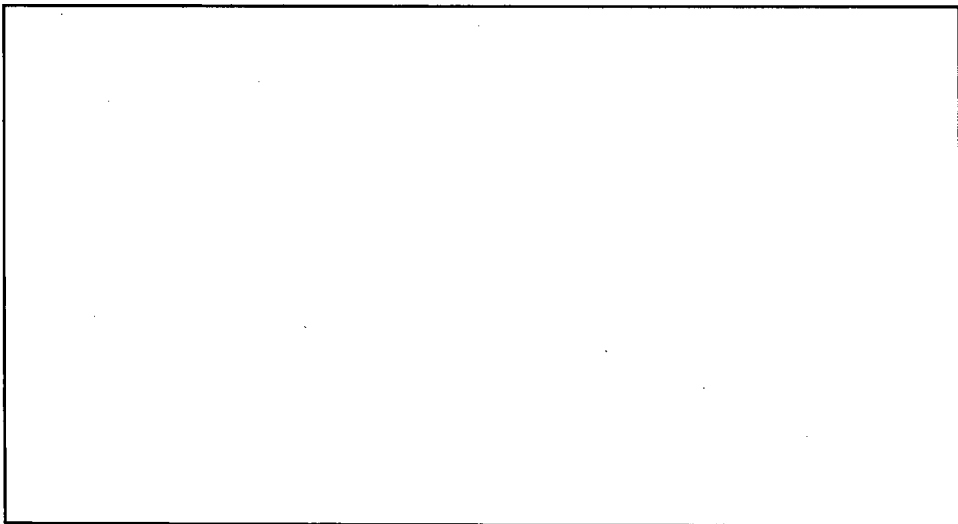


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ARAB STATES - ISRAEL: Efforts to persuade Cairo and Tel Aviv to resume direct talks continued yesterday amid indications of increasing expectations on both sides that a resumption of the fighting may be imminent.

United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) commander General Siilasvuo met with Egyptian Minister of War Ismail in Cairo for an hour yesterday before flying to Jerusalem for meetings on Sunday with Israeli officials, probably including Minister of Defense Dayan, according to press reports. Cairo's UN representative met with UN Secretary General Waldheim yesterday and reportedly warned him that the breakdown of the Kilometer 101 talks last Thursday could jeopardize the start of peace talks in Geneva on 18 December. The representative also raised the possibility of renewed fighting along the Suez front. Waldheim also met with US, Soviet, and Israeli UN representatives late yesterday. What, if any, success UN efforts to bring the two sides together again might have is unclear, but press reports cite Egyptian officials as saying it is now up to Washington and Moscow to salvage the situation by persuading Israel to be more forthcoming on the issue of troop withdrawals in the Sinai.

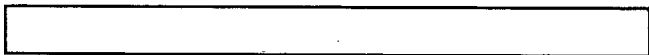


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UN forces patrolling the southern Suez front have reported a marked upswing in the number of cease-fire violations over the past several days, according to a UN spokesman in Cairo. An Israeli military officer also told the press that the Suez front was "warming up," and Tel Aviv reported that Israeli forces came under Egyptian fire five times yesterday, resulting in one Israeli wounded. Most clashes, however, appeared to be localized affairs involving small-arms fire, although some mortar and artillery fire was also exchanged.

In a speech to American Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, Prime Minister Meir repeated a number of her well-known views on the Arab-Israeli question, including her objections to international guarantees as a substitute for defensible borders. She said that she is not convinced that fighting will not be resumed, although she hopes it will not. After stating that she had not perceived a single genuine call for peace coming from this week's Arab summit in Algiers, she indicated that Israel is nonetheless ready to take part in the proposed Geneva peace conference.

The Israeli scenario for the conference was spelled out by Foreign Minister Eban in an interview with an Israeli newspaper. He expects it to convene in Geneva on schedule on 18 December, with Gromyko and Kissinger attending the opening session along with the foreign ministers of Israel, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and possibly Lebanon. The conference would then adjourn until after the Israeli Government received a negotiating mandate in the 31 December elections. Eban said that he expected the peace conference to go on for months after reconvening in January, with this second phase attended by permanent delegations of professional diplomats who

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would deal with specific problems between Israel and individual Arab states as well as conduct discussions among the Arabs themselves.

Eban insisted that Israel would not accept the participation in the peace conference of PLO leader Yasir Arafat, even though the Arab summit had recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Instead, he suggested that Palestinian representatives be included in the Jordanian delegation--the very concept that was rejected by the Arab summit.

The US consul in Jerusalem reported on 30 November that Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank are rapidly coming around to the view that at the peace conference the PLO should negotiate for all Palestinians. They reportedly also feel that an independent West Bank - Gaza state should emerge with PLO leadership, and that Jordan's King Husayn should not be the Palestinians' negotiator or ruler. Informed journalists think that, in the wake of the Algiers summit, an overwhelming majority of the normally politically fragmented West Bankers favor these ideas, while the remainder are reluctant to speak out in opposition.

In such an atmosphere, there is considerable expectation that the PLO will try to broaden its base by adding West Bank personalities to its Palestinian National Assembly. The upsurge of expressed support for the PLO and a separate state apparently has been stimulated by the widespread assumption that now, for the first time, it is worthwhile for the West Bankers themselves to decide what they want, regardless of Jordanian and Israeli views.

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