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COALITION TALKS SUSPENDED; BEGIN REFUSES DEMAND TO ADOPT PLAN TO IMPLEMENT AUTONOMY UNILATERALLY

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 2 (JTA) -- The Telem faction suspended coalition negotiations with Premier Menachem Begin yesterday after failing to reach agreement on basic policy matters. The party's steering committee is scheduled to meet next week to evaluate the situation.

Begin is anxious to incorporate the two-man faction, founded by the late Moshe Dayan, into his Likud-led government. The defection of two Likud MKs--Amnon Lin and Yitzhak Peretz--last month deprived the government of its one vote Knesset majority. But Begin is not willing to accede to Telem's demand that the government adopt Dayan's proposal to implement autonomy unilaterally on the West Bank and Gaza Strip if no agreement can be reached with the Palestinians.

He reportedly suggested that the Telem MKs submit the proposal to the Cabinet, after they become members of the coalition. Unilateral autonomy was flatly rejected by the Likud Cabinet when it was proposed by Dayan himself who, as Foreign Minister, wielded far more influence than Telem does today.

Telem is also uneasy over the government's declared intention to demand Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the five-year autonomy transition period. A Telem spokesman said last week that policy and principles rather than possible Cabinet portfolios motivated its negotiations with Begin.

HABIB RETURNING TO MIDEAST

WASHINGTON, June 2 (JTA) -- The State Department said today that U.S. special envoy Philip Habib will be in the Middle East next week in another effort to ease tensions in Lebanon.

Department deputy spokesman Alan Romberg said Habib has already left the country on a private trip before going to the Middle East. It will be the retired diplomat's sixth mission to the region in the past 12 months as President Reagan's special emissary for the Lebanese crisis.

Habib helped engineer the cease-fire along the Israel-Lebanon border which went into effect last July 24. On his latest trip however, he is expected to bring concrete proposals for dealing with the overall situation in that war-torn country. This was intimated by Secretary of State Alexander Haig in his Middle East policy speech in Chicago May 27 when he said "The time has come to take concerted action in support of both Lebanon's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and a strong central government capable of promoting a free, open, democratic society."

Haig said that was the reason the President "directed Ambassador Habib to return to the Middle East soon to discuss our ideas for such action, with the cooperation of concerned states." Habib, who has been a trouble-shooter for several Administrations, was called out of retirement by Reagan a year ago to defuse the crisis that arose from Syria's deployment of anti-aircraft missiles in eastern Lebanon and Israel's threat to destroy them.

EGYPTIAN CLAIMS 'AGREEMENT' NOT TO HOLD TALKS IN 2 CAPITALS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 2 (JTA) -- A top Egyptian official expressed his country's hopes and concerns in the continuing peace process with Israel here today. Butros Ghali, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, said at a meeting with the editorial staff of Maariv, that he was confident that the autonomy talks would proceed and claimed that the issue of venue was determined by a "gentlemen's agreement" not to hold the talks in either Jerusalem or Cairo.

He also said, in a wide-ranging question and answer session, that by opposing the sale of Western arms to Jordan, Israel was forcing Amman to turn to the Soviet Union; that Egypt was sometimes surprised by Israeli actions which could endanger the Camp David accords; that the Egyptians feel there is an extremist element in Israel that does not believe in peace; and that Israeli policymaking is complicated by the power of the smaller parties in the Knesset.

Ghali is visiting Israel at the head of a delegation representing his country's ruling National Democratic Party, invited here by the Labor Party. He denied there was a deadlock in the autonomy talks and observed that "There have been worse deadlocks" in the course of Egyptian-Israeli negotiations over the past three years.

The major obstacle to resumption of the talks appears to be Egypt's refusal to meet in Jerusalem and Israel's insistence that the talks cannot proceed unless Jerusalem is at least one of the meeting places. According to Ghali, the gentlemen's agreement has been in effect all along, since the earlier autonomy sessions have been held either in Alexandria or Herzliya, near Tel Aviv.

He conceded there was nothing in writing, but suggested that Maariv "Ask Dr. (Yosef) Burg," head of the Israeli autonomy negotiating team, "who would confirm that over 50 talks have been held in numerous venues outside of the capitals."

Replying to other questions, Ghali said the Saudi Arabians have hinted that a renewal of diplomatic relations with Egypt is possible. He said the Persian Gulf war should not be used as an excuse to postpone talks on the Palestinian question. He said Egypt would not help Israel restore its diplomatic ties with Black African nations but will remain neutral.

20-MEMBER TERRORIST GANG ARRESTED

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 2 (JTA) -- A 20-man terrorist gang was uncovered by Israeli security forces in Ramle and Lod three months ago, a police spokesman disclosed today. Announcement of the arrests was barred by a court order until now but the restrictions were lifted as the suspects are about to go on trial.

According to police, the terrorist cell, operating within Israel, planned large scale sabotage operations throughout the country. Quantities of sabotage material and explosives were found when the gang was apprehended. The police said the cell was part of El Fatah, the main terrorist arm

of the Palestine Liberation Organization. They learned of it while investigating the murder of an Arab money-changer in the Old City of Jerusalem two years ago.

Four men were sentenced for the murder but a fifth escaped and was later reported hiding in Ramle. His arrest several months ago led police to the El Fatah cell of which he was a member.

SCHOOL CHILDREN MARCH FOR SOVIET JEWRY

By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, June 2 (JTA) — Hundreds of Jewish school children rallied today at Lafayette Park and then marched to the Capitol where they released some 1,000 balloons which bore the inscription, "Let My People Go," in a demonstration of solidarity with the plight of Soviet Jewry.

The students, from six Washington area Hebrew day schools, joined by 100 adults, listened to several speeches focusing concern on the fall in Soviet Jewish emigration figures, the continued suffering of long term refuseniks and the plight of refusenik children.

At the Capitol reflecting pool they were addressed by Rep. Samuel Gejdenson (D. Conn.) who visited the Soviet Union this year. Gejdenson, whose family fled the Soviet Union in the 1940s said in an interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency following the rally that the Reagan Administration's efforts to secure the safety of Soviet Jews through quiet diplomacy has not been successful.

"We have to be loud and we have to be persistent and that is the only way to keep the handful of Jews who are still prisoners in the Soviet Union uppermost in both American and Soviet politicians' minds," he said. Gejdenson said the Administration's failure in quiet diplomacy is best exemplified by the U.S.'s inability to use its "leverage" to "restrain the Argentine generals during the Falklands crisis."

Today's rally was sponsored by the Soviet Jewry Committee of the Greater Washington Jewish Community Council.

CARTER REVEALS 1978 FEARS FOR SADAT

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, June 2 (JTA) — Former President Carter, providing a preview into his soon to be published memoirs during an address to a convention of American booksellers, described this week how he had ordered increased security precautions one evening during the Camp David peace talks for former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat because he feared the Egyptian leader might be "in danger from the Egyptian delegation."

Elaborating on his remarks to the American Booksellers Association convention meeting in Anaheim, California, the former president said at a later news conference, yesterday: "I thought Sadat was in physical danger. I called Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski (Carter's former National Security Advisor) to come to my cabin about 3 o'clock in the morning and I called the head of the Secret Service detail to come to my cabin and I told them I wanted to tighten the guard around Sadat's cabin without letting him know and not let anybody go into it."

"And the next morning about 8 o'clock I was waiting by the window and was relieved to see Sadat come out of his cabin and go for his morning four kilometer walk. And then a few days later, looking back on that time, I thought how foolish I was to be concerned about Sadat. Of course, even later, with the tragedy that resulted in Sadat's death, I'm not so sure that was foolish."

The Carter memoirs, "Keeping Faith," are scheduled for release in November. The former president also mentioned his "frustrations" in trying to deal with Israel's Premier Menachem Begin.

YAACOV HESS, ISRAELI DIPLOMAT, DIES AT 56

VIENNA, June 2 (JTA) — Yaacov Hess, a diplomat attached to the Israel Embassy here, died of a heart attack while on a private visit to West Germany last weekend. He was 56.

Hess was born in Germany. He fought in Israel's War of Independence in 1948 and was wounded. Later he served in diplomatic posts in Bonn, Copenhagen and Houston, Texas. He was responsible for political and information work at the Embassy in Vienna.

PLO PERFORMANCE WORRIES E. GERMANS

By David Kantor

BONN, June 2 (JTA) — East Germany is reported to be disappointed with the performance of Palestine Liberation Organization terrorists equipped with anti-aircraft arms. Military sources in West Berlin said that the failure of PLO units to bring down Israeli planes on reconnaissance missions over Lebanon was viewed in East Germany with much concern.

The sources reported that East Germany decided to send military experts to help in handling the Soviet supplied anti-aircraft batteries. They will be assigned to East Germany's embassy in Beirut.

East Germany has trained dozens of PLO members in handling Soviet equipment. After unusual publicity in the official Communist press, the training program has apparently aroused expectations in political and military circles in East Berlin.

FRENCH CATHOLIC WEEKLY FOUND GUILTY OF ANTI-JEWISH ATTACKS

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, June 2 (JTA) — The prestigious French Catholic weekly, *Temoignage Chretien*, was found guilty by a criminal court here of inciting racial hatred in an editorial attacking Israel as a "terrorist state" and raising the charge of deicide against Jews. Its editor, Georges Montaron, was fined 1500 Francs (\$300) on grounds that the editorial overstepped the bounds of normal political commentary and contained material likely to arouse anti-Jewish feelings.

The nature of the editorial surprised many because *Temoignage Chretien*, though pro-Palestinian in its views, reputedly represents "progressive liberal" elements in the French Catholic Church. French circles were also puzzled by an editorial in the Moroccan government controlled newspaper *L'Opinion* on May 30 which called the Holocaust a Zionist hoax and claimed that Israeli Premier Menachem Begin was more vicious than Hitler. Morocco traditionally has been moderate in the Middle East conflict.

The French court acted against *Temoignage Chretien* on a complaint filed by the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism which was awarded a symbolic one Franc (20 cents) in damages. The three judge panel found Montaron guilty of provoking hatred against the Jewish people by linking Israel's bombing of Beirut last summer with "operations carried out by the Israeli authorities and Israeli settlers (on the West Bank) who believe they are allowed to kill their Arab neighbors because they are the 'Chosen People.'"

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Sixty passengers were injured, most of them not seriously, when the bus in which they were travelling overturned after losing its brakes on a steep and twisting mountainous road down to the Dead Sea Wednesday.

BACKGROUND REPORT

SELF-HELP PROGRAM ALLOWS ISRAELI SEPHARDI YOUTH TO GET EDUCATION, AID COMMUNITIES
By Judith Kohn

NEW YORK, June 2 (JTA) -- Five years ago this week, a handful of Sephardic Jews assembled at a midtown law office to lay the groundwork for a visionary program aimed at bridging the social, economic and cultural gaps between Ashkenazim and Sephardim in Israel. They have since provided more than 2,600 scholarships to needy students of Sephardic background, and embarked on a far-sighted self-help campaign by which students from disadvantaged neighborhoods extend their own contributions to communities like the ones from which they came.

The birth of the International Sephardic Education Foundation (ISEF) was, according to Nina Weiner, its founder and president, a response to a longstanding imbalance between Ashkenazim and Sephardim that was preventing a large segment of Israel's population from achieving their full potential in contributing to Israeli life.

For years, Weiner said, in an interview at the same Manhattan law office where the organization was founded, the Zionist community in Israel and abroad had avoided addressing the problem of Sephardic Jewry in the Jewish state. "Because Israel was so besieged and beleaguered with all the wars, it really couldn't focus on, or even talk about the social problems," Weiner said. "But the time has come where it's there and we have to start doing something about it."

Weiner, who was born in Egypt to a third-generation Israeli mother of Sephardic origin, and an Ashkenazi father, emigrated as a teenager to the United States, following a two year stay in Israel and completion of a degree in psychology. She has worked in this country as a vocational counselor both within and outside the Jewish community, has served for the past four years as alternate representative of the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO) to the United Nations.

Scholarships Provided

Having undertaken to address the problems of Sephardic Jewry in Israel, Weiner decided that Israel's ethnic imbalance could best be corrected by upgrading the educational level of its Sephardic citizens, who, she noted, represent only 16 percent of the total university student body in that country, even though they comprise well over half of Israel's population. Following consultations in 1977 with a number of Sephardic Israeli leaders, including Yitzhak Navon, then a member of Knesset and now President of Israel, it was agreed that such an effort would be most effective at the university level, since higher education could provide the Sephardic community with capable leadership that might, in turn, offer positive role models for Israel's younger Sephardic population, and eventually help to correct ethnic imbalance in other spheres, such as housing and unemployment.

When the twenty founding members of ISEF met that year to create the new organization, their goals did not extend beyond the raising of funds to finance education for a select number of potential university students. But a year after the foundation's program had gone into effect - with 400 scholarships distributed through Israel's six universities, as well as academic institutions abroad - it became apparent that scholarships by themselves would not eliminate the obstacles confronting many of Israel's Sephardic students.

Although financial distress has undoubtedly contributed to the high drop-out rate among Sephardic students - 92 percent according to figures provided by ISEF - other factors related to circumstances common to a majority of these students were causing some of the

scholarship recipients to abandon their studies, despite ISEF's declared commitment to providing financial support for the duration of each student's academic program.

Sustaining Services

One such factor, according to Weiner, was the feeling of frustration and self-doubt that was experienced by students who were unaccustomed to dealing with complex bureaucracies of the kind they encountered in university administration. "If a typical Israeli student has to go to the army, it's very easy to make up an exam," Weiner said. "There's a rule. It's clear." But, she added, "when he has to go and say that one of his seven brothers is in trouble, or the father died, or one of these family problems, he becomes discouraged to go back and start explaining the problem."

In view of this, ISEF expanded its assistance to the scholarship recipients by providing a network of sustaining services, including the maintenance at each university of at least two "mekashrim" - liaison students who serve as ombudsmen of sorts between their peers at the institution and the university administration. ISEF has also undertaken to allocate a fraction of its shoestring budget to helping the universities maintain staff counselors and tutorial services. In Haifa University, the foundation now maintains a full-time worker to head a special ISEF section within that institution's "Unit for Bridging the Gap" - a campus service aimed at assisting Sephardic students of disadvantaged backgrounds with academic as well as personal problems.

The network of sustaining services, says Weiner, is designed to see the students through from beginning to end, "to follow them through the year so that they don't fall. Whenever they are about to fall, someone is there to help them pass through that moment."

As testimony to ISEF's success in that respect, Weiner pointed out that its scholarship students boast a substantially lower drop-out rate than that of Israel's total Sephardic university student population.

Working in Communities

The sustaining services, however, represent only one direction for ISEF. During the last couple of years, the foundation has also participated in community work programs, offering its finances as well as the volunteer services of nearly half of its scholarship recipients, to youngsters in disadvantaged, predominantly Sephardic communities.

The most ambitious of its undertakings in this field is ISEF's participation in the Open Apartment Project at Ben Gurion University. The Foundation now sponsors ten apartments in slum neighborhoods located near the campus, which have been renovated and occupied by ISEF scholarship recipients who use the apartments as both dormitories and community centers in which youngsters, frequently from large families in overcrowded tenements, find an atmosphere conducive to schoolwork or, at other times, to cultural activities with their peers. In addition, residents of the open apartments attempt to enhance the quality of life in their neighborhoods with such projects as day-care centers, adult education, cultural evenings, clean-up campaigns "boot-strap" neighborhood committees and an informal kind of social work that reaches out to members of street gangs and juvenile offenders in an at-

tempt to restore them to the fold of society. Weiner, whose studies in child psychology included volunteer work with children at the transition camps in southern France established in the 1950's for Moroccan Jews en route to Israel, explained the Open Apartment Project as one feature of a program to provide deprived Sephardic youngsters with role models from among their peers. "We try to have them see an older peer from the same background that succeeded, and say 'If he can do it, so can I,'" Weiner said. "That sort of thinking is very, very important."

Students Help Younger Sephardi

With this aim in mind, ISEF students at Bar Ilan University have participated in a nationwide program called "Perah" - an equivalent of the "Big Brother" project in this country. Scholarship recipients provide high school students with tutoring, and with companionship on a one-to-one basis, all the while serving as role models and indirectly involving the developing communities in university life.

Just as ISEF students serve as living examples to youngsters from similar disadvantaged communities of what they might achieve, so ISEF's Advisory Academic Committee, composed primarily of Sephardic professors drawn from all the Israeli universities to assist the foundation with its planning, provides role models for the ISEF students, some of whom have already achieved post graduate degrees and joined the faculties of Israeli universities.

Magnifying ISEF's achievements many times over is the modest style of its operation, directed with a frugal budget that consists exclusively of donations and only three percent of which is spent on administrative costs, including a full-time coordinator in Israel. Having raised over a million dollars for scholarships, the foundation has remained a kind of "mom and pop" set-up, that draws its volunteer staff and patrons primarily through community contacts in Brooklyn and Manhattan. No attempt has been made to plug in to other larger Jewish philanthropic organizations.

Weiner, who calls herself a "volunteer executive," directs the foundation from her home in New York. Legal aid is provided on a volunteer basis by her husband's law firm - the company which hosted ISEF's initial meeting five years ago. Amnon Giniger, director of the firm's associate office in Israel, manages the distribution of ISEF scholarships on a volunteer basis. Similarly, accounting services are provided gratis by a sympathetic firm.

ISEF has also remained decidedly non-political and, according to Weiner, has abstained from dogmatic accusations or demands for immediate panaceas to the problem of Israel's cultural gap.

Looking toward the future, Weiner, who travels to Israel each year to oversee the foundation's programs, envisions a bridging of Israel's Ashkenazic-Sephardic gap through systematic efforts at unearthing the roots of the current ethnic imbalance. "I would like to have more research on the problem of the gap," Weiner said. "I would like to be able more and more to get at the real facts, the real numbers, and to see in a concrete way how we can help to solve these problems. I have a vision for twenty years to come."

JUDITH KOHN IS INTERN AT JTA

NEW YORK, June 2 (JTA) -- The Jewish Telegraphic Agency's summer intern program has begun its 12th year, it was announced today by Martin Fox, president of the JTA. Special grants by JTA Board members have made possible continuation of the program which provides on-the-job training for young people interested in Jewish journalism, Fox said.

This year's intern is Judith Kohn, a former assistant to the press attache at the Israel Consulate General in New

York. Kohn, 24, received a B.A. degree in history and Hebrew studies from the State University of New York at Binghamton. She completed a year of her undergraduate work at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

A graduate student of Arabic studies at New York University, she hopes to spend next year in Cairo perfecting her language skills and reporting for Jewish publications in the United States.

Kohn said she applied for the internship with the JTA because "having monitored the American news media for two years from the Press Office at the Israeli Consulate, I am now looking to apply my academic interest in Mideast politics and my personal interest in Jewish community life and in Israel, to the field of journalism itself."

SEATTLE COMMUNITY SAVES CENTER

SEATTLE, June 2 (JTA) -- An appeal to Seattle Jews for cash contributions to save Seattle's debt-threatened Jewish Community Center produced a needed \$1.5 million in a 10-day campaign to raise enough money to pay off interest and principal on a \$4 million bank loan and save the center from default, a Seattle Jewish Federation official reported today. The \$4 million was raised in addition to the regular Federation campaign.

Murray Shiff, Federation executive director, said that as of the tenth day before the May 16 deadline for total repayment, \$2.5 million had been contributed in the public campaign. In the final campaign, led by two former Federation presidents, Samuel Stroum and Martin Rind, the extraordinary campaign ended with total cash contributions of \$4,070,000, making possible complete repayment of the debt.

Shiff said gifts ranged from a few dollars to one of \$500,000, with hundreds of small gifts. Jim Myers, the Federation's campaign director on loan to the center for the special fund-raising, said there had been "selfless giving" from elderly Jews on fixed incomes and contributions by children from their allowances. Myers said some Seattle Jews had cancelled long-planned trips to donate to the emergency campaign.

The problem stemmed from a decision to make a bank loan for a facility added to the center last September. Current high interest rates made it impossible to meet payments on schedule, posing the threat that that addition of defaulted payments would raise the total debt to levels which would have meant loss of the center building.

SLEPAK'S IMPRISONMENT MARKED

By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, June 2 (JTA) -- Some thirty persons gathered across from the Soviet Embassy here yesterday to highlight the fourth anniversary of the imprisonment of Soviet Jewish activist Vladimir Slepak. Sponsored by the Washington Committee for Soviet Jewry, the group presented a petition with hundreds of signatures to a Soviet official at the gates of the embassy appealing to Soviet authorities to release Slepak. But the official who spoke briefly with some members of the group said that he could not accept the petition and that the matter should be handled through the State Department.

Slepak is serving a five year sentence in internal exile in Siberia, and according to the organizers of the rally, his crime was hanging a banner from his window which read, "Let Us Out To Our Son In Israel."