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CABINET UNANIMOUS THAT ISRAEL WILL VACATE SINAI ON SCHEDULE APRIL 25

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 21 (JTA) -- The Cabinet affirmed unanimously today that Israel would complete its withdrawal from Sinai on April 25 -- this Sunday -- as required under the terms of its 1979 peace treaty with Egypt. The Cabinet convened in special session as Israeli troops moved into Yamit to clear the northern Sinai town of several thousand militant squatters and die-hard settlers.

At the same time, a military spokesman announced that Israeli war planes bombed three Palestinian bases in Lebanon today, the first such action since the cease-fire on the Lebanese border took effect last July. (See separate story.)

The Cabinet, sitting as a ministerial defense committee, meaning in closed session, issued an eight-point statement expressing satisfaction that Egypt is taking steps to correct treaty violations alleged against it by Israel and with assurances contained in letters from President Hosni Mubarak to Premier Menachem Begin that Egypt will adhere scrupulously to the peace treaty and will pursue the autonomy negotiations in good faith.

The Cabinet statement disclosed that Begin received a letter from President Reagan today which was "of great significance to the future security of the Jewish people and the State of Israel." It expressed "deep appreciation" to Reagan and also thanks to Deputy Secretary of State Walter Stoessel Jr., for his efforts during the past week to mediate last minute differences between Israel and Egypt.

Elements In Cabinet Statement

The Cabinet statement referred to Israeli charges of excessive Egyptian troop concentrations in the limited forces zone of Sinai. It said that Mubarak, in a letter to Begin dated April 16, said this had been "put right" and promised it would not recur. The statement noted further that Egypt had taken "steps" to prevent the penetration of terrorists or weapons into the Gaza Strip from Sinai and pledged to prevent this in the future.

A second letter dated April 20, was received from Mubarak, the Cabinet said, in which the Egyptian President re-endorsed the letter that accompanied the March, 1979 peace treaty. In that letter, the two countries pledged to negotiate over Palestinian autonomy "in good faith" and declared that "The objective of the negotiations is to agree, prior to the elections, on the modalities for establishing the elected self-government authority (administrative council), define its powers and responsibilities and agree upon other related issues."

The Cabinet said that Mubarak, in his second letter, reaffirmed Egypt's commitment to continue these negotiations, with U.S. participation as a full partner, "until we reach an agreement."

Finally, the Cabinet statement called on the Yamit die-hards, members of the movement to halt the withdrawal, to leave peacefully and not clash with the army and police, "in spite of the

pain which is well understood." It said the "higher interests of the State" demanded this.

Sources close to Begin had indicated before the Cabinet met that the Premier was "satisfied" with the clarifications and actions by Egypt in response to Israeli complaints and demands. The second letter from Mubarak was delivered to Begin's home last night by the Egyptian Ambassador, Saad Mortada. Reagan's letter was delivered during the Cabinet meeting.

ISRAEL HITS TERRORIST BASES IN LEBANON IN RETALIATION FOR 'MURDEROUS ACTS' AGAINST ISRAELIS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 21 (JTA) -- Israel Air Force planes bombed Palestinian terrorist bases over a wide area of Lebanon today in what was officially described as "counter-attacks" in retaliation for "bloody attacks and murderous acts" by terrorists. As of 3 p.m. local time, "these attacks are still in progress," a military spokesman said. No Israeli casualties were reported.

The air raids marked the end of the precarious cease-fire along the Lebanese border which took effect last July. Israel, in a statement, justified them on grounds that "Terrorist organizations whose centers, headquarters and bases are in Lebanon, have recently carried out against Israeli citizens bloody attacks and murderous acts in Israel and abroad in Europe. These reached a climax this morning when terrorist mines killed an Israel army officer."

The officer was killed and another soldier was wounded when their vehicle hit an anti-tank mine in southern Lebanon. Their names were not immediately released.

According to today's announcement, the Israeli bombers hit terrorist targets south of Beirut, and northeast of Sidon which had served as operational bases for terrorist attacks and sabotage operations against Israel. "These bases contained such material as 130 mm. artillery pieces, 120 mm. mortars, anti-aircraft guns, jeep-mounted recoilless rifles and vehicles of various sorts used by terrorists," the official announcement said.

Beirut radio broadcasts reported widespread air attacks on refugee camps in Beirut, the port of Damour and elsewhere in southern Lebanon and on radar installations and other Palestinian targets along the coast. The Beirut radio said the Palestine Liberation Organization ordered its forces to withdraw from many positions because of the intensity of the air attacks. Israel denied Beirut reports that its naval vessels participated in the attacks. Meanwhile, Israel ordered an alert in settlements along the Lebanese border for possible terrorist rocket attacks in retaliation for the air raids.

Chief of Staff Gen. Rafael Eitan told a press conference here late today that two Syrian MIG-23 aircraft were shot down when they tried to intervene against the Israeli attackers. He said the targets of today's raids had been carefully selected to ensure that few if any civilian buildings were in their vicinity. He said the targets included installations of El Fatah, of the Lebanese Arab Army and

Ahmed Jibril's terrorist organization, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine--General Command. He said some light anti-aircraft fire was encountered.

U.S. DEPLORES ISRAELI RAID AND THE VIOLENCE AGAINST ISRAELIS THAT TRIGGERED THE RETALIATION

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 21 (JTA) -- The United States said today that it deplores both the Israeli air raid against Palestinian terrorist bases in Lebanon and "the violence against Israelis" that triggered it. In a statement issued both by the White House and the State Department, the Reagan Administration urged that the cease-fire across the Israeli-Lebanese border be maintained and nothing be done to violate its "spirit" as well as its terms.

Neither White House deputy press secretary Larry Speakes nor State Department spokesman Dean Fischer would elaborate on the statement. Fischer maintained that it did not differ from previous statements by the Administration on violations of the cease-fire which has been in effect since last July.

However, only the Israeli air raid was specifically mentioned today. Asked to list violations by others, Fischer replied: "It is understood by everyone involved that hostile acts against or from the area controlled by Major (Saad) Haddad are viewed as clear violations of the cease-fire." He then noted that there had been reports of an Israeli soldier killed by a land mine in that area. This death was one of the justifications Israel gave for its air raid.

Speakes rejected the notion that the Israeli raid had embarrassed Deputy Secretary of State Walter Stoessel Jr. who was in Israel at the time. He noted that Stoessel is in the Middle East in order to help Israel and Egypt with any last minute problems on Israel's scheduled withdrawal from Sinai on Sunday. Fischer said the U.S. welcomes and was "pleased" by the Israeli Cabinet decision today to go ahead with the withdrawal as scheduled.

ARMY REMOVING DIE-HARD SQUATTERS FROM YAMIT AND RAZING THE TOWN

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 21 (JTA) -- The army moved in force into Yamit today, systematically removing die-hard squatters and razing the town, block by block as each building was emptied. Resistance was reported to be "reasonable."

Some resistors left voluntarily when soldiers ordered them out. In other cases, troops had to break down doors and carry squatters, kicking and screaming, to waiting buses. Some of the buses were pelted with rocks and bottles. Squatters on rooftops hurled bottles and burning tires at troops. Most of them were removed in cages lowered to the roofs by mobile cranes.

The army acted in accordance with pre-arranged plans. Each squad of soldiers was accompanied by a senior officer of at least Lt. Col. rank. Women police and soldiers were employed to remove women squatters.

The squatters' belongings were packed in crates by soldiers and loaded onto trucks for transportation out of the region. Private cars were towed to an enclosed parking lot where they could be claimed later by their owners.

The Israeli plan is to leave nothing of the town when the region is handed back to Egypt this

Sunday. As each house was evacuated, it was reduced to rubble by bull-dozers.

Two pockets of resistance remained this afternoon. One is an abandoned war memorial tower where a group of university students led by Zachi Hanegbi, son of MK Geula Cohen of the ultra-nationalist Tehiya faction, barricaded themselves a week ago.

The other is an air raid shelter where followers of Rabbi Meir Kahane's Kach movement, many of them American-born Orthodox Jews, threatened mass suicide if soldiers tried to remove them. Kahane, who was helicoptered to Yamit today, reportedly dissuaded them from taking their lives. But as of this evening, the militants are still refusing to leave.

AUSTRIAN OFFICIAL SAYS TERRORISTS INTENDED ATTACK ON TRANSIT CAMP

NEW YORK, April 21 (JTA) -- Austria's Interior Minister has told the World Jewish Congress that the Palestinian terrorists being held for the attack on Vienna's main synagogue last August have admitted under interrogation that the transit camp for Soviet Jewish emigrants in Vienna was originally an intended target.

Minister Erwin Lanc, who oversees Austria's internal security and police forces, met with leadership of the WJC American section, accepting the invitation of its Chairman, Rabbi Arthur Schneier, for a private two-hour meeting Monday. The meeting took place at the Park East Synagogue, whose spiritual leader is Schneier. The talks focused on a wide range of issues of mutual concern relating to the Soviet Jewry question, international terrorism, and Austrian foreign policy.

Lanc reported on intensified measures being taken by the Austrian authorities to insure the security of the transit camp of Soviet Jewish emigrants in Vienna. He noted in this connection that prior to the attack on the Vienna synagogue, the Palestinian terrorists had had the camp under lengthy scrutiny but had abandoned their planned attack against it after finding that security around it was too tight.

Austria's Mideast Stance Discussed

A frank discussion was held on Austria's stance toward the Middle East and its relations with the PLO, in which the two sides "agreed to disagree." It was an absolute necessity, Lanc noted, that terrorist elements be identified and isolated within Palestinian groupings.

Aside from some well-known political differences he underscored that relations between Austria and Israel in all other fields -- economic, cultural, social -- were excellent. Lanc conceded that Austria's dialogue with the PLO has not been as successful as he might have wanted it to be, but noted that extremist Palestinian factions have also struck at the PLO itself. Austria, he said, supported the Camp David accords as an important step away from war but did not feel it will solve the Palestinian problem.

On the question of Soviet Jewry, he reported on information he had received indicating that the number of Jews being processed for exit visas was down to 300 a month. He saw "no sign that this trend will change." In his view, these low figures were caused by the deteriorating state of Soviet-American relations. Soviet Jews had also told him that a secondary reason stemmed from the hardship that Jewish outflow was causing in sectors of the Soviet scientific, social and academic infrastructure.

ADMINISTRATION IS URGED TO MAKE CLEAR ITS SUPPORT OF ISRAEL

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 21 (JTA) --

Three U.S. Senators joined Jewish leaders last night in demanding that the Reagan Administration make clear its support for the security of Israel as the Jewish State demonstrates it is keeping its commitment to its peace treaty with Egypt.

"I don't think we should leave any room for anyone anywhere to believe that our dedication to the security, to the territorial integrity and the independence of Israel is not sound and sure and solid," Senate Minority Leader Robert Byrd (D. W. Va.) declared to several hundred persons at a meeting at Congregation Adas Israel.

"We must especially at this time make sure that the world understands that Israel is our friend, we're their's and that our commitment which was made several years ago is as firm today as it was when it was first made."

Sens. Henry Jackson (D. Wash.) and David Durenberger (R. Minn.) also addressed the "National Leadership Conference of Solidarity with Israel," organized by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in cooperation with the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council and the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington.

Byrd stressed that Israel, which will move out of the Sinai as scheduled Sunday, is "keeping her word to the letter." But he said it is "paying a heavy economic price." He said he has urged the Administration, which has proposed providing Israel with \$300 million in additional military aid for the 1983 fiscal year, to make that sum a grant and not a loan as the Administration proposes.

Egypt Must Live Up To Peace Treaty

Jackson stressed that the Administration must make it clear to Egypt that it, too, must live up to the peace treaty. It is "very important that our government make clear that we expect Egypt, with Israel honoring the Camp David agreements that they (Egypt) must honor it, they must keep it ... and they must not join up with the enemies of Camp David," Jackson said.

Durenberger said that before the Senate vote on the sale of AWACS and other military equipment to Saudi Arabia he had tried to convince President Reagan that the sale was wrong because it would be perceived as undermining U.S. support for Israel. He said he still hopes to change the Administration's policy of providing arms to anti-Israel states.

Opposing Arms To Jordan Is Priority Item

Byrd said that he told Secretary of State Alexander Haig that if the Administration proposes selling to Jordan F-16 jets "or even F-5G jets" or Hawk mobile missiles "we will have AWACS all over again." All three Senators voted against the sale of AWACS last year. Yehuda Hellman, executive director of the Presidents Conference, said that the Presidents Conference will make opposition to the sale of arms to Jordan a priority item on the Jewish agenda for 1982. He said such a sale would mean "a grave threat to the security of Israel and an alarming peril to the cause of peace and the long strategic interests of our own country."

Howard Squadron, chairman of the Presidents Conference, said the meeting last night was

to demand that the Administration give Israel "full credit" for its scheduled withdrawal from Sinai, a move which he said is "a terrible gamble with Israeli lives for peace."

Squadron also said an effort must be made to "try to prevent this Administration from joining in what has become a worldwide exercise of blaming Israel, placing pressures on Israel, demanding concessions from Israel, because others will not perform as Egypt has. Israel gets the blame for what others will not do." Squadron said that a demand must be made to "give Israel credit for what it does do and stop blaming Israel for what it does not do."

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, scored what he called an attempt to differentiate between Israel and its Premier, Menachem Begin. He said the "democratically elected" Begin "articulates the genuine consensus of the overwhelming majority of Israeli people." He said that Begin was being judged by unfair standards in which he was blamed for actions that were excused when committed by Arab leaders. Schindler declared that Begin "has but one desire, and that is to bring peace to his people."

Jewish Leaders Meet With Bush

Before the meeting last night, a Presidents Conference group of 75 persons met with Vice President George Bush for an hour at his official residence. Presidents Conference delegations met with Sen. Charles Percy (R. Ill.), chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, yesterday and were scheduled to meet today with Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker (R. Tenn.) and Israeli Ambassador Moshe Arens.

Bush told the Presidents Conference group that the AWACS sale serves to strengthen the role of the Saudi regime as a "moderating" force in the area. This position was strongly rejected by Squadron and Byrd in their speeches last night.

Bush also repeated that both he and Reagan had been deeply offended by questioning of the loyalty of American Jews during the AWACS debate. Bush said he was "not convinced that the issue had been laid to rest" and said both he and the President would continue to reject any attempts to question the loyalty of any groups that challenge the Administration's policy.

Bush also promised that the question of Soviet Jewry will always be on the agenda when Administration officials meet with Soviet leaders. He said he would urge that the question of the right of Jews to emigrate be raised during the forthcoming U.S.-Soviet talks in Vienna on the possible resumption of U.S. wheat sales.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- The government has presented its arguments to the Supreme Court against an appeal by the Movement for Progressive Judaism in Israel (Reform) to permit its rabbis to perform marriages, a function allowed only Orthodox rabbis since the State was founded. According to the government, Reform rabbis do not meet the requirements to be recognized as rabbis according to religious law. This has always been the Orthodox point of view. The government contended further that the real goal of the Reform group is to create a separate religious authority in Israel which would perform marriages and divorces according to laws other than "Torah laws."

BEHIND THE HEADLINES THE JEWS OF POLAND

By Edwin Eytan

(Part One Of A Two-Part Series)

WARSAW, April 21 (JTA) -- It snowed on the first Passover seder night in Warsaw this year. Thick snow flakes fell over the sad and dismal city as several hundred Jewish families, the remainder of what was once one of the world's largest Jewish communities, were preparing to celebrate the Jewish feast of freedom.

After the excitement but also the anarchy of last year, Warsaw had gone into a slumber on December 13 when the army took over the country's government. The seder was the first occasion for the Jewish community to celebrate. Few wanted to miss it, even those who generally try to conceal their Jewishness and melt into the general population, the "submarines" as they call themselves in derision.

This year, the seder celebrations started early so as to end at 10 p.m. at the latest. At 11, curfew starts and Warsaw turns into a ghost town in which only armed soldiers pace in the streets between the high, dark buildings.

Officially, it is believed that some 5,000 to 6,000 Jews are left in Poland. Unofficially, some 7,000 more live all year round as Poles and only occasionally emerge into the open. On seder night it seemed as if most wanted, for once, to openly assume their Jewishness.

Food Available For Passover

The Joint Distribution Committee had shipped weeks earlier Hungarian baked matzoh and Israeli "Kosher le Pessach" wines. Jewish housewives had also been lining up for days for the traditional carp, chicken for the matzoh ball soup, and even for the herring, part of the local Jewish tradition.

For once luck was with them. The Jewish Pesach practically coincided with the Catholic Easter and larger than usual quantities of food were distributed. Competition in the shops was tougher but the official rations were easier to obtain. Even the vodka ration was doubled, from one to two bottles per month.

Warsaw's main seder was celebrated at the community center. Over 50 people gathered into the old, half-run down building at Twarda Ulytza across from the wartime little ghetto, only a short walk away from the Umschlagplatz where the city's Jews were taken by the Germans for their ultimate ride to their final destinations.

Today, the area, with the exception of the community center and the old Nozyk Synagogue, has been rebuilt. The Polish Ministry for Religious Affairs has also started work on the synagogue and plans to modernize the community center next year.

People started arriving at the community center shortly before five p.m. By six, the hall was full: a sad group of old and sick people who had remained when most of their families left years ago, either because of the small pensions they receive or for various family reasons.

"For once we forget our 'tzures,' Shmuel Zylberstein said. "This is a yom tov for us." The tables were laden with all the traditional trimmings and even flowers, an expensive luxury in Poland, and yet the atmosphere was somber.

The four questions were asked by "little Natek" who is indeed only five feet tall but is 59 years old. With the exception of a little girl, who seemed lost in the crowd, Nathan Ziviak, "little Natek's" real

name, was the youngest member of the congregation.

The Polish government went out of its way to help the seder celebration. The Minister for Religious Affairs, Jerzy Kuberski, not only approved a special distribution of kosher meat but also sent personal greetings and well wishes. Poland's new government headed by Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski is keen to dispel any reports of government tolerated anti-Semitism.

Private homes also obtained special kosher meat if they registered in time with the community, but housewives also tried hard on their own to obtain larger quantities or better qualities of food. Mrs. Adam Czarko, whose husband works as an electrician at the Warsaw Jewish Theater, had been lining up for days.

The family was lucky because it lives right in the center of the city, along Warsaw's main Avenue Marshalowakiego, where most of the larger department stores and food shops are. Mrs. Czarko could go home for a rest after each long wait. She also managed to obtain what she had wanted. Her table, in spite of restrictions and the austerity measures now enforced, was heavily laden with the traditional dishes.

At the Czarkos, like in most Jewish homes that night, the evening started with a radio broadcast. For the first time since the war, Warsaw radio broadcast the seder ceremony, the Haggada, some of the ritual songs and even an explanation in Polish of Passover's significance and symbolic importance.

Anti-Semitism Will Be Punished

The broadcast was part of the Polish government's attempt to deny reports in the Western press that following the military takeover, there has been a renewal of anti-Semitic incidents. Polish officials are adamant in claiming that any anti-Semitic incident which did take place -- and they admit that there have been about half a dozen cases -- occurred before the December coup during what they term "the anarchy" of 1981.

The Polish officials, with whom I met, also stress that those who wrote or broadcast anti-Semitic material have now been transferred or have been fired from their previous jobs.

Kuberski told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that "anyone guilty of such an offense (anti-Semitism), whatever his political background or official function, will be tried and punished as prescribed by law." Kuberski added: "I make this declaration with the full knowledge and on behalf of General Jaruzelski himself."

Most of the Polish Jews with whom I met during my week-long stay seemed less preoccupied with anti-Semitism or anti-Semitic reports than with food shortages, high prices, long queues and difficulty in obtaining permission to travel abroad.

Since the December 13th military takeover, exit permits are rarely granted and then only to people over 65. Even then, formalities are far more difficult and complicated than before. Most of Poland's remaining Jews have families living abroad, often in Israel. It is this restriction which hit them hardest and standing in the Warsaw snow, after the seder night, and wishing each other "Beshana Haba BeYerushalaim" took on added significance. It was not only a customary greeting, it expressed their deepest current preoccupation.

(Tomorrow: Part Two)