

Begin Tells Vance: 'Stay Home'; Javits Tries Blackmail On Arabs

Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, in two days of talks with the Carter Administration in Washington last week, reportedly stuck to his guns and rerouted the National Security Council drive for war in the Middle East.

According to informed sources, the primary objective of the Begin visit to the United States was to prevent Secretary of State Cyrus Vance from leaving on August 1 on a round of "shuttle diplomacy" ala Henry Kissinger in the Middle East. The Vance mission, to Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, is meant by Carter and his NSC Director Zbigniew Brzezinski to blackmail the Arab states with the threat of war in order to establish the New York bank's airtight control of both Arab petrodollars and politics.

"Vance and the Council on Foreign Relations don't want peace," sources close to Prime Minister Begin said yesterday. "They want war, and they want to destroy Israel. But Begin knows this and he is trying to stall for time."

In a Washington press conference, however, Begin gave no indication at all that Israel was prepared to initiate a positive program for peace. Begin foolishly paid lip service to the Carter Administration's policy: then urged that the Arab states attend a reconvened Geneva Conference in October. But Begin refused under any circumstances to allow any representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization to attend the proposed conference, and instead suggested that Israel will pursue bilateral peace accords with the individual Arab states.

Begin's stonewalling and stalling cannot alone block the danger of war in the Middle East. There is absolutely no change that the Arab states, Egypt in particular, will attend a Geneva parley without the presence of the PLO. As a result, Arab and Western diplomats expressed gloom over the situation in the Middle East, and in Beirut the Palestine Liberation Organization warned that a refusal by Carter and Begin to recognize the national rights of the Palestinians would "guarantee a fifth Arab-Israel war."

Carter's Problem

The Arab's violent denunciations of the Begin-Carter policy have presented the Carter Administration with a profound crisis in its policy for the region.

By no means can Carter afford to identify U.S. policy with the position of the Israeli government. A former State Department official said today that Carter will shortly issue a hastily formulated policy statement that will attempt to differentiate U.S. policy from the hardline positions outlined by Begin during his visit, in a desperate effort to persuade the Arabs not to abandon the last

shreds of confidence in U.S. mediation of the conflict. At the State Department itself, an official noted with humor the optimistic Carter pronouncements the day before about the Geneva conference and said that the U.S. could not hope to convince the Arabs to attend such a meeting without the PLO. "Our policy," he said, "is this: How long can we hold onto the bastards?"

An experienced Middle East analysts in Washington said that Vance, if he does leave for the Middle East on schedule August 1, "will try to calm down the Arabs" and "explain" the results of the Carter-Begin meeting to them.

In the Middle East, the Arabs reacted to the Begin position across-the-board by warning Carter not to attempt to back up the Israeli position. The consensus in Washington is that the Arab states will now move quickly to decide to break with Washington, and Beirut newspapers reported yesterday that Egypt is considering a call for an Arab summit meeting to consider strategy.

The possibility exists, of course, that Begin is acting according to a diabolical gamble. Begin knows that if the U.S. does not obtain from Israel a stated willingness to return all the occupied territories and recognize some form of "bantustan"-style Palestinian "homeland" on the West Bank, then U.S. influence in the Arab world collapses. Further, the so-called moderate Arab regimes, such as Egypt's President Sadat's that have staked their political capital on a U.S.-mediated settlement will be in deep trouble.

Thus, Begin — who in essence is seeking concrete political, military and economic guarantees of Israeli security — is blackmailing Carter by deliberately threatening to wreck the U.S. position in the Arab world, and thereby force the Carter regime to abandon its headlong plunge into a war confrontation over Saudi cash, and instead accept the idea of a real peace.

Javits Wants Arab Blood

The option toward which the Carter Administration is increasingly lurching is the policy outlined in gory detail by Jake Javits, the senator from Chase Manhattan, in a television interview last week. Javits, who just returned from a trip to the Middle East, bluntly demanded that the Arab states drop their commitment to the PLO and return the sovereignty of the occupied West Bank to Jordan's King Hussein.

Javits said that Egypt and Saudi Arabia would agree to this policy because Egypt is weak and economically desperate, and does not have a political basis to continue its support for the PLO. And Saudi Arabia, said Javits, is afraid of a new war that would destabilize the region. Javits is urging that Vance, during his shuttle, press the

Arabs to accept this deal — a deal which, according to informed observers, would be suicide for any Arab leader to accept it.

In return, according to Javits' scenario, Vance should offer to dump the hardline Begin government and install a more "moderate" agent regime led by Yigal Yadin, the fascist general who heads up the Democratic Movement for Change.

Key to this scenario is the physical destruction of the PLO, and the creation of a countergang leadership to Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, possibly led by Zuhair Mohsin, an agent of Syrian Military Intelligence who heads the Syrian-backed Saiqa organization within the PLO.

Sadat At Heart Of U.S. Policy Vs. PLO

A well-known Palestinian intellectual, currently living in the U.S., warned this week that efforts by the Carter Administration to destroy the political leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization and to force the formation of a Jordan-PLO federation on the West Bank, will lead to civil war throughout the Middle East. The source confirmed that Egyptian President Anwar Sadat has been tapped by the Carter Administration to carry out the liquidation of the PLO.

"I don't think federation between Jordan and the PLO is at all possible," stated the Palestinian spokesman in an interview. "I'm not sure that Arafat could make that kind of a move. Confederation is a possibility were Jordan and Palestine two sovereign states, but federation between the PLO and Jordan is unrealistic. If Arafat were to somehow go along with the scheme, then I think without a shadow of a doubt there would be a civil war, confined not just to the Palestinian camps but more widespread, affecting much of the Middle East."

Noting that the Palestinians are disenchanted with Carter's Middle East "peace" formulations and vague, insubstantial calls for a "Palestinian homeland," the source asserted that it is widely recognized that Carter's real intentions are to split and crush the Palestinian movement, and that Sadat has been chosen to carry out this operation. "Sadat is at the core of Carter's plans to liquidate the PLO," affirmed the source.

"Lebanon, following the civil war, is too weak to do anything. Syria is too divided internally to even function right now. The entire solution, in Washington's eyes, to the Palestinian problem must involve Egypt. You must watch very closely what Sadat says about the Middle East, in particular about the Jordanian-PLO link. By carefully watching what Sadat is saying you can tell that he is testing to see how far he can go in undermining the PLO.

"The last time Yasser Arafat flew to Cairo, he went there to tell Sadat not to push the Jordan-PLO federation scheme further, that the likelihood of civil strife inside, and outside, the movement was real. You see, when you

talk of civil war or violence within the PLO and the emergence of a new leadership, you must ask yourself what kind of leadership it would be. It need not be one that the U.S. would like. In my estimation, it is very possible that the National Front — comprised of West Bank communists, Arab leftists, and various Palestinian commando groups including fatah — will gain leverage over those Palestinian moderates who are frustrated and disgusted and want to reach a settlement of the Mideast problem at almost any price. The Soviets would throw a lot of weight behind a PLO organized by the National Front. Arafat can tell this kind of thing to Sadat and I think it carries weight.

"It is obvious that the U.S. is telling Sadat: You give up support for the PLO and we will give you arms and economic support. But, there is a real time factor involved in this, and that is the longer Sadat and the U.S. refrain from launching their onslaught against the PLO, the more difficult it will be to force them to cooperate with the confederation scheme."

PLO, Syria In Accord Over Lebanon

Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization this week reached an important accord to end the fighting in southern Lebanon. The accord was reached after talks in Damascus between Abu Iyad, the number two man under PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, and Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam.

The accord is said to provide for a ceasefire in the south, where Lebanese rightists supported by Israel are battling with Palestinians and their leftist allies, and a mutual troop withdrawal, with security forces comprised of Lebanese troops to enforce the accord.

Abu Iyad yesterday met with the commanders of the Syrian and Lebanese armed forces to discuss implementation of the agreements. After the meeting, the PLO announced a unilateral ceasefire in the south, and appealed to the rightists to join the pact.

However, there are indications that the rightists, led by warlord Camille Chamoun, will reject the peace offer. Reports from southern Lebanon indicate heavy clashes and artillery fire in the south sparked by the right and Israel.

According to Palestinian sources, however, Chamoun is now increasingly isolated within the Lebanese right and has even had clashes with the larger Falangist militia led by Pierre Gemayel. The sources estimate that Chamoun, alone, does not have the power to disrupt an agreement reached by the PLO and Syria.

The PLO said in Beirut that the peace agreement for Lebanon was meant to undercut Israel's ability to use southern Lebanon as a weapon of blackmail against the Arabs by threatening a new war in defense of the extremist Christian right.