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GRAPPLING WITH LAST MINUTE ISSUES

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 19 (JTA) -- Top level Israeli and Egyptian officials continued to grapple here today with last minute issues that stand in the way of Israel's final withdrawal from Sinai next Sunday.

The Egyptian team, which arrived this morning, headed by Foreign Minister and Deputy Premier Kamal Hassan Ali and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Butros Ghali, met for two hours with Premier Menachem Begin, Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. (Late story, P.3.)

Neither side would make a statement after the session. Both are conferring with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Walter Stoessel Jr. who has been in the region since last week, shuttling between Jerusalem and Cairo. The presence of the senior State Department official, second only to Secretary of State Alexander Haig, underlined the urgency Washington attaches to a successful resolution of the differences between Israel and Egypt.

The issues which surfaced as the Sinai pull-out deadline approached include Israeli allegations of Egyptian peace treaty violations; a last minute Israeli demand, rejected by Cairo, that Egypt offer a written pledge to abide by the Camp David accords after the Sinai withdrawal takes place; and a so far intractable dispute over a sliver of territory—about 125 acres—near Israel's Red Sea port of Eilat which both countries claim.

The Cabinet decided at its regular weekly session yesterday to reconvene Wednesday before putting its final stamp of approval on the Sinai withdrawal. By then, the ministers expect to know whether Egypt has corrected its alleged violations, among them charges of aiding arms smuggling from Sinai to Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip and the excessive deployment of Egyptian troops in the limited force zone of Sinai.

Egyptians Appear Optimistic

Informed sources here continued to predict that the pull-out will take place on schedule. Hassan Ali appeared optimistic when he landed at the Ben Gurion Airport this morning, saying that all differences would be cleared up "today." Shamir, who met him at the airport, stressed that Israel was willing to discuss all controversial issues and expressed hope that these talks would "contribute to strengthening the peace." Israel's Ambassador to Egypt, Moshe Sasson, also came home for the talks.

The Egyptians lunched with Sharon this afternoon, following their meeting with Begin. They were to confer with Stoessel again before another session with the Premier this evening. The intensive, high powered American diplomatic efforts seemed aimed at smoothing over the differences and spurring both sides to early resolution.

Some within the Israeli camp insist that Israel stand firm on the Taba border dispute near Eilat. They suggest that Israel refuse to withdraw from the enclave unless Egypt accepts a proposal for an interim civilian status quo pending a final resolution of the dispute by arbitration.

This would mean that the large Israeli resort hotel nearing completion at Taba would open as planned under Israeli management. The Egyptians insist that work on the hotel be suspended pending the arbitrator's decision which could take months, or even years, before it is rendered.

Cairo reportedly has accepted part of the Israeli suggestion that Israeli forces withdraw to the Egyptian-proposed line east of Taba and the Egyptians would advance to the Israeli-proposed line west of the region. The Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) would police the few hundred yards of disputed beach on which the hotel stands.

A Historical First For Latin America: COSTA RICA WILL HAVE A JEWISH FIRST LADY WITH THE INAUGURATION OF LUIS ALBERTO MONGE TO THE PRESIDENCY

MEXICO CITY, April 19 (JTA) -- With the scheduled inauguration of Dr. Luis Alberto Monge to the presidency of Costa Rica on May 8, a Latin American republic will have a Jewish first lady for the first time in history, according to a report by the American Jewish Committee's Mexico and Central America office.

Doris Yankelewitz Berger de Monge was born in San Jose, Costa Rica's capital city. Her family is part of the small Costa Rican Jewish community, which, with almost 2,500 members, has been an integral part of this democratic country since the first arrival of Jews in the 1920s.

Dr. Monge, a lawyer, was the first Ambassador of Costa Rica to Israel in 1962. He has represented Costa Rica at the International Labor Organization, the Regional Interamerican Organization of Workers, and the Center of Democratic Studies of Latin America. He was a member of Costa Rica's Congreso (Parliament) for three separate terms, and acted as the president of the Congreso during his last term, from 1973-4.

President-elect Monge won the Costa Rican presidential elections of February 7 on the Partido Liberacion Nacional (National Liberation Party-PLN) ticket. Both he and Mrs. Monge are active in the party; she plays an active role in the women's section of the PLN. They have a daughter, Lena, now in high school.

ARMY MOVES TO CLEAR YAMIT REGION By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 19 (JTA) -- The Israeli army moved in earnest today to evacuate several thousand civilian die-hards from the Yamit region of northern Sinai which must be handed over to Egypt next Sunday. The operation, code-named "Red Dove," is commanded by Maj. Gen. Haim Erez, commander of the southern district, who predicted it would take "several days."

Erez warned his troops that this was not a war and the squatters are not the enemy. He expressed hope, however, that they would not use young children as a shield to prevent the soldiers from carrying out their orders.

There were few eye-witness accounts of the events today because the media has been barred from the region, ostensibly to prevent the re-infiltration of militants previously evacuated. This raised a storm of protest from both the Israeli and foreign press corps.

It was learned, however, that three villages in the vicinity of Yamit were emptied this morning. Troops removed 22 families from Talmi Yosef. Some of them were lifted off rooftops in cages lowered by mobile cranes. Others were dragged from houses. One resident who threatened to kill himself was allowed to remain.

All residents were removed from Sadot village, except the family of Vita and Ella Weitzman who are the unofficial spokespersons for the "Halt the Withdrawal" movement. They are not squatters but veteran Yamit area settlers. They said they had the area commander's personal permission to remain until Wednesday. The village of Ugdā was deserted but for one hold-out family removed by troops this morning.

Because of the press ban most information was obtained from squatters or residents as they were transported out of the area by troops. In Itzmona village, which is expected to be evacuated by nightfall, squatters went about their business seemingly oblivious to the approach of Israeli troops. They continued planting trees and prepared to harvest a melon crop later this week.

Situation In Yamit

The army has not yet moved on Yamit itself, the largest town in northern Sinai, where more than 3,000 settlers and squatters are reported to have barricaded themselves for a confrontation with Israeli troops. Most of the squatters there, militants of the "Halt the Withdrawal" movement, have said they would offer only passive resistance. Apparently they will not budge but will allow themselves to be carried bodily to waiting army vehicles.

A group of yeshiva students, led by Zachi Hanegbi, barricaded themselves in the remains of a dismantled war memorial in Yamit and promised "surprises" for the troops. Hanegbi is the son of Knesset member Geula Cohen of the ultra-nationalist Tehiya faction.

Another group of young Orthodox Jews, many of them American-born, who are members of Rabbi Meir Kahane's Kach faction, are barricaded in a booby-trapped air raid shelter and have threatened mass suicide if troops attempt to remove them. They have summoned Kahane from the U.S. to join them.

Kahane himself says there is a warrant for his arrest if he tries to enter Israel. He was reportedly in Washington today to appeal to the Israeli Ambassador, Moshe Arens, to have the warrant lifted.

Israeli and foreign reporters, encamped at Kerem Shalom just outside the Yamit region, are watching the town through telescopes. The Foreign Press Association, the Israel Editors Committee and the Israel Journalists Association have lodged protests against the press ban with Premier Menachem Begin and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. Sharon reportedly invited journalists to accompany him on a visit to Yamit tomorrow.

While the soldiers evacuated civilians from Yamit area villages, bulldozers moved in to complete the demolition of houses and communal structures which might be used by infiltrators. Meanwhile, Bedouin tribesmen of the region

are standing by, ready to strip the remains of any objects of value not already transported away or destroyed.

ABU-HATZEIRA FOUND GUILTY ON THREE COUNTS, ACQUITTED ON THREE OTHERS By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 19 (JTA) -- Aharon Abu-Hatzeira, the Minister of Labor, Welfare and Absorption, was found guilty in Tel Aviv district court today on three counts of larceny, fraud and breach of trust but was acquitted of three other criminal charges. His attorneys announced that he will appeal. A former aide, Moshe Gabai, was found guilty on the same counts.

Abu-Hatzeira, who heads the Tami faction, a member of Premier Menachem Begin's coalition, faces a maximum penalty of seven years imprisonment. Sentence will be pronounced at a later date. Judge Victoria Ostrovsky-Cohen, who rendered the verdict, was escorted to court by a heavy police guard and extra police were stationed throughout the building.

The verdict against the Moroccan-born minister sparked an uproar among his followers who saw it as an ethnic slur against the Sephardic community. Shouts of "Up the Sephardim," "There is no justice in Israel" and "Long live Abu-Hatzeira," erupted from the visitors gallery.

Background Of The Charges

The charges against Abu-Hatzeira stemmed from his administration of a State-supported charitable fund established in the name of his late father, the former Chief Rabbi of Morocco Yitzhak Abu-Hatzeira, when he was Mayor of Ramle six years ago.

Judge Ostrovsky-Cohen excoriated Abu-Hatzeira and his co-defendant. Although they were found not guilty of charges of aggravated fraud and criminal conspiracy, this was mainly because of the statute of limitations and the fact that Interior Minister Yosef Burg had not come forward to give evidence, she said.

Consequences For Government

The verdict against Abu-Hatzeira could have serious consequences for Begin's narrowly-based government. Although a minister is not required by law to resign if found guilty of criminal offenses, his resignation can be requested by the Premier. Begin is not expected to act until the outcome of the appeal, but opposition members of the Knesset are demanding that Abu-Hatzeira resign forthwith.

Should he resign, the Tami faction is considered likely to quit Begin's coalition, thereby eliminating its one-vote margin in the Knesset. Abu-Hatzeira formed Tami last year after defecting from the National Religious Party, another coalition partner, because the NRP wanted to replace him as Minister for Religious Affairs. He had held that portfolio during the first Begin administration. Abu-Hatzeira was tried last year and acquitted of charges of accepting bribes in the form of kickbacks from religious institutions which his ministry financed.

U.S. REMAINS CONFIDENT ISRAEL WILL EVACUATE SINAI ON SCHEDULE By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 19 (JTA) -- The State Department reiterated today its confidence that Israel will withdraw from the Sinai as scheduled this Sunday. But State Department deputy spokesman Alan Romberg would not comment on the efforts of Deputy Secretary of State Walter Stoessel Jr. except to say, "We are pleased with reports we have received on the mission so far."

Romberg said there are so far no plans to send a U.S. delegation to the ceremony marking the last stage of the turn-over of the Sinai from Israel to Egypt. There have been reports that Secretary of State Alexander Haig now in Buenos Aires, if successful in mediating the Falkland Islands dispute between Argentina and Britain this week, might go to the Sinai on Sunday.

Romberg said that there have been no efforts made to prevent American citizens from going into the Sinai as part of the movement to attempt to prevent Israel from removing all Jewish settlers there by Sunday. Many of the Jewish militants that have gone into the Sinai and are now clashing with Israeli troops are American Jews who have moved to Israel.

In particular, the members of Rabbi Meir Kahane's Kach movement, who have barricaded themselves in a bomb shelter in Yamit and have threatened mass suicide, are reported to be Americans.

"Obviously, we would not welcome suicide by anybody, by Americans or anybody else in this situation," Romberg said. Romberg indicated that the situation will be handled by Israeli authorities.

BEGIN INTRODUCED TO HIS EGYPTIAN NAMESAKE

JERUSALEM, April 19 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem Begin was introduced last Friday to his Egyptian namesake, Begin Hanafi, aged three. The two met at the Premier's office in Jerusalem and posed together for media cameramen.

Little Begin was named in honor of the Israeli leader in the wake of the first Israeli Sinai withdrawal. His father, Samir Hanafi, was watching the withdrawal ceremonies on TV just as his wife gave birth to their son.

The family's neighbors did not approve of the idea. The Hanafis' home was burned and Samir found himself ostracized socially and ousted from his place of work. He nevertheless refused to revoke the child's name, believing it to be an omen of peace.

At the initiative of Israeli diplomats, father and son were invited to Israel -- little Begin as the personal guest of the Premier.

LATE NEWS DEVELOPMENT

BEGIN, HASSAN ALI SATISFIED LAST MINUTE DISPUTES ARE BEING RESOLVED
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 19 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem Begin was reported "satisfied" tonight by Egyptian clarifications regarding last minute disputes between Israel and Egypt prior to the Sinai pull-back Sunday. A group of Likud Knesset members who met with the Premier this evening came away with the impression that he intends to proceed with the withdrawal as scheduled.

Egyptian Deputy Premier Kamal Hassan Ali, after a long day of talks with Begin and top ministers, also sounded upbeat. He told reporters "new ideas" had been advanced to "bridge the gaps" and that "the coming days will witness hopefully a happy conclusion of the pending issues."

Hassan Ali said Egypt was "fully confident" that April 25th "will give the bilateral relations a new impetus and vigorous thrust in the right direction towards the full autonomy ... as envisaged in Camp David and the peace treaty to which Egypt adheres and remains faithful in letter and spirit."

Hassan Ali said he was conveying a letter from Begin to President Hosni Mubarak. Israel TV

reported there would be a formal exchange of letters between the two leaders stressing their commitment to Camp David. The Begin-Hassan Ali talks lasted more than four hours, in two sessions, and were interspersed by additional meetings involving U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Walter Stoessel Jr. Hassan Ali and Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Butros Ghali flew back to Cairo tonight.

ISRAEL AND THE SOVIET UNION CLASH SHARPLY IN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, April 19 (JTA) -- Israel and the Soviet Union clashed sharply in the Security Council today with the United States joining in at one point as Israeli Ambassador Yehuda Blum and Soviet representative Richard Ovinnikov hurled verbal brickbats during the debate on the "situation in the occupied Arab territories."

The debate, which opened April 13, was precipitated by the fatal shooting on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, site of Islamic shrines, on April 11. Ovinnikov charged that "the terrorist" responsible was an Israeli-occupying soldier "who acted under the cover of other terrorists," meaning the Israeli army. He went on to accuse Israel of bringing "tears, blood and destruction" to the Palestinian people.

Exercising his right of reply, Blum said he was "moved" by the Soviet display of concern for holy places and charged that tens of thousands of churches and mosques in the Soviet Union have been shut down and "at best converted to barns or stables." He said the Soviet Union sought to avoid such issues as Russian and Cuban troops in Africa, the situation in Poland and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. "How many mosques have the Soviet occupation army in Afghanistan closed over the last two years?" he asked.

Ovinnikov, retorting, said the real issue in the Middle East was Israel's illegal occupation of Arab land and that Israel did not want to see the Soviet Union speaking on behalf of the Arab nations. Blum took the floor again, accusing the Soviet Union of posing as the "apostle of peace" while it opposed the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt and, in fact, had contributed substantially to every war in the Middle East since 1950.

The Soviet envoy replied that his country opposed the Camp David accords because they contained a "secret" understanding that the Palestinians should never have a state of their own. He also referred to the "secret" strategic cooperation agreement signed between Israel and the U.S. last year which, he charged, was aimed against the Soviet Union.

At that point, the U.S. representative, Charles Lichtenstein, denied vehemently that the strategic cooperation agreement was secret or that it was directed against any nation or group. He said the agreement was intended to preserve and protect the interests of Israel and the U.S., which often coincided.

Lichtenstein noted that its implementation was temporarily suspended "for reasons well known" to the Israeli and U.S. governments. The agreement was suspended by the Reagan Administration last December, one week after it was signed, because of Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights.

Earlier today, a UN spokesman said that no draft resolution on the Temple Mount incident has been introduced at the Security Council and therefore it is not known when a vote will take place.

In his earlier statement, the Soviet representative charged that it was impossible for the Security Council to take action against Israel because the U.S. prevented it and said the U.S. supports Israeli expansionism in the Middle East.

KLUTZNICK: ISRAEL HARMED BY U.S. JEWISH LEADERS WHO APPEAR TO ACT AS 'RUBBER STAMPS' FOR ISRAEL POLICIES

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 19 (JTA) -- Philip Klutznick, president emeritus of the World Jewish Congress, declared that American Jews were losing "credibility" and "fooling ourselves" in believing they were "fooling others" in maintaining that Jews in the U.S. and elsewhere were united behind every act of the Israeli government.

"We are doing great damage" to Israel by our acts that give rise to serious questions of credibility of our own American Jewish institutions, our own Jewish American leaders who are perceived in too many places as acting as rubber stamps," he told some 200 people yesterday at a meeting sponsored by The New Jewish Agenda at Temple Sinai here.

Klutznick, who was Secretary of Commerce in the Carter Administration, devoted much of his prepared remarks to defending his right to criticize Israel. He noted that as someone who has held leadership positions in both the U.S. government and the American Jewish community, he had a "moral obligation" to speak out rather than be silent as some have advised him.

He noted that in a speech to the American-Arab Chamber of Commerce in New York last Thursday, he had stressed that "I believe it is appropriate and imperative ... that the U.S. maintain its commitment of friendship to Israel and its commitment to the security of Israel." At the same time, he said, there was nothing in this commitment that was "incompatible" with the efforts by the U.S. to achieve good relations with Arab countries.

Klutznick said Israel will make the final decisions on issues of its security but this does not mean that American Jews cannot speak out. "I wish our Jewish community was as open and respected differences and the right to differ as much as the State of Israel," he said.

Outlines Need For 'Simultaneous Commitments'

In his talk yesterday, Klutznick also outlined the views given in the "Path to Peace," a report he and three others made for the Seven Springs Foundation of Mt. Kisco, N.Y. following a trip to the Middle East last year. In the audience were two other authors of the report, Harold Saunders who was Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs in the Carter Administration, and Merle Thorpe, president of the Foundation for Middle East Peace.

Klutznick said that the letters he has received since the report was published have been 4-1 to 5-1 in favor of his position. He noted that the mail had been much more voluminous and critical when he was one of six Jews who endorsed the Brookings Institute report on the Middle East at the outset of the Carter Administration.

In discussing the Seven Springs report, Klutznick said the U.S. must "encourage" Israel and its Arab neighbors, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, to make "simultaneous commitments" in order to achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

He said the U.S. should not be a "by-stander" after Israel withdraws from Sinai next Sunday but should work vigorously in pushing the negotiations for autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza Strip and beyond that for including Jordan and other Arab countries in the peace process. He warned that unless this is done, the Camp David agree-

ments would come to naught. Klutznick expressed confidence that Israel will leave Sinai as scheduled. "I have not known any government of Israel not to keep its written commitment," he said. He denied he had ever called on Israel to talk to the PLO. He said Israel should not speak to anyone who does not recognize its sovereignty. He noted that the PLO has been sending "signals" through private conversations with American visitors and other means about willingness to accept co-existence with Israel.

"If they want to say it, let them say it publicly," Klutznick said. He said that what the PLO should be saying is that it recognizes the sovereignty of the State of Israel and the right of the Jewish State to live behind determined borders.

Klutznick acknowledged that there is a price to pay for peace and Israel must decide if it is willing to pay it. He observed, "The price of peace is land and money. The price of war is people."

Basis For Sadat's Historic Trip

In calling for simultaneous commitments, Klutznick rejected the notion that the late President Anwar Sadat of Egypt made an independent act when he came to Jerusalem in 1977. He noted that there had been a great deal of preparation and back-and-forth discussion before Sadat's arrival.

He also pointed out that in their respective Knesset speeches at the time, both Sadat and Premier Menachem Begin re-stated their past positions. The only thing that was different was that Sadat had recognized Israel's sovereignty, Klutznick stressed.

He said they were able to begin negotiations from that point but those negotiations were tough and they would be tough in future talks between Israel and other Arab countries.

CZECHOSLOVAK C.P. STEPS UP ATTACK AGAINST JEWISH RELIGION

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, April 19 (JTA) -- The Czechoslovak Communist Party has stepped up its attacks on the Jewish religion after a period in which it kept a low profile on Jewish matters, says the International Council of Jews from Czechoslovakia.

It was commenting on an article in *Tribuna*, the party's ideological weekly, which said, among other things, that "the Jewish faith, especially Torah and Talmud, sanctified the exploitation of man by man. Its ideal of man ... is the humble slave deprived of all human dignity."

The Council, which reproduces these quotations in its April newsletter, also quotes highlights of a demographic study of Czechoslovak Jewry carried out in London. It shows that in 1981, the approximately 5,000 members of Jewish congregations in Czechoslovakia resided in almost 200 localities: 101 in Bohemia, 52 in Moravia and 45 in Slovakia.

In Prague, the newsletter adds, Rudolf Gibian and Zdenek Taussig have been elected chairman and secretary, respectively of the Jewish community. It also reports that the community is negotiating with the authorities about repairing the roof of Prague's ancient Jewish Town Hall.

BONN (JTA) -- An anti-Israel mass demonstration organized by the local office of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the West German Communist Party drew about 4,000 people here Saturday. They carried anti-Israel slogans and blown-up photographs of PLO chief Yasir Arafat.