

EGYPT, ISRAEL FAIL TO SETTLE DIFFERENCES OVER SINAI BORDER BUT HOPE TO RESOLVE THEM BY APRIL 25

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 17 (JTA) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamal Hassan Ali ended his three-day visit to Israel today without having settled the differences between Israel and Egypt over the Sinai border. The timing and itinerary of President Hosni Mubarak's projected visit to Israel also remained undecided.

Nevertheless, both countries are determined to resolve their differences through amicable negotiations by the time Israel completes its withdrawal from Sinai on April 25. That was the message conveyed by Hassan Ali and Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon at a joint press conference before the Egyptian delegation left for Cairo at noon today. Hassan Ali and Sharon will meet again within 2-3 weeks in Cairo for another session of the Israel-Egyptian Joint High Commission on normalization of relations.

In the interim, the two governments will consider the compromise proposals put forward by each side during Hassan Ali's meetings with top Israeli officials here this week. Sharon and the Egyptian visitor stressed that the border problems were "technical."

The most serious dispute concerns the location of the boundary line in the Taba region near Eilat. It involves a coastal strip of less than one kilometer on which an Israeli-built resort hotel is located.

Sources on both sides predicted that some form of functional arrangement would be worked out whereby the Israelis would be able to continue to operate the hotel while Egypt exercised its sovereignty over the area. The other disputed border points involve even less territory, in some cases only a few yards.

Mubarak's Visit To Be Decided In Future Talks

Hassan Ali had little to say about Mubarak's plans to visit Israel. The Egyptian President has refused to go to Jerusalem and the Israeli government has said in that case he would not be welcome. The Egyptian Foreign Minister said he had conveyed to Premier Menachem Begin an oral message from Mubarak reiterating his desire to visit Israel and that Begin, for his part, had "re-extended" the invitation. Hassan Ali said the timing of the visit and the issue of whether Mubarak would include Jerusalem on his itinerary would be decided in future discussions.

The Egyptian official said it was inconceivable that these disputes could lead to "a standstill" after both countries, through courage and perseverance, had overcome many much more serious problems. Sharon agreed that there was no cause for anxiety over the future state of relations between Israel and Egypt.

FIRST CONTINGENT OF U.S. SOLDIERS FOR SINAI FORCE ARRIVE IN THE AREA

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 17 (JTA) — The first contingent of 450 American soldiers for the multinational peacekeeping force in the Sinai arrived there this morning. A second group is due later today.

The 806-man American contingent is being flown by El Al jumbo jet aircraft direct from Fort Bragg in North Carolina to Ophira in southern Sinai. The El

Al Israel national airline won the U.S. contract to fly in the Americans who are part of the 82nd Airborne Division of the U.S. Army which forms the backbone of the American Rapid Deployment Force.

The American commander, Lieut. Col. William Garrison, said that although his men were part of the Rapid Deployment Force they now came under the international peacekeeping force and would not be called on to fulfill any purely American tactical task.

DRUZE TOWN PLACED UNDER CURFEW

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 17 (JTA) — The Israeli army imposed a curfew on the Druze town of Majdal Shams on the Golan Heights today. It was only the second time since Israel captured the Golan in 1967 that a Druze town was placed under curfew. According to the army, the measure was intended as punishment for demonstrations at Majdal Shams yesterday to protest the sealing-off of that town and the three other Druze villages on the Heights since last month.

The Golan Druze are in the fourth week of a general strike aimed against Israel's annexation of the territory and the arrests of the leaders of the largest Druze clans who refused to accept Israeli identity cards. The demonstration in Majdal Shams reportedly touched off sympathy demonstrations in Kuneitra on the Syrian side of the line and in parts of the West Bank.

News from the Golan Heights is sketchy as the army has barred the media from the sealed-off towns. It denied reports that a measles epidemic broke out in the Druze towns and that medicine is in short supply.

Druze residents have also complained about the army's conduct in their towns. But a military spokesman said International Red Cross (IRC) representatives who visited the region had congratulated the Israeli authorities for their benign treatment of the Druze. The IRC spokesman was unavailable for comment to confirm the army's claim.

COUNCIL OF SAGES PRESSING GOVERNMENT TO ENFORCE SABBATH BAN ON EL AL

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 17 (JTA) — Agudat Israel's Council of Sages has ordered its four-man Knesset faction to press the government to enforce a Sabbath ban on El Al and to act more vigorously to ensure passage of the controversial "Who is a Jew" amendment to the Law of Return by the Knesset.

The Sages have warned that unless Israel's international air carrier ceases flights on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays before the start of the Passover season next month, it will call on all Jews in Israel and abroad to boycott El Al which is government-owned.

The boycott would coincide with the peak of Jewish tourist travel to Israel. Economic observers believe the financially troubled airline could be seriously hurt since a very large proportion of its passengers are Orthodox Jews.

Shmuel Halpert, the Aguda MK who attended the latest meeting of the Council of Sages, warned that the boycott was a certainty unless El Al complied. He said the Aguda MKs were also ordered to seek a meeting with Premier Menachem Begin "as soon as possible" to expedite passage of the "Who is a Jew" amendment. The amendment and the ban on Sabbath flights by El Al were among the concessions demanded by the Aguda Israel as its price for joining Begin's coalition government.

The Premier pledged to do "all in his power" to push through the amendment that would recognize as Jews only those converts converted "according to halacha." Persons converted to Judaism by Reform or Conservative rabbis would be excluded.

Halpert said that no specific time limit has been set for Knesset action, an indication, according to some observers, that the Aguda would not precipitate a Cabinet crisis over the issue. In practical terms, however, the amendment is given virtually no chance of passage despite Begin's enthusiastic personal support of it. A solid bloc of some half dozen Likud-Liberal MKs are determined to vote against it as a matter of conscience and their votes, with those of the opposition factions, would ensure its defeat.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE PRESIDENT TO VISIT MIDEAST TO REASSESS ROLE OF EEC IN PROMOTING PEACE IN THE AREA

BRUSSELS, March 17 (JTA) -- The President of the Council of Europe, Leo Tindemans, told the leadership of the World Jewish Congress European Branch that his forthcoming visit to the Middle East is intended to reassess the role the European Economic Community (EEC) can play in promoting peace in the Mideast in light of changes in the international arena since the EEC formulated its policy in Venice in 1980 which included a call for the Palestine Liberation Organization to be associated with the peace process.

The changes he cited during his private meeting with the WJC leaders here included the election of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States, the reelection of Menachem Begin as Premier of Israel, the election of Francois Mitterrand as President of France, the assassination of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, and Mitterrand's trip to Israel.

Tindemans, who is Foreign Minister of Belgium and who was elected President of the EEC at the beginning of the year, explained that his forthcoming visit would be a fact-finding mission to determine how the basis for European political cooperation on Middle East policy could be structured.

It was his hope, he said, that following his visit, the EEC would be in a position to propose what he termed confidence-building methods to the leaders of the Mideast nations. In working toward that objective, Tindemans said the EEC might seek ways to extend the peace between Egypt and Israel to other countries in the area on a progressive basis.

ARAFAT SAYS HE WILL NEVER ACCEPT U.S. CONDITIONS FOR RECOGNIZING PLO

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 17 (JTA) -- Yasir Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, had indicated that he will never accept United States' conditions for recognition of the PLO because he fears that it would mean he would meet the same fate as the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

The U.S. policy since 1975 has been that it will not talk or negotiate with the PLO until that group recognizes Israel's right to exist and accepts United

Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. The Reagan Administration has added the requirement that the PLO renounce terrorism.

When Ted Koppel, in an interview with Arafat at his headquarters in Lebanon, shown on ABC-TV's "Nightline" program last night, asked Arafat why he does not go ahead and meet the U.S. conditions, the terrorist leader said he does not want to be considered a "traitor" to his people as was Sadat. He said that if he took this step, "I will lose the confidence of my people, I will be useless."

Arafat said that Sadat paid for the return of the Sinai with the Palestinian people and Jerusalem. He predicted that after Israel returns the Sinai April 25, the Egyptian army will force the Egyptian government to reverse Sadat's policy of peace with Israel. He said the Egyptian people and the army support the Palestinians and indicated that it was the army that killed Sadat.

Last night's "Nightline" was devoted to the situation in Lebanon. Tonight the ABC program will show the situation from the Israeli side of the border and will feature an interview with Moshe Arens, Israel's Ambassador to the United States.

The program last night showed how much of Lebanon is dominated by either the PLO or the Syrian army. At the close of the program, Koppel said that as he was leaving Beirut, a Lebanese-Muslim told him that the Lebanese would like to get both the Palestinians and Syrians out of their country. The Lebanese was quoted as saying that if it takes the Israelis to accomplish this, then "Shalom."

REPORT IRAN BUYING ARMS FROM ISRAEL

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, March 17 (JTA) -- The French paper Le Matin reported today, quoting an Israeli who has recently returned from Teheran, that Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini personally approved arms deals with Israel. The paper said the Israeli, who went under an assumed identity to Teheran to negotiate new arms contracts on Israel's behalf, said Khomeini recently ruled that "Israel is Satan, but in our country's situation we have to deal with Satan himself."

Le Matin, which did not disclose the identity of the Israeli, said that the decision to buy arms and spare parts in Israel was taken at the urging of the "Islamic Guard," an extremist group. No Iranian leader wanted to assume responsibility for the contacts with Israel and Khomeini himself had to rule on the issue.

The French weekly L'Express reported earlier this week that Iranian army generals telephoned Israel via Rome to discuss arms deliveries to Iran which is now in the second year of war with Iraq.

NEW SOVIET EDITION ON MIKHOELS

TEL AVIV, March 17 (JTA) -- Natalia and Nina Mikhoels, daughters of the late Shlomo Mikhoels, the famous Russian Yiddish actor murdered on the direct orders of Stalin nearly 30 years ago, have received a copy of a new edition of a Russian book on their father.

The first edition of "Mikhoels" was published in 1965. No reason has been given for the sudden publication of a new edition, with many photographs to accompany the series of articles on Mikhoels' life and artistic career as director and leading actor of the Moscow Yiddish Theater.

But Russian immigrants to Israel believe it is an attempt on the part of the Soviet authorities to prove to Western critics that the Soviet Union is not anti-Jewish. Mikhoels' daughters said the editor of the official Russian book had hand-written a cordial dedication and greetings to them.

COURT REVERSES CONVICTION OF A NEO-NAZI ACTIVIST

By David Kantor

BONN, March 17 (JTA) -- A West German court today reversed the conviction of a neo-Nazi activist who had been sentenced to 10 months imprisonment for distributing pamphlets alleging that the Holocaust never occurred.

The court, in Celle, Lower Saxony, ruled that denial of the Holocaust does not constitute an offense under West German law, although the judges conceded that such behavior was an assault on the honor of Jews. The ruling nullified the conviction of neo-Nazi Edgar Geiss by a lower court in the town of Stade.

Geiss gained notoriety as a Nazi propagandist on several occasions. He has appeared on television giving the Hitler salute. During the trial of Kurt Lickha, the World War II Gestapo chief in France, which took place in Cologne in January, 1980, Geiss distributed pamphlets claiming the Holocaust was a hoax. Lickha was tried for his role in the deportation of 70,000 French Jews to Auschwitz and other Nazi death camps.

The Geiss case now reverts to the court in Stade which will have to decide whether his activities constituted an "insult" to Jews. But individual Jews would have to bring criminal charges against Geiss if he is to be tried again. There is an odd twist to the Geiss case. Some West German authorities claim he is an East German agent provocateur whose purpose is to portray West Germany as a country wracked by right-wing extremism.

REPORT PRIVATE PAPERS OF HIMMLER BOUGHT IN MEXICO FOR \$40,000

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, March 17 (JTA) -- The private papers of Heinrich Himmler, chief of the German SS during the Nazi era, and of his family, were purchased recently in Mexico for \$40,000 from a former Nazi. It was disclosed at a press conference today by Chaim Rosen-Thal, who until a few months ago was Israel's Cultural Attache at the Israel Consulate here.

But Rosen-Thal said that the authenticity of the vast collection of documents has not yet been completely verified and is under scrutiny by various experts. He declined to identify the person who sold the documents because "one of the conditions" of the seller was that his name would not be disclosed. Rosen-Thal said the seller was "the secretary of the secretary" of Himmler whom he identified as Karl Wolf.

Rosen-Thal, who said he learned about the existence of the documents five years ago from a friend in Belgium who is an art and gun collector, said the collection includes about 700 personal letters of Himmler and his family; scores of photos from the private albums of the Himmlers; and diaries and legal documents, such as a Nazi Party membership book belonging to Himmler's wife, Marya. Rosen-Thal introduced xeroxed copies of these documents at the press conference. He said that after the documents are sifted through and authenticated, they will be given to an Israeli institution, probably to Tel Aviv University.

Rosen-Thal came under fire recently in the Israel press for not returning to Israel after he completed his tour of duty here, but he said today that he extended his stay in the United States because of the Himmler documents.

JACKSON: SYRIAN, PLO OCCUPATION OF LEBANON HAS HAD 'DISASTROUS IMPACT'

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 17 (JTA) -- Sen. Henry Jackson (D. Wash.) said today that the American government and people should know more about what the Syrians and the Palestine Liberation Organization are doing in Lebanon. He said their occupation has had a "disastrous impact" on Lebanon and the Lebanese people want to have their own country back.

Jackson described Lebanon as having been at one time the most advanced of the Arab countries. He made his remarks after viewing photographs of civilian casualties in Lebanon inflicted by the Syrian forces and the PLO since 1970. The photographs are part of an exhibit called "Zahle '81." Zahle is the largest Christian town in Lebanon which was under siege by Syria for more than 90 days last year.

The exhibit is sponsored by the American Lebanese League, an American group, and by "Help Lebanon," a non-profit organization in Lebanon which seeks to help Lebanese Moslems and Christians caught in the civil war. It contains pictures of PLO attacks in Beirut and pictures taken during the siege of Zahle. They show victims of Syrian and PLO shelling, including a hospital destroyed by Syrian artillery and the wrecked chamber of the Lebanese Parliament which, as one Lebanese said, was in territory occupied by Syrian forces.

The exhibit was put on display in one of the hearing rooms of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by Sens. Edward Kennedy (D. Mass.), Rudy Boschwitz (R. Minn.) and George Mitchell (D. Me.). It may be taken on a tour of major cities in the U.S.

CURACAO SYNAGOGUE MARKS ITS 250th ANNIVERSARY

CURACAO, March 17 (JTA) -- Ceremonies marking the 250th anniversary of the oldest synagogue in continuous use in the Western hemisphere began today on this Dutch island in the Caribbean with the first in a series of events sponsored by the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) this week.

Nearly 200 leaders of the World Union gathered here to celebrate the historic anniversary of Mikve Israel-Emanuel Synagogue, built the year George Washington was born and still the site of Jewish services. The Curacao congregation is a member of the WUPJ -- the international organization of Reform synagogues in Israel and 25 other countries. The governing body of the WUPJ, representing Liberal and Reform congregations throughout the world, will meet here Friday. Gerard Daniel of New Rochelle, N.Y., WUPJ president, heads the mission.

The Dutch government, which is officially participating in the celebration, has issued commemorative stamps and coins and a special edition of Delft tiles to mark the event.

Located in Willemstad, the capital of the Netherlands Antilles, the richly-furnished, gabled synagogue was consecrated on the first day of Passover in 1732. It is the fourth synagogue building to be used by the congregation, which was founded in 1651 by Jewish refugees fleeing the inquisition in Brazil.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Several students of the Hebrew Polytechnion were arrested Tuesday for stoning a bus transporting Israeli soldiers through the town. The soldiers used tear gas grenades and fired into the air to disperse the Arab youths.

BACKGROUND REPORT PATTERN OF MEN AND WOMEN ENROLLED AS RABBINICAL CANDIDATES UNDER RECONSTRUCTIONIST, REFORM AUSPICES By Ben-Gallob

NEW YORK, March 17 (JTA) -- There has been a drop in the number of men enrolled as rabbinical candidates under Reconstructionist and Reform auspices during the current academic year, compared with enrollment during the 1980-81 year, but virtually no change in the number of women rabbinical candidates studying this year, as compared with the prior academic year.

The data on the decline in the number of men candidates emerged from the annual Jewish Telegraphic Agency survey of the number of rabbinical students in the two categories of Judaism. A bruising struggle for several years over enrollment of women for the Conservative rabbinate has been shelved indefinitely. Orthodox seminaries do not admit women.

Breakdown In Number Of Candidates

The number of men and women studying for the rabbinate at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) in Philadelphia this academic year is 35 -- 20 men and 15 women. During the prior school year, the total was 40 -- 25 men and 15 women. The number of men and women studying for the Reform rabbinate this year is 190 -- 124 men and 66 women. During the prior academic year, the total was 201 -- 134 men and 67 women.

Thus, the data show there are five fewer men students at the RRC this year than last, and 10 fewer men studying for the Reform rabbinate this year.

Four men and two women are completing studies at the RRC this year who, barring unforeseen developments, will be ordained as Reconstructionist rabbis this coming summer. In June, eight women and nine men will be ordained as Reform rabbis in New York City by the Hebrew Union College -- Jewish Institute of Religion. Four women and 16 men will be ordained at the Cincinnati branch of the Reform seminary.

A-New Program Added

An RRC spokesperson said that the seminary added a new program, a preparatory year, for the 1981-82 school year. Two women and four men are enrolled in the preparatory year. Successful completion of this new program will enable the six students to enter Biblical Civilization Studies, the first year of the Reconstructionist five-year rabbinical studies curriculum. The preparatory year courses include intensive study of Hebrew, basic Judaism and historiography.

Numbers Ordained In 1981

During the 1981 graduation ceremonies, 14 women were ordained as Reform rabbis and four as Reconstructionist rabbis. This made the total of women ordained as rabbis since 1972 47--37 Reform women rabbis and 10 Reconstructionist women rabbis.

Ordination during the coming summer of the two women graduating from the Reconstructionist school and the eight women completing their Reform rabbinical studies will bring the grand total to 57--45 Reform and 12 Reconstructionist.

In 1972, Sally Preisand became the first woman to be ordained as a rabbi in American history. She has held several pulpits since, though none as a senior rabbi. Most of the women rabbis have entered and remained in the rabbinate, usually as

assistant rabbis. The others have taken administrative and teaching posts in Jewish institutions.

AJCONGRESS SAYS SYRIA SOUGHT TO BAR U.S. JEWS FROM PARTICIPATING IN A CONTRACT WITH A NEW YORK COMPANY

NEW YORK, March 17 (JTA) -- The American Jewish Congress has assailed a demand by the Syrian Ministry of Defense that "suspected persons, particularly jews (sic)," be barred from participating in a proposed contract with the Sybron Corporation of Rochester, N.Y.

Citing similar discrimination urged by the Syrian government in proposed contracts with companies in New Jersey and Illinois, Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, wrote to Syrian Ambassador Rafic Jouejati in Washington:

"The outrageous demand by your Defense Ministry that American companies discriminate against American citizens on the grounds of religion destroys the claim that Arab boycott activities are directed against Israel and Zionists and not against Jews as such. It also destroys the absurd contention that Arabs cannot be anti-Semitic because they are Semitic. And it explains the persecution by your government of the pitiful handful of Syrian Jews still barred from leaving your country."

Corporation Rejected Request

Siegman said he was "deeply gratified" that the discriminatory request has been "properly rejected" by the Sybron Corporation, a manufacturer of medical supplies and equipment. Similar anti-Jewish discrimination demanded by the Syrian government as a condition of proposed contracts was rejected by the Buck Engineering Co. of Farmingdale, N.J. and the Central Scientific Co. of Chicago.

The demand by the Syrian Ministry of Defense to Sybron, dated March 5, 1981, was discovered by the AJCongress during the course of its program of monitoring reports to the Department of Commerce of boycott-related requests received by American companies. Requests to participate in a boycott must be reported to the Commerce Department under the Export Administration Act. Access to the report is made possible by the Freedom of Information Act.

The proposed contract received by Sybron includes the following paragraph:

"Contract shall be deemed cancelled, regardless of the state of affairs before the approval of the contract or after advising the contractor of the approval of the contract, if the administration finds out that the contractor, for the execution of his contract, depends materially on suspected persons, particularly jews. He shall be penally prosecuted before the court martial, and legally for all expenses and indemnities (financial penalties) without his having the right to any objection."

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Ten women members of the Hahit Sinai Withdrawal movement, together with four young children including a nine-month-old baby, barricaded themselves on the roof of a house in the Yamit area Talmei Yosef Village Wednesday, to prevent Jewish Agency workmen from dismantling it. The women told army officers they would offer passive resistance to any attempt to remove them. But the soldiers stood by without any move against the women, while the workmen continued their dismantling of other farm equipment, giving the occupied house a wide berth.