

## HAIG URGES AMERICANS NOT TO CRITICIZE ISRAEL ALONE FOR VIOLENCE ON THE WEST BANK; INDICATES JORDAN HAD TO SHARE BLAME FOR THE SITUATION

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 28 (JTA) — Secretary of State Alexander Haig urged Americans today not to criticize Israel alone for the recent violence on the West Bank but to maintain a "level of objectivity" and keep the situation in "proper perspective." He indicated that Jordan had to share the blame for the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories.

"I think it is important whether we are in the United Nations or here in our own nation's capital that we attempt to maintain a level of objectivity on this vexing question," Haig said in an interview on NBC-TV's "Meet The Press."

He noted that it was "measures taken" by the government of Jordan which "triggered" the events on the West Bank. While Haig did not explain, he was obviously referring to Jordan's recent announcement that any West Bank residents who cooperated with the Village Leagues set up by Israel would be tried for treason in absentia and executed.

Haig noted that some of the actions taken by the Israeli government were "not sources of confidence to this government." But he rejected charges that Israel's policies have resulted in "de-facto annexation" of the West Bank or that Israel was planning to annex Judaea and Samaria.

This statement was similar to one made last Friday by the State Department when it said that it did not believe that Israel's handling of the current situation on the West Bank was a "prelude" to the annexation of the area. The State Department Friday also rejected the suggestion that the situation on the West Bank will have any effect on the autonomy talks or Israel's final withdrawal from Sinai scheduled for April 25.

### Optimistic On Return Of Sinai To Egypt

In his television interview today, Haig pointed out that Israeli Premier Menachem Begin said that Israel will adhere to the Camp David accords requirement that the future of the occupied areas will be determined five years after the autonomy agreement goes into effect. He said he was "optimistic" that the Israelis "will be as good as their word as they will be with the return of the Sinai" to Egypt.

Haig said that progress on the autonomy negotiations has been difficult because both Israel and Egypt were focused on the Sinai. He stressed that this is a "traumatic period" for Israel since it was giving up both a "strategic buffer" and has to remove settlers who have "set down their roots over an extended period" in the Sinai.

But Haig stressed that he was hopeful that progress would be made on the autonomy agreements after April 25. He said the U.S. would continue as a "solid partner" in the Camp David process which he said is the only means for achieving further progress in the peace process, including an autonomy agreement for the residents of the West Bank and Gaza. He warned Americans against "excessive impatience"

which he said "can bring about the very outcome we are seeking to avoid."

He said people seem to forget that it is only three years since an "unprecedented treaty" was signed between Egypt and Israel which ended "three decades in animosity" and has begun the process of "normalization" between the two countries. Last Friday was the third anniversary of the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

### CABINET SAYS ISRAEL WOULD 'CONTINUE UNDAUNTED' ITS WEST BANK POLICIES

By David Landau and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, March 28 (JTA) — The Israeli Cabinet, at a 4 1/2 hour meeting today, declared that the government would "continue undaunted" its policies on the West Bank which, it said, were aimed at destroying Palestine Liberation Organization influence there while giving all possible aid to Arab residents prepared to "observe the law and keep the peace."

The 10 days of demonstrations and rioting on the West Bank, which spread to the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, have taken eight lives so far, including an Israeli soldier killed in a grenade attack in Gaza last Thursday.

Today, three Arab youths were wounded in a clash with security police in the town of Yaabad near Jenin in northern Samaria. The town was placed under curfew. The incident occurred when an officer of the civilian administration on the West Bank arrived in the town to meet with the local mayor. A large group of residents attacked the officer with rocks. The soldiers escorting the officer fired back, wounding one of the residents.

Border policemen summoned to the town were ambushed and attacked with Molotov cocktails and knives. The policemen opened fire in self-defense, seriously wounding two of the attackers. The two were rushed to the hospital in Afula.

Premier Menachem Begin's government has been criticized at home and by several friendly governments and the media abroad for harsh measures taken to quell the disturbances. These included the removal of the elected mayors of Nablus and Ramallah, Bassam Shaka and Karim Khalaf, last Thursday on grounds that they were PLO agents responsible for incitement to violence. One week earlier, the Israeli authorities removed Mayor Ibrahim Tawil and the town council of El Bireh for refusing to cooperate with the Israeli-instigated civilian regime.

### Massive Rally Protests Government's Actions

The Cabinet issued a statement today saying the government's policies were intended "to ensure peace and give all possible help to Arab residents of Judaea, Samaria and Gaza who keep the law and maintain the peace. No acts of violence or breaches of the peace, of any kind whatsoever, will be tolerated," the statement said.

Today's Cabinet meeting followed a march and mass rally in Tel Aviv last night where an estimated 15,000-20,000 persons representing the Peace Now movement and the Committee for Bir Zeit

University protested the government's actions on the West Bank. They shouted slogans such as "Peace yes, annexation no" and "Zionism is not vandalism."

At one point a Palestinian flag was raised, apparently by a Communist supporter of Bir Zeit University on the West Bank which has been shut down by the Israeli authorities. It was seized and destroyed by police. The rally included sympathizers with the Druze on the Golan Heights who are striking in protest of Israel's annexation of that territory. Apart from the flag incident it was noisy but peaceful.

Begin berated the demonstrators. But the Cabinet seemed much more incensed that the government-controlled Israel Broadcasting Authority had allowed the screening of television interviews with deposed Mayors Shaka and Khalaf over the weekend. (See separate story.)

### Won't Say If The Worst Is Over

Cabinet Secretary Arye Naor, briefing the press after today's session, declined to say whether the Cabinet felt "the worst is over" on the West Bank. But he said the ministers believed the policies employed there were succeeding.

Naor indicated that Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir spoke of the negative reactions from foreign governments and the media to the dismissals of the West Bank mayors. But he also intimated that the ministers were not disposed to weaken the government's stand against the PLO because of criticism abroad.

Naor said there had been no mention "at all" during the Cabinet meeting of U.S. suggestions that "non-lethal" methods be employed in riot control. He said there was no discussion either of possible disturbances by Israeli Arabs when they mark Land Day on Tuesday, the sixth anniversary of the expropriation of Arab lands in Galilee by Israel, Israeli Arab leaders have called for a general strike on that day. Reporters believe the matter was taken up today by senior army and police officers seen entering the Prime Ministers Office after the Cabinet meeting.

### Begin Blasts Labor, Tel Aviv Rally

Many observers believe that Begin, determined to have early elections in order to benefit from his current high popularity as reported by opinion polls, has already begun to campaign against the Labor opposition.

That view was given credibility by Begin's blast today at Labor MKs who participated in last night's Peace Now rally in Tel Aviv and by the government's attempts to blame past Labor governments for the present unrest on the West Bank because they permitted free municipal elections there in 1976.

Begin denounced slogans heard at the Peace Now rally, such as "The Golan is Syrian" and "Down with the occupation." He said the slogan about the Golan was in effect "erasing, trampling and ignoring" a law, the Golan annexation bill of last February 14, which was supported by many Laborites.

Referring to the protests, he asked rhetorically, "What are we coming to? To what terrible denial of the bases of Judaism and Zionism and the faith for which our sons fought and died?" He warned the Labor Party to mend its ways "before it is too late."

A spokesman for the Peace Now movement said Begin owed an answer to the thousands who turned out to protest his government's policies

in the occupied territories. Denouncing one slogan or another, as Begin did, was no explanation for the serious deterioration of the situation on the West Bank, the spokesman said. The movement dissociated itself from the Palestinian flag raised during the rally.

### Charge Labor 'Invited' The PLO To The West Bank

Begin ordered his attack on the Labor Party to be published and broadcast. The charge that Labor "invited" the PLO into the West Bank by allowing elections six years ago was raised in a Knesset debate last week by Defense Minister Ariel Sharon in an angry exchange with Labor Party chairman Shimon Peres.

Begin and other Likud spokesmen have picked up on that theme. On Friday, Menachem Milson, who heads the civilian government on the West Bank, held a press conference at which he said that Israel's struggle against the PLO has reached a "very crucial stage." He claimed that the 1976 elections were held under PLO "terror and intimidation" and as a result, 10 out of 25 West Bank municipalities were controlled by PLO supporters.

When reporters reminded Milson that Israel always prided itself that the 1976 elections were free, he retorted that they were free from Israeli pressures but not from PLO pressures and that he himself had never considered them free elections.

He promised that "soon" local dignitaries would be installed to replace the ousted mayors of Nablus, Ramallah and El Bireh, but would not say when. Israeli army officers are now running those towns. He said Israel hoped to hold elections on the West Bank, but not under PLO terror.

Meanwhile, the situation on the West Bank continued to remain tense over the weekend. A Palestinian youth was wounded by Israeli troops in Halhoul last Friday for violating the curfew. He was indentified as Juwad el-Kashkish, 17. Israeli authorities described the shooting as an isolated incident. Rocks and bottles were hurled at Israeli military vehicles in Nablus and in an Arab village near Jenin. There were also incidents in the Gaza Strip, Bethlehem, Bet Sahour and Hebron. In Nablus, Israeli troops fired tear gas and rubber bullets to quell a riot in the market place.

### CABINET RAPS IBA FOR INTERVIEWS WITH TWO OUSTED WEST BANK MAYORS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 28 (JTA) — The Cabinet today expressed extreme displeasure with the government-owned Israel Broadcasting Authority for screening television interviews over the weekend with Mayors Bassam Shaka of Nablus and Karim Khalaf of Ramallah who were removed from office last week on grounds that they are agents of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Cabinet Secretary Arye Naor told reporters that the condemnation of the interviews was unanimous. The Cabinet, nevertheless, voted 9-7 to approve a three-month budget for the IBA. Premier Menachem Begin and six other ministers had argued for a one-month budget extension to demonstrate the government's anger over what it considered an affront to its authority by a governmental agency.

Naor, who personally takes a hard line on such matters, said the State-owned media should "be loyal to the State." He contended that broadcasting the interviews was tantamount to "incitement against the State."

The IBA, a quasi-autonomous agency, has always enjoyed a certain amount of freedom in selecting broadcast material and occasionally this has

brought its staff into conflict with its government-appointed management. Yosef Lapid, director general of television, who was called before the Cabinet today, explained that IBA staff members had threatened to strike and shut down radio and television if the interviews were not screened.

He said that he consulted with other senior executives and decided that the damage to Israel from a strike would outweigh the damage done by televising the interviews with Shaka and Khalaf.

#### HAIG: U.S. COMMITTED TO CONTINUE AS FULL PARTNER IN MIDEAST PEACE PROCESS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 28 (JTA) -- American participation in the Sinai peacekeeping force is "testimony" to the United States commitment to continue as a full partner not only in the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, but also in the peace process in the Middle East, Secretary of State Alexander Haig said here last Friday.

Haig made these remarks at a ceremony at the State Department at which he and Leamon Hunt, director general of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), signed the agreements for U.S. participation in the Sinai force.

Hunt, a retired U.S. foreign service officer, said the U.S. was the last of the 11 countries in the MFO to sign the agreement. He said 2,400 soldiers are already in the Sinai and the rest of the MFO force, which will total some 2,500 will arrive early this week.

Hunt said that training has already begun and the MFO will be ready to take over on April 25, the day set for Israel's final evacuation from Sinai. "We're confident that we can do the job that Egypt and Israel have asked us to do," Hunt said. He said he was "confident" that this "international effort" would help Egypt and Israel "bridge the confidence-building process and move towards full peace and normalization."

#### Roots Of Peace Are Taking Hold

Haig said that the ceremony, at which representatives of many of the 11 countries in the MFO were present, celebrated both the Egyptian-Israeli peace and the "effort to carry peace forward to strengthen it." He said that in the three years since the peace treaty was signed at the White House, "the roots of peace and normalization have begun to take hold." He noted that "over three decades of tension and animosity between two great nations has steadily declined as normalization has begun."

Haig, who spent a good part of last year trying to get nations to participate in the MFO, said the "breadth of participation" in the Sinai force is "testimony first to the vision and wisdom of the leaders and of the people of Egypt and Israel." He said it is also "testimony to the continuing American support, not just for the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel itself but also for the peace process."

The Secretary of State declared that "Americans today can take just pride in the fact that they have been full partners in this momentous and historic process." After the ceremony, Haig walked over and shook hands first with Ambassador Moshe Arens of Israel, saying "congratulations," and then shook hands with Ambassador Ashraf Ghorbal of Egypt.

The 11 nations participating in the Sinai force are: Australia, Britain, Colombia, Fiji, France, Holland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, United States and Uruguay.

#### ARMY PREPARES LAST SINAI SECTOR FOR EVACUATION

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 28 (JTA) -- The army, reflecting the government's apparent determination to honor its peace treaty commitments and pull out of Sinai by April 25, moved vigorously over the weekend to prepare the last Israeli-occupied sector for evacuation. Today, President Yitzhak Navon paid a farewell visit to the Yamit area in northern Sinai and to Ophira, the last Israeli outpost at the southern end of the peninsula.

He spoke to representatives of the farmers and merchants of Yamit and to the militants of the movement to halt the withdrawal from Sinai, mostly persons from outside the region who infiltrated the Yamit area in recent weeks.

The Yamit residents are demanding payment in full of the compensation promised by the government before they abandon their property and leave. The militants insisted that they would not leave voluntarily under any circumstances. Navon said he came to the region to listen, not to make any statements.

#### Army Moves Into Yamit In Force

Beginning last Thursday afternoon, the army moved into Yamit in force, breaking down the link chain fence around the town and reoccupying abandoned buildings from which troops had been forcibly ejected by militants a day earlier. Soldiers dismantled sandbagged positions and barbed wire barriers set up by militants and recalcitrant residents for a promised last ditch resistance to evacuation. Forty civilians were arrested for interfering.

The army's tough, no-nonsense approach was apparently ordered by Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. He was reportedly angered when the area commander, Gen. Haim Erez, ordered his soldiers out of Yamit last week after they were cursed and pelted by militants and settlers. The army's retreat in face of civilian pressure was widely criticized in the Israeli press.

The army announced, meanwhile, that the entire Sinai must be cleared of civilians by April 1, March 31 is the final day for evacuation. No trouble is expected at Ophira where few militants penetrated and most of the local civilians have already left, reluctantly but peacefully. Yesterday the Israeli flag was hauled down at Ophira for the last time.

#### JEWISH SETTLER RELEASED ON BAIL

JERUSALEM, March 28 (JTA) -- Nathan Nathanson, a Jewish settler from Shiloh on the West Bank, was released on bail today. He was arrested last week on suspicion of murdering an Arab youth, Mohammed Abdullah Suhweil, 17, whose family claimed he had been kidnapped by settlers from Shiloh.

There were several incidents during the past week of Jewish settlers firing on Arab demonstrators on the West Bank which have given rise to criticism that the armed settlers are not sufficiently supervised. The issue was raised at today's Cabinet session.

Defense Minister Ariel Sharon is expected to work out a system under which West Bank settlers will be designated reserve soldiers while carrying arms for self-defense.

There will be no Daily News Bulletin dated April 9, because of the Passover holiday.

## PRESIDENTS CONFERENCE LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO UNDERSCORE ISRAEL'S 'MAJOR SACRIFICES FOR PEACE'

NEW YORK, March 28 (JTA)-- The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations has embarked on a nationwide campaign to underscore Israel's "major sacrifices for peace" and to protest current Administration policies in the Middle East that could damage the peace process and imperil U.S. strategic interests in the region.

Howard Squadron, Conference chairman said seven regional meetings had been scheduled at which current concerns of the Presidents Conference over the "dangerous drift in U.S. policy" would be explored. These meetings will culminate in a National Leadership Conference, highlighting the dangers confronting Israel, now being planned for April 20 in Washington.

Speakers at the meetings, co-sponsored by the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council and the local Jewish Community Relations Council in each community, include Squadron; former Conference chairmen Theodore Mann and Rabbi Alexander Schindler; and Yehuda Hellman, executive director of the Conference of Presidents.

The schedule of meetings, some of which have already taken place, are: Miami, March 24; Chicago, March 30; Atlanta, April 1; Baltimore, April 1; Boston, April 2; Los Angeles, April 2; and New York, April 12.

### Says Public Opinion Must Be Alerted

In a statement, Squadron said that Israel's imminent withdrawal from Sinai made it "particularly timely" that public opinion be alerted and informed concerning the "genuine concessions and major sacrifices for peace" made by the government and the people of Israel. He declared, "Israel has invested some \$17 billion in the Sinai airfields and other military bases, in oil well exploration and development and in building roads and settlements. Another \$4 billion has been spent on replacing the modern airbases built by Israel in the Sinai -- a cost to which the United States is contributing only 20 percent.

"Israel would have approached oil self-sufficiency if it had not returned the Sinai oil fields. Last year Israel spent \$2.4 billion -- equivalent to Israel's entire civilian balance-of-payments deficit.

"Incalculable in dollar terms is the military and political effect of Israel's withdrawal. Israel has waived strategic depth, relinquished needed airspace for airforce operations and training, abandoned control of the Strait of Tiran, surrendered the traditional invasion route in Israel through Northern Sinai and forsaken the years of pioneering by Israeli settlers who tamed the sand dunes of Sinai and the Rafah salient into flourishing farms and towns and tourist attractions."

Continuing, Squadron stated: "We want the makers of public opinion and public policy to understand and appreciate what Israel has done -- and continues to do -- for peace. At the same time, we want to alert these same public officials to recognize the dangers in current U.S. Middle East policy, which in our judgment does not enhance American interests against the Soviet threat and provides no incentive for moderation by the Arab world."

Squadron said that "Two erroneous assumptions underly current U.S. policy: first, that Saudi Arabia is the key to our country's interests in the region; and second, that military sales to Arab states are the key to winning friends for America."

Among the results of these policies, Squadron noted, are the sale of AWACS and F-15's enhancements to the Saudis; "flirtation with the alleged Saudi 'peace plan'; Defense Secretary (Casper) Weinberger's encouragement of Jordan's request for arms; and the apparent Administration willingness to permit Syrian missiles to sit in Lebanon and to permit build-up of PLO arms in southern Lebanon."

To protect American interests and to protect the peace already in existence between Israel and Egypt, "our country must revise its relationship with Saudi Arabia by insisting that the Saudi regime must enter the peace process if it wishes to continue to receive American support and protection," Squadron said.

### TERRORIST REAFFIRMS CONFESSION THAT HE MURDERED VIENNA CITY COUNCILMAN

VIENNA, March 28 (JTA) -- A Palestinian terrorist sentenced to life imprisonment for attacking the Jewish community center here last August, has reaffirmed his original confession to the murder of Vienna city councilman Heinz Nittel last May after recanting it before his trial. Nittel headed the Austria-Israel Friendship Society.

The prisoner, Husham Muhammed Radjih, implicated another terrorist suspect, Bahij Younis, who he said masterminded the attack on the community center and supplied him and his collaborator, Hassan Marwan, with guns. The weapon which killed Nittel was found in Younis' apartment in Salzburg. Younis is due to go on trial shortly.

Radjih's renewed confession was filmed and taped to prevent him from changing his story later. The District Attorney may draw up a new indictment against him for the Nittel murder.

The terrorists claim to be members in Al Asifa, a radical Palestinian group which the Palestine Liberation Organization disowns and accuses of having killed PLO representatives in Western Europe. Israel insists that Al Asifa is part of the PLO. The Austrian government indicated in a recently released Foreign Ministry report that the attacks in Vienna were committed by Al Asifa to discredit the PLO.

### AUSTRALIAN F.M. PRAISES ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, March 28 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Anthony Street of Australia praised the "courage of the Israeli people" upon his arrival here last Friday. His brief visit to Israel will include meetings with President Yitzhak Navon and government officials and a visit to the Australian members of the Sinai peace-keeping force.

Upon his arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, Street told reporters: "Australia is proud of its association from the beginning with the creation of the State of Israel, and your security is a fundamental part of Australia's Middle East policy.

"The courage of the Israeli people when under threat is well known in my country. The Camp David accords and the Israel-Egypt peace treaty have also shown that the people of Israel are prepared to be equally courageous in the search for peace. Recent events make it clear that the demands on your reservoir of courage for peace may well increase."