Egyptians filed out of the auditorium.

SYRIAN SYNAGOGUE, YESHIVA RAZED

NEW YORK, Sept. 6 (JTA) -- The centuries-old synagogue and yeshiva of Beth Nassif in Aleppo, Syria, was demolished last month by Syrian authorities, according to reliable reports received here by the Committee for the Rescue of Syrian Jewry, committee president Abraham Dwek

reported today. According to the report, Dwek said, Syrian authorities also ordered the destruction of an entire Jewish section in Aleppo and the eviction of Jewish families whose belongings were thrown into the street.

Dwek said he sent a telegram today to President Carter, reporting on the "distressing situation" of the Jews of Syria and asking the President to instruct the State Department to protest "this outrageous act of sacrilege and demolition" of the synagogue and yeshiva, located near the Bab el Faraj Square in the heart of Aleppo, as well as the destruction of the Jewish section. Dwek said he reiterated his appeal to Carter to call on Syrian President Hafez Assad to permit the remnant of the Jewish community, an estimated 5000 Jews, to emigrate.

U.S. DISSOCIATES ITSELF FROM ITS ENVOY'S VOTE AT UN COMMISSION ON MEASURE SUPPORTING THE PLO

By Joseph Palakoff

WASHINGTON, Sept. 6 (JTA) -- The American representative to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Ambassador Beverly Carter, voted for two resolutions unfavorable to Israel and supportive of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Today, the State Department formally dissociated itself from his votes and declared that he was acting as an individual and had voted in "a personal capacity" and "without instructions." Officially, the Department contended to reporters, it would have opposed both resolutions because they are contrary to U.S. policy.

One resolution called for peace talks to begin immediately between Israel and the PLO without preconditions. It urged all other member UN states to "enable negotiations to begin immediately between Israel and the Palestinian people through their representative, the PLO, to restore all rights" of self-determination. Carter was one of 15 members of the UN Subcommission on Protection of Minorities to support this resolution. Five members of the 26-member commission abstained and six were absent. No negative votes were cast.

The resolution was offered by Ben Witterak of Great Britain as a replacement to an original draft that urged all UN member states to "extend their support" to the PLO. This was discarded when commission members failed to agree. Carter reportedly described the measure as an "over-kill" of the Palestinian situation.

The second resolution, adopted by consensus, called on Israel to "desist forthwith from the bombing of the civilian population" in south Lebanon. This resolution also said "the subcommission deeply deplores the violation of fundamental rights of the Arab population in Palestine." The Israeli observer at the meeting was forbidden from speaking. The subcommission had agreed not to allow observers to join the discussion on resolutions.

When the news of Ambassador Carter's vote reached the State Department, "tempers were not very good because he did not ask for guidance," a State Department source said. The source said the U.S. would not have officially approved either resolution, the resolution explicitly favorable to the PLO because of U.S. policy requiring that the PLO must first recognize Israel's right to exist in peace, and the other resolution because it would have had to be "more even-handed and include the PLO."

Carter's official title is "Ambassador-at-Large and Coordinator for State and Local Government" with offices in the State Department. He was appointed about a year ago, the State Department said, as an expert in human rights. The source described Carter as "a Black leader in America."

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

THE SYRIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

By Barbie Zelizer

JERUSALEM, Sept. 6 (JTA) -- The 4500-member Jewish community in Damascus is dominated by an 80-year-old Jewish supporter of the Syrian regime who is regarded with distrust by the Jewish population, two American Jewish students recently told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

The two, Terry Magady, 23, and Dan Weiner, 22, both of California, spent five days last month in the Syrian capital as part of a personal "fact-finding" tour of the region, including Egypt, Jordan and Israel. They were put in touch with the JTA by an official of the Jewish Agency student department.

"Every official transaction, including applications to go abroad, must go through a man called Mr. Totah," they explained. "He acts as a liaison between the government and the Jewish community. Unfortunately, he acts largely out of self-regard and sells information to Syrian officials about the comings and goings of the community."

Viewed With Distrust And Fear

The figurehead leader, as Magady and Weiner described him, is regarded by the Jewish community, who call him "a 50-50 Jew," with a mixture of distrust and fear. "Talk to Mr. Totah first," they were told. "Totah will make a phone call and everything will be OK." Totah is also reportedly in regular contact with the American Embassy in Damascus.

"We avoided Totah for as long as we could, because we knew that meeting with him might prevent us from reaching the community at large," they said. Totah, however, "caught up" with them on the fourth day of their visit, greeting them by name at one of the local synagogues. The next day, which was by coincidence their last, two "well-dressed" men visited them at the youth hostel at which they were staying, telling them "to be sure they were on their scheduled flight to Amman the next morning." They were.

Totah presented the two students with what they termed a "white-washed" overview of Jewish life in Syria, denying any problems and minimizing the political oppression to which Syrian Jews are subjected. They received a different picture, however, from other, more forthcoming community members.

"We found an extremely affluent community, with surprisingly strong Jewish values and a strong Jewish identity, spiritually led by the well-liked and young Rabbi Albert Hamrah," Magady said. "But this community is denied even minimal political freedoms and is subject to an ever-present feeling of tension that things could get worse at any point." Specifically, those concerns center on a political take-over by Islamic radicals or another war with Israel. Most important, all want out of Syria.

Magady and Weiner reported that community members branded the controversial screening of a CBS-TV "60 Minutes" program on Syrian Jewry a few years ago as a "total farce." They pointed to the presence of Syrian officials who accompanied the television crew at all times as ample evidence of the one-sided picture of contentment and freedom which resulted.

Syrian Jews Want To Leave

"We would give up everything we have here, all our possessions and money, if we could

just get out," community members told the two students, with many expressing a desire to immigrate to Israel. "All we want is to be with our family and to keep our Jewish identity -- anywhere but here." Time and again, the two students heard expressions of bewilderment over the fact that many Iranian Jews chose to remain in Iran after the Shah was deposed. For them, the implications of the ascent of an Islamic republic are all too clear, Weiner and Magady related.

For this reason, as well as one of safety, the Jewish community in Damascus is a cohesive one, clinging to remnants of Jewish tradition as a means of retaining their heritage. All shops close on the Sabbath, some of the community observes kashrut, and attendance is high at two Jewish day schools and three synagogues.

Six men are studying for their rabbinical ordination and religious artifacts are freely brought in from abroad. Daily life for many of the community members, most of whom are brass and copper merchants, is a good one, and Weiner added that the impressive Jewish community center is reminiscent of a local Jewish community center back in the U.S.

Arbitrary Acts Cited

Tensions between the Jewish community and Moslems have largely died down since the 1973 Yom Kippur War. But Magady and Weiner reported that it is enforced, and perhaps illusory picture of harmony. Entire families are arbitrarily punished for the act of one individual and only family heads are allowed to go on periodic trips abroad, provided they leave their family and a \$7000 deposit behind. In addition, some 400 women lack partners for marriage; emigration is a forbidden topic of discussion; and a plain-clothes policeman regularly patrols the shops in the Jewish quarter.

Community members, the two students said, praise the pressure exerted on the Syrian government by American officials and world Jewry, contending that it is largely responsible for the fact that acts of violence committed against them are now at a minimum. But all fear that this respite is temporary and that time works against them.

They look to Israel with great pride, listening regularly to Israel Radio's Arabic-language broadcasts and tending to glorify Israeli military prowess. "If only Israel would destroy this regime and free us," Magady and Weiner said one person told them. "For this we wait, because it is the only way we will ever get out of Syria."

EINSTEIN'S CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATED

MEXICO CITY, Sept. 6 (JTA) -- The Jewish and Zionist activities of Albert Einstein were described at the third of a series of programs commemorating the centennial of Einstein's birth attended by both Jews and non-Jews. The presentation was made by Sergio Nudelstejer, secretary general of the Central Jewish Committee and representative of the American Jewish Committee for Mexico and Central America.

Several thousand people attended this week the series of lectures, symposiums and the showing of a film, "The Education of a Genius" on Einstein. Outstanding Mexican scientists, intellectuals and philosophers took part in the programs which were held at the National Institute of Anthropology and History. The centennial will be completed with the unveiling of a statue of Einstein in a park in the Jewish neighborhood of Hipodromo. The statue was presented by the Central Committee to Mexico City whose officials will participate in the unveiling.