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(BEGIN) MEETS U.S. ENVOY QUANDT, REMARKS ON MEETING

TA091745Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 9 Aug 78 TA

[From the Evening Newsreel]

[Text] At his office in the Qiryia [military headquarters] in Tel Aviv, the prime minister hosted U.S. delegate William Quandt, who reported to the prime minister, his deputy and the foreign and defense ministers on Vance's talks with President as-Sadat in Alexandria. This meeting ended a few minutes ago and we will now go over to the broadcasting van to our correspondent Sara Frankel to hear remarks made at the end of the meeting by Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

[Begin--recorded] Well, Mr Quandt came here and reported to us, at the request of the secretary of state, important information on the talks with the Egyptian president in Alexandria. I will report this to the government at the special session to be held tomorrow morning. [Begin starts speaking in English and Sara Frankel takes over]

[Frankel--live] Later, the prime minister said that the 3 weeks left until the meeting at Camp David will be devoted to a thorough preparation for the talks. The prime minister emphasized the importance of the meeting and hence the earnestness involved in preparing for the talks. Asked whether Secretary of State Vance will visit Israel prior to this meeting, the prime minister said that Mr Quandt had not mentioned this. It is also not known whether there will be other meetings between Israelis and Egyptians before the tripartite meeting. In fact, the prime minister did not elaborate on the content of the talks with Mr Quandt, and when asked how he would define the subjects on which they spoke, Begin answered: important subjects. I will now hand the microphone over to Dan Eshel, who will give a translation of the remarks the prime minister made in English.

[Eshel--live] Well, what transpires from the prime minister's remarks is that the most important thing he learned from Mr Quandt is that President as-Sadat consented to participate in the meeting at Camp David. As of tomorrow there are only 3 weeks left before the meeting, and these, according to the prime minister, will be devoted to talks with advisers to prepare for the meeting at Camp David. Nevertheless, the prime minister remarked that he will not interrupt his vacation except for tomorrow's cabinet meeting, at which he will report to the ministers on what is expected from the tripartite meeting. Mr Begin said Mr Quandt had not brought anything he had not already known about, but when he was asked what he expects from the meeting at Camp David he replied that he hopes for a breakthrough and continued efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East. Mr Begin emphasized his hope that nothing will change in the 3 weeks left before the meeting at Camp David.

More on Remarks

TA091930Y Jerusalem Domestic Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 9 Aug 78 TA

[Text] Prime Minister Menachem Begin announced today that the Israeli delegation to the tripartite meeting at Camp David will depart on 3 September. Early in the evening Mr Begin interrupted his vacation to meet with William Quandt, assistant to U.S. National Security Adviser Brzezinski, at his office in Tel Aviv.

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Quandt arrived from Alexandria to report on the talks between Secretary of State Vance and President as-Sadat. At the end of the meeting Mr Begin said that Mr Quandt had given important information on Vance's talks in Egypt. The prime minister also said he does not expect President Carter to submit a proposal for a declaration of principles at the Camp David meeting and that he hopes for a breakthrough and the continuation of the peace process. At the end of the meeting with Mr Quandt the prime minister answered questions by reporters, including those of our political correspondent Elimelekh Ram. [begin videotape]

[Question] Will the government need to make decisions on certain subjects tomorrow, and on what subjects, if it is possible to know?

[Answer] Certainly not tomorrow. However, in the coming 3 weeks we will hold meetings and consultations, cabinet meetings and meetings with our experts. We are going to prepare very earnestly for this meeting, which is by nature very earnest.

[Question] When you say to prepare earnestly, what do you mean? On what subjects?

[Answer] On all subjects involved in the peace-making process in the Middle East. It is surely clear to you, gentlemen, that this is a meeting which we greatly appreciate. It is important--it is the first time such a meeting will be held. There are problems, documents and proofs, and all these should be prepared. And, mainly, we should simply think.

[Question] Are you stopping your vacation, sir?

[Answer] No. I have interrupted it now and I will be at tomorrow's cabinet meeting, but I will return to my vacation after the cabinet meeting. I hope I will be able to finish it without further breaks. [end videotape]

BEGIN COMMENTS AFTER SPECIAL CABINET SESSION

TA101034Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 10 Aug 78 TA

[Text] Prime Minister Menahem Begin said at the end of today's special cabinet session that the cabinet will have to adopt resolutions and that a lengthy political discussion would be taking place in the cabinet during the next 3 weeks. We shall examine every document that has to do with the conference, the prime minister said. This is our duty.

In answer to a question he said: Our peace plan is good.

On As-Sadat's statement, which implies that he is going to the meeting only because Carter invited him and not in order to meet Begin, the prime minister said: President as-Sadat is entitled to speak in his own style, but we know that he read the invitation sent to him by President Carter, and there it explicitly states that the meeting will be a tripartite one. President as-Sadat gave his consent to such a meeting at once, a fact to which the U.S. secretary of state testified on reaching Washington.

Regarding allegations published in Washington that the United States is hastening the meeting due to a danger of war in the region, Mr Begin said: I do not think that there is a basis for such reports. We shall hear the reasonings of the opposite party, but threats will not frighten us. They have no influence on reality.

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Public opinion about As-Sadat's peace intentions has been checked by the PORI Institute ever since As-Sadat assumed office as president. The following is a chart on this subject since 1971:

"Does Egyptian President as-Sadat want or not want true peace with Israel?"

Date of Poll	Wants	Does Not Want	Don't Know
1971	21	58.1	20.8
1972	32	51	16
1975	34	40	26
December 1977	80.4	9.5	10.1
January 1978	52	24.4	23.6
April 1978	51.5	32.3	16.2
July 1978	51.6	33.1	15.3

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BEGIN TELLS SACHER HE SEES NO NEED TO SEEK NEW MANDATE

TA170730Y Jerusalem POST in English 17 Aug 78 p 8 TA

[Text] On August 10, a letter from Michael M. Sacher, a leading member of the Anglo-Jewish community, appeared on this page expressing doubt that the majority of Israelis support Prime Minister Begin's posture in the peace negotiations. It suggested that the Prime Minister go to the polls to see if he does, in fact, have a mandate of the people. If it is proved that he does not, then the premier should "pass the leadership of the government over to someone else who then may be in a position to carry on more fruitful negotiations for peace with Egypt." Sacher's letter, which has created much controversy in Britain, now draws a public reply from Menahem Begin.

August 16, 1978

Dear Mr. Sacher,

Yesterday, which was the last day of my short vacation, I read your letter in the Jerusalem POST and it left me wondering. During the last year you had numerous opportunities to talk to me in the circle of a few friends or, if you so wished, privately.

But you did not use those opportunities. You never brought your interesting suggestion to me but preferred, as the Americans say, to "go public."

This is your right. Since I became a disciple of Jabotinsky at the age of 15--it is now fifty years ago--I learned from him, and believe this with all my heart, that Eretz Yisra'el belongs to all the Jewish people and not only to that portion of our people that lives here.

However, it is my duty to state that a national election being the internal issue in any country, must always remain the legitimate exclusive domain of those who can influence the electorate or be influenced by it.

Your suggestion or allegation that my colleagues and I were elected by the people mainly "on the basis of our economic plan" is, to put it mildly, a complete mistake. We campaigned for months on two issues: the political-security problems and the socio-economic problems.

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Western circles say that a peace agreement cannot be expected to come out of the meeting. In their evaluation, it is clear to the United States that it is faced with complex negotiations. Therefore, the negotiations will begin in an informal meeting between the three leaders. At the same time, the negotiating teams of the parties will discuss the security arrangements and the declaration of principles.

Our political correspondent, Elimelekh Ram, reports this and adds that the willingness was expressed in Jerusalem to discuss the sovereignty over the territories and a territorial compromise at the request of one party. Similarly, the prevailing estimate in Jerusalem is that the talks must at least yield a formula which will make it possible to renew the direct negotiations between Israel and Egypt.

POST: WEIZMAN LIKELY TO GO TO CAMP DAVID

TA170815Y Jerusalem POST in English 17 Aug 78 p 1 TA

[By Hirsh Goodman, POST military correspondent]

[Text] Defense Minister Ezer Weizman in all probability will attend the Camp David summit next month, even if his Egyptian counterpart, Gen Abd al-Ghani al-Jamasi, does not attend.

Earlier, it was believed that Weizman would join Prime Minister Begin and Defence Minister [as published] Dayan at the summit only if Al-Jamasi is at the meeting. Now it is believed that Weizman will go to Camp David in any eventuality.

In preparation for the talks, a special Defence Ministry team under Aluf Avraham Tamir, one of the delegates to the Cairo talks, is putting together a strategy based on past contacts between the sides.

Tamir's team will also put together an analysis of Israel's current security posture to help guide the policy makers.

A Defence Ministry source stressed last night that the Defence Ministry strategic team will not be advancing independent positions, nor would it be formulating separate proposals, but is merely preparing material as background for the Camp David negotiators. This, together with material from other agencies, will form a common Israeli policy platform, he said.

POLL SHOWS EQUAL DIVISION ON AS-SADAT DESIRE FOR PEACE

TA131346Y Tel Aviv HA'AREZ in Hebrew 13 Aug 78 p 3 TA

[Text] About half of the Israeli public believes that As-Sadat wants true peace with Israel. This percentage has not changed since January 1978 when it dropped to 50 percent from the 80 percent noted immediately after As-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. This was learned from national public opinion polls conducted by the PORI Institute at the request of HA'AREZ.

About a third of the public does not believe in the sincerity of As-Sadat's intentions and about 15 percent "do not know" if he does or does not want peace with Israel.

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Every child in Israel knew exactly what we stood for on the question of peace and security--the more so the adults. This was the main theme of the election-eve television dialogue between the Labour Alignment's candidate for the premiership, Mr. Peres, and myself. After all this thorough public elucidation came the decision of our people. And I venture to say that there never was a more democratic expression of opinion in the annals of our country or of any other state than the Israel national election of 1977.

According to the constitution of our land the mandate given us by our people is for a four-year period. Upon taking office I gave an oath of allegiance before the Knesset to the effect that I would faithfully fulfil my duty as prime minister of Israel, and, Mr. Sacher, I intend to do my best and utmost to fulfil my duty for the constitutional duration of the 9th parliament. I shall do so as long as the government I head enjoys the confidence of the house. As far as I am aware, this is called in several countries, including Britain: democracy.

I must state with a full sense of responsibility that your concept of Israel's security would lead us into untenable conditions of permanent bloodshed, a general war under the most intolerable circumstances and a direct danger to the very existence of Israel and its people. You will, therefore, understand why your concept is utterly unacceptable to my colleagues in government, in parliament and to me.

We shall go on doing our very best to obtain peace with security not only for our own generation but also for our children and their children.

I am, as is proper, sending a copy of this letter to the Jerusalem POST for publication, and a copy to friends in Britain with a view to appropriate publication there.

Sincerely yours,

Menahem Begin.

POLL SHOWS BEGIN, WEIZMAN, DAYAN, EHRLICH POPULARITY RISE

TA171058Y Tel Aviv HA'AREZ in Hebrew 17 Aug 78 p 3 TA

[Text] The popularity of the four senior Likud ministers--the prime minister, the defense minister, the foreign minister and the finance minister--increased in the last month, according to the findings of the PORI Institute national public opinion poll conducted at the request of HA'AREZ.

The popularity of Weizman rose from 68.8 percent in June to 75.7 percent, an increase of 6.9 percent. He is the most popular among the four ministers. His popularity is almost as high as the peak it reached in March and April--78.3 percent.

Begin's popularity has grown from 54.2 percent in June to 59.7, an increase of 5.5 percent, but it is still lower than the popularity he enjoyed in December 1977, immediately after As-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, at which time it was 78.3 percent.

Dayan's popularity has risen only slightly: It was 51.2 percent in June and it is now 51.9 percent.

Ehrlich's popularity has grown from 21.9 percent in June to 24.7, an increase of 2.8 percent, but he still continues to be the least popular minister among the top members of the cabinet.

The poll questioned 1,200 men and women above 18 years of age, constituting a sample representative cross-section. The interviewees were interviewed individually at their homes all over the country.

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WEEKLY CABINET SESSION DISCUSSES CAMP DAVID

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NC271233Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 27 Aug 78 NC

[Text] In Jerusalem the cabinet meeting to sum up the preparatory discussions for the Camp David conference ended about 1 hour ago. Three decisions were adopted:

1. The delegation to Camp David will attempt to reach an agreement between the parties.
2. The delegation will submit to the summit conference the Israeli Government's peace plan aimed at signing an agreement between Israel and its neighbors.
3. The delegation will try to bring about a continuation of the negotiations among the parties.

The deputy prime minister, Yiga'el Yadin, will not go to Camp David. The Israeli delegation will number 11 members, including the prime minister, the foreign minister, the defense minister, the former government legal adviser, Aharon Baraq, and top-level officials.

The delegation spokesman will be the prime minister's adviser for media affairs, Dan Patir. Mr Patir told our correspondent that the hundreds of journalists who will be covering the conference will be given the basic facts. The aim will be to cut down on reports on details of the talks until the participants agree the details can be disclosed.

(BF)
Begin Meets Press

NC271411Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1159 GMT 27 Aug 78 NC

[From the Midday Newsreel: press conference given by Prime Minister Begin to correspondent Shalom Qital and others following 27 July cabinet meeting--live]

[Text] [Qital] The prime minister, who has been waiting with the cabinet statement, is here with us. Mr Prime Minister, please.

[Answer] The cabinet has concluded and summed up its political discussion. It has adopted the following decision:

- A. The Israeli delegation to the Camp David conference will work to achieve an agreement between the parties.
- B. At the conference, the Israeli delegation will submit its plan aimed at signing a peace treaty between Israel and its neighbors.
- C. The delegation will work for the continuation of the negotiations between the parties.

The Israeli delegation to Camp David will be composed of the following three cabinet members: The prime minister, the foreign minister and the defense minister. The other members of the delegation will be: Professor Baraq; the Israeli ambassador to the United States, Simha Dinitz; General Avraham Tamir; Dr Me'ir Rosenne; Brig Gen Efrayyim Poran; Yehivel Qadishay; Elyaqim Rubinstein; and Ilan Tehila.

The Israeli delegation will leave on Sunday, 3 September. On Tuesday it will go to Washington and from there to Camp David. The conference itself will start on Wednesday morning. As for the conclusion of the discussions, the date is not yet known. What is clear, is that the discussions will go on into the week following the week in which the discussions start.

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[Unidentified correspondent] Mr Prime Minister, you said that the government will submit its plan for the signing of a peace treaty. Is the plan which will be submitted by the government the same plan for administrative autonomy which was submitted to President as-Sadat in Ismailia?

[Answer] I can answer that positively.

[Qital] Mr Begin, what do you mean by saying that the delegation will work to achieve an agreement between the parties? What does an "agreement between the parties" mean?

[Answer] A substantial agreement.

[Qital] What is a substantial agreement?

[Answer] I think that you know Hebrew as well as I do. An agreement is an agreement and substantial is substantial.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr Begin, President as-Sadat last week rejected your proposal for a permanent partial settlement since--as I understand it--your proposal came in response to President as-Sadat's request for a goodwill gesture in Al-'Arish. Has the proposal been expanded since President as-Sadat's rejection?

[Answer] Your assumption is correct. We will examine the matter when we meet.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr Begin, has the government also adopted a decision on the alternatives [words indistinct]?

[Answer] We have a good peace plan. This is the answer. We have no alternatives to our plan. If there is a problem of formulations, we will be prepared to hear it and make a decision on it in accordance with the government's decision.

[Qital] Has the entire cabinet agreed on this decision?

[Answer] Yes.

[Qital] Unanimously?

[Answer] Unanimously.

[Unidentified correspondent] Have other decision been adopted?

[Answer] No. No other decisions have been adopted.

[Unidentified correspondent] Is there room for tactical flexibility on the part of the delegation?

[Answer] Kindly air your own interpretations on the IDF radio.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr Begin, did the government, in adopting its decisions, take into consideration the recommendations of the interministerial committee which you appointed?

[Answer] The panel's recommendations will be at the delegation's disposal just as they were at the cabinet's disposal.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr Begin, would you prefer that Professor Yadin be included in the delegation?

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[Answer] I thank you for the question. I had been about to propose to the cabinet the inclusion of Deputy Prime Minister Professor Yadin in the delegation. We met yesterday, and Professor Yadin informed me that he would prefer not to be included in the delegation, but to act in my place. During the delegation's absence from the country, Professor Yadin will be the acting prime minister and the acting defense minister. Dr Burg will be the acting foreign minister.

[Qital] Is this an agreement based on coalition considerations? I think this is the first time Dr Burg has served as acting minister.

[Answer] This is an agreement based on commonsense. Just because this is being done for the first time, does not mean that it is a bad thing. I think this is a very good decision. It has also been unanimously adopted.

Further on Press Conference

NC271416Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 27 Aug 78 NC

[English portion of press conference given by Prime Minister Menahem Begin at his office following 27 August cabinet meeting--live]

[Text] [Begin's voice fading in] a territorial compromise, we shall consider it. This is what we said, and I stand by it.

[Question] Today it is a fact that Israel itself isn't proposing a plan built around territorial compromise. If that is the case, do you believe that peace in the Middle East is not built easier on territorial compromise?

[Answer] As-Sadat said so. Yes, President as-Sadat said he rejects any idea of a territorial compromise. It is a fact.

[Question] I am inquiring as to your opinion whether peace in the Middle East would be most easily built upon territorial compromise.

[Answer] No. I think that our plan is the best there is for negotiations and for the conclusion of peace treaties, and therefore we shall bring it to the conference.

[Question] Would you have preferred that Deputy Premier Yadin (?went with you)?

[Answer] I wanted to suggest that. But yesterday he told me that he will not participate in the delegation and he prefers to be the acting prime minister during our absence.

[Question] Mr Prime Minister, did your cabinet discuss what an acceptable role for the United States will be in the talks and would you define your thoughts on that?

[Answer] I already said that the United States fulfills a very important role of an honest broker, and should bring the parties for face-to-face negotiations.

[Question] Mr Prime Minister, should your plan not be acceptable to the Egyptian side, do you still plan to bring up the idea of a partial settlement between Israel and Egypt?

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[Answer] The question of a partial settlement is connected only with the idea which was brought to me from Salzburg, and what we ask is to negotiate this proposal. As I already said last week--and I also declared so to the representative of the (?NEWSWEEK)-- we stand by the idea of conclusion of peace treaties. And we shall see on the spot, if the idea comes up, we shall negotiate. It cannot be a unilateral arrangement. It can only be an arrangement based on reciprocity.

[Question indistinct]

[Answer] Again it is written in the decision of the government and the Knesset, namely that 5 years after the autonomy plan comes into effect, we shall be prepared to discuss the problem of sovereignty.

[Question] Which might include the possibility of foreign sovereignty?

[Answer] No.

[Question] Mr Begin, how do you discuss sovereignty?

[Answer] Autonomy. What we suggest is autonomy.

[Question] But you said that you are willing to discuss sovereignty after 5 years. How can this exclude sovereignty of some [words indistinct]?

[Answer] As I said, why a country? If anybody suggests foreign sovereignty, then we shall discuss our sovereignty. In our peace plan we said obviously, clearly that Israel has a right to demand sovereignty in Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. We leave it open. And 5 years later, we are prepared to discuss it. When the proposal will be that there should be foreign sovereignty, we shall bring our proposal of Israel's sovereignty.

[Question] You think you are not prepared to abandon Israel's right to sovereignty in the West Bank.

[Answer] Oh, no. Why should we. We don't abandon anything. We only said that in order to achieve an agreement, we leave the question of sovereignty open. When we are asked whether we are prepared to discuss it after 5 years, yes, we are prepared to discuss it.

[Question] Mr Prime Minister, could you tell us what is new in the plan that you are taking to Washington? We understand it contains the autonomy plan that you first presented in December. Are there new elements that are being added now? What do you think?

[Answer] No. This is our peace plan as it stands. It is a very good plan. It was considered by the President of the United States as a fair basis for negotiations, a great deal of flexibility; by the secretary of state, a great contribution to the peace-making process. This is the plan which we are going to bring.

[Question] Are there no new options or variables that you are now adding based on the deliberations of the ministerial team and your own negotiations?

[Answer] I beg your pardon.

[Question] Are there no new options or variables that are being added now for this summit conference?

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[Answer] No. We don't have to have new options. This is the basis for negotiations as we said time and again.

[Question] Mr Begin, in the cabinet decision there appear to be three goals for the Camp David summit. The first two have to do with trying to make an agreement providing for a peace treaty. Is it possible that this will happen at Camp David and how long are you willing to stay there to test that possibility?

[Answer] We don't know yet. What we know is that the negotiations will be continued the second week, and the beginning will be on Wednesday morning. No timetable was fixed.

[Question] If it should take weeks, are you willing to stay in Camp David and work on it for weeks?

[Answer] I don't think it will take weeks. But it may take many days. Yes. We are willing to stay there.

[Question] And would you comment on the possibility of achieving goals number one and two--a peace treaty or (?full) agreement?

[Answer] We shall present our peace plan, but we basically hope to achieve an agreement, and then there will be a continuation of the negotiations. It is not to be supposed that you can solve the problems of the conflict which lasts for 60 years in a few days, we have to have negotiations.

[Question] Is the cabinet, or rather are you and your team taking to Camp David possibly new formations? So the plan is the same plan, but is there any essential change in the formulations?

[Answer] We discussed various formulations.

[Announcer] A live transmission of Prime Minister Begin speaking to reporters from the prime minister's office after today's cabinet meeting.

TV Commentator on Session

TA272028Y Jerusalem Domestic Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 27 Aug 78 TA

[Excerpt] [Commentator Ya'akov Ahime'ir] With me in the studio is our political commentator, Elimelekh Ram. Elimelekh, will Israel bring new ideas to Camp David, beyond the cabinet's well-known peace program?

[Answer] I would say that Israel is taking with it the original Israeli program, that which was presented at the Ismailia summit; this program has not changed in principle. On the basis of this peace program, the delegation will take new ideas to Camp David, but these ideas will not be such as, we can say, will turn Israel's position upside down. I would say that Israel will go to Camp David with great openness, without changing its peace program substantively.

[Question] In other words, did the cabinet today give the delegation to Camp David maneuvering room, so that it will be able to maneuver, to raise new ideas?

[Answer] Certainly, yes, the Israeli delegation to Camp David has a fairly large amount of maneuvering room, but the prime minister, the foreign minister and the defense minister will not be able to commit themselves to things which are beyond, or things which deviate from the spirit of Israel's proposal as it was presented in Ismailia. In other words, Mr Begin will not be able to commit himself to revolutionary changes in the peace program.

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I would like to point out one thing: We must remember that, in fact, the Israeli peace program has not been discussed between Israel and Egypt. When Mr Begin presented the program to President as-Sadat in Ismailia, the Egyptian answer was: That is your proposal, we will present a proposal of our own. After a relatively long time, the Egyptians did--on the eve of the Leeds conference--the Egyptians did, if you remember, present a document which they called a program regarding withdrawal from Judaea, Samaria and Gaza and security arrangements. I would say that the Israeli delegation will, at the beginning of the conference, opt to discuss both programs, the Israeli and the Egyptian.

[Question] What about the idea of partial permanent settlement? Will Israel raise this on its own initiative?

[Answer] The prime minister said today, after the cabinet session, that since President as-Sadat completely rejected this idea, Israel, on its own initiative, will not propose permanent partial settlements. However, I would say that, further on in the conference, if there is a risk that the conference will come to a dead end, Israel, in order to renew the political momentum, is likely, perhaps, to again propose a solution perhaps such as permanent partial settlements, as the prime minister calls them.

[Question] Do you have any further details about the dropping of Professor Yadin from the trip to Camp David?

[Answer] I do not know whether these are additional details, but there is something curious, quite interesting, in my view. Today it was learned how the meeting was held last night. As you remember, the prime minister appeared yesterday at a rally in Tel Aviv supporting Soviet Jewry. On Saturday the deputy prime minister was at his home in Mikhmoret. During the night, after the prime minister had appeared at that rally, he went to Jerusalem. Professor Yadin also went to Jerusalem from the coast, from Mikhmoret, and when they reached Bet Zayyit, at the entrance to Jerusalem, their cars turned into that settlement and there the meeting between them was held, in the middle of the night.

YADIN INTERVIEWED ON CAMP DAVID, DEFENSE, SETTLEMENTS

TA271514Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1410 GMT 27 Aug 78 TA

[Interview with Deputy Prime Minister Yiga'el Yadin on the "Direct Line" phone-in program moderated by Yizhaq Golan--live]

[Excerpts] [Golan] Mr Deputy Prime Minister, today for the first time you are the guest on our program no longer as the leader of the DMC, but as the head of the Democratic Movement. What is your feeling in the new garb?

[Answer] The garb is not new. In fact, I began my political life as the chairman of the Democratic Movement. Now it has gone back, possibly in a different way, to the same situation. The problem is this: We went together for a long way and this decision was a hard one for all of us, but it was unavoidable and, as stated, I think that my colleagues and I, on both sides, went into public life because we believe in our path and if we must now continue on the path--but maybe, to a certain extent, to also start again from the beginning--this should not, of course, prevent any one of us from doing what he understands and as he understands it and this is how I, too, regard matters.

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[Question] Yes. We will be going back, during the broadcast, to the reasons for the split in the DMC. However, before we ask about the lessons from this split, a few questions about today's cabinet session. What is the significance of the first decision announced by the prime minister, that Israel will work for an agreement between the sides? Which sides?

[Answer] First of all, there are, in fact, two sides at Camp David. There is Egypt and there is Israel. These, in fact, are the sides involved in the negotiations, this should be clear.

[Question] Yes, with the second decision speaking of peace between Israel and its neighbors.

[Answer] Of course, but even before we come to "between [Israel and] its neighbors," first of all we are speaking with the Egyptians there, and this sentence says this clearly, because we will have come there to speak with Egypt; Egypt will speak with us. I think that President Carter and the United States, by the fact that they have made this meeting possible--which, not because of us, could not have been held before that--they are of course contributing a great deal and I assume that here and there, when there is a need to help maybe this or the other side, they will certainly also help, but the negotiations are between us and Egypt.

[Question] Should we understand from this that the reference is to the possibility of a bilateral peace between Israel and Egypt?

[Answer] Nobody knows what may happen there. The agenda is, altogether, completely open.

[Question] No, in view of this decision, I mean, between the sides--and you say that the other side at Camp David is Egypt.

[Answer] We are interested in peace with all the sides in the sense of all the Arab countries surrounding us. At this moment, the only country which is speaking with us, or prepared to speak with us, is Egypt and this is one of the issues--I assume one of the issues--which will be put forward there: whether Egypt wants to make a bilateral agreement with us. Whether it also speaks in the name of other countries. What is the link between the issues which touch on other countries and the issue which are bilateral between us? These are all open questions which I assume will be discussed there frankly.

[Question] Have tactical moves also been authorized, practical ones, in the direction of flexibility on our part? For example, will we make a gesture this time to the president of Egypt and permit him to build a mosque in Santa Katerina, if he again asks for this, and give Al-'Arish back to Egyptian sovereignty?

[Answer] These issues were not discussed today, even in the cabinet session. The issues are much more basic and principled. Our peace program which, in fact, was supported by all of us--and even the United States announced that it regards it as a fair basis for negotiations--to this day, in fact, has not been discussed between the two sides in a basic way. This is what we are coming with. What the Egyptians will come with--we do not know. Recently, at Leeds Castle, they came with some sort of program of their own. So, these are the things with which our delegation is going there.

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It may very well be that, during the negotiations, and these are completely open negotiations, all sorts of proposals will be put forward by each side and the delegation members, and, of course, the prime minister, will have to consider. Of course they, as well as the cabinet, know the general line of the cabinet and the general directives which were agreed upon and they will have to decide from time to time. It may be that there will be several things on which they will not be able to decide themselves, they will have to bring them to the cabinet itself, but the issues you spoke of were not discussed today.

[Question] Fine, but if it is raised, is it to be expected that there will be a readiness on our part?

[Answer] I cannot give you an answer on that. I am sure that if this is raised, if any side raises it, I am sure that there will be a debate on it and I cannot tell you exactly what our position will be because it also depends on what is presented, how it is presented and so on.

[Question] What is your position regarding these two things?

[Answer] At this moment I cannot tell you about my personal position. At one time, when the matter came up--it was also publicized then--I was of the opinion that we should have made a unilateral gesture. All the cabinet members, including the ministers of the DMC as it was then--Tamir and 'Amit and I do not remember if Katz as well, I am not sure--were against a unilateral gesture. We said, a gesture, fine....

[Question] In return for....

[Answer] It is not a matter of in return for, no, we are, after all, not doing personal favors for each other. Fine, if it is part of something, let us speak about it. Today I can no longer tell you exactly what will happen because, as stated, if such a question is raised they will certainly speak about it. What the position will be--I assume that the position will be as the cabinet decided at the time.

[Question] In his speech at the end of a class of the armed forces command college in the general headquarters Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizman said that there was a sharp argument about the political solution and that it was now more relevant than at any time in the past. What is the argument about?

[Answer] The argument is simple. Until As-Sadat came--until someone from the Arab countries was prepared to speak with us--the political argument there was within the parties and so was in fact over what each one, each party, or all of us together, wanted. We now, for the first time, since the time As-Sadat came--and this is continuing--no longer speak in a vacuum. We already have an echo and a reaction from the other side as well and, for example, my party, in its platform, both before and now, said that if it was possible to obtain a solution on the basis of territorial compromise, to us it appeared that this was the best solution. The situation at the moment is that the other side is saying no, it is not prepared, and so we have to see what the problems really are on which it is possible to achieve negotiations.

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It is hard for me to explain to you about this point--I will explain to you--why we, too, supported the peace program, because as far as the matter involves Judaea and Samaria, if, on the one hand, the other side does not want territorial compromise--and this problem of sovereignty is a very serious one, it is the problem of the dispute. [as heard]

For us, the security problem is the most important of all and there is a consensus on this. What does it say in the program as it will be presented? In the meantime, as far as the matter involves the inhabitants, they will really be given complete autonomy. They will not be able to say that some sort of rule is being forced to oppress the inhabitants living there. In fact, we said even more: the military government is being canceled. And we said--in accordance with the cabinet's decisions as they were announced some time ago--that if the other side after 5 years wants to discuss the problem of sovereignty, fine. This means that this today allows all sides to say that the problem that disturbs them most remains, but with the option open. Let us see, in this situation, what can be done.

[Question] That is clear. Before we turn to the listeners, one more question in this sphere: Does the decision that you will carry out the duties of minister of defense during his absence and that Dr Burg will carry out the duties of the foreign minister, is this intended to compensate the MAFDAL after it expressed fairly sharp opposition to your inclusion in our delegation to the Camp David talks?

[Answer] I do not think there is any connection to this at all. There have already been several cases before this. Generally, when the prime minister is absent, I fulfill his role and if the defense minister is also absent, up to now, at least, each time, then I also deputized for the defense minister and I think that it is natural. But, from time to time, there are several ministers who are absent together and the posts have to be divided. Then you also have to remember that Minister Burg is, let us say, the most senior minister in the cabinet and I think it is only natural that he should be appointed deputy foreign minister. There is no connection to this, in my view, at all....

[Question] But from the aspect of seniority, was the finance minister not due to get something?

[Answer] Look, I do not divide according to seniority and everything connected with this. The finance minister, I think, has only just now returned from abroad. He has problems; he did many things abroad; he has very difficult problems which he has to deal with here. It is not, after all, a matter of presents but the question is who can deal best with the problems.

[Question] Yes. We will turn to the first listener. Is the next listener on the line? Hello? Hello? No, I understand that we have more problems with communications. Let us go back again to an issue on which you have already replied in connection with the future composition of the cabinet. For the moment, it is impossible to know how many ministers your movement will have in the cabinet and whether the portfolios in your hands today will indeed remain as they are even if there are changes.

[Answer] I think it is possible to know.

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[Question] Are you prepared to say what the posts are that you now have in the cabinet and which you will not be prepared to give up in the future?

[Answer] The problem is not what we will or will not be prepared to give up. As I said, we entered the cabinet and the cabinet wanted us to enter, we wanted to enter--otherwise this mixture would not have come up--and all the sides had political considerations and I assume that these considerations exist now too. When there was the division of ministries at the time--of course it was not only what we wanted and there are also other cabinet members--but I will give you an example, in order to make it plain: If they were to offer us the Ministry of Religion--not that they would offer it--I assume that we would not agree.

We regarded the position of Minister of Justice as a very important one indeed, because a very large section of the DMC platform deals with problems which demand new legislation, both on matters of crime and on basic laws of the state.

With respect to the Ministry of Labor and Social Betterment, it is obvious that we regarded this ministry as the foundations of all our work. With respect to the economic, or services ministry, as it is called, the Ministry of Transport and Communications--although it was not exactly in accordance with the DMC needs--the problem [of retaining this portfolio] has a certain implication, although indirectly, and the post I had. I entered as deputy prime minister and I think that it is the first time in history that the deputy prime minister--and this was a part of the coalition agreement--asked that he have the post of chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Society and Social Betterment in order to coordinate all social activities. From this you can understand exactly with the issues are in which we are particularly interested.

[Question] That is, you are prepared to give up transport?

[Answer] I did not say that, you did.

[Question] Yes. Is there any listener on the line? Not yet. That being so, we will continue. What is your reaction to the document by Prof Ra'anan Weitz, the head of the Jewish Agency Settlement Department, regarding Judaea and Samaria, which was published on Friday?

[Answer] I will tell you the truth; I have not yet seen that document and I have only heard about it in the press and I do not like judging people just on the basis of excerpted things in the press, which were not said by them. If Ra'anan Weitz said that, in his view, one of the real options was a Palestinian state, then I, of course, am firmly opposed to this--all the movements, all the parties which are in the cabinet and also the main opposition party, at least the Labor Party, are opposed to this, and so I can say that if this is exactly what he said, then of course I am opposed to this very emphatically.

[Question] But you have certainly also heard that Mr Matityahu Drobles, who is the head of the Settlement Division in the Jewish Agency, in reaction to Ra'anan Weitz' proposal, at once ordered the preparation of a settlement program for Judaea and Samaria; in those same regions Ra'anan Weitz eliminated for settlement.

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[Answer] Look, I cannot manage now, particularly nowadays, to go over all the press. There is quite a lot of the DMC and I hardly manage to go over that, but if someone said that he had prepared such a program, then all right, they are making programs. The problems are afterward, in the operational stage, and on this matter there are ways and there are methods and institutions which determine and decide.

[Question] No, in your view, is this the right time for the preparation of settlement programs for Judaea and Samaria, today?

[Answer] In my view, no.

[Question] Mr Deputy Prime Minister, what is your reaction to the letter by the 100 officers, reserve soldiers, in which they say that they are not prepared to spill their blood for the sake of greater Israel and that they will not guard the settlements during their reserve service?

[Answer] I think that there is no need to react to this very much. A soldier who serves in the IDF is--the IDF is subordinate to the Government of Israel and it is not each soldier who decides what he is fighting for, not even the IDF decides what it is fighting for, the cabinet decides. It is inconceivable--if it was not said it would even be ridiculous--that each soldier should say what he is prepared to fight for. These are not prepared to fight for one issue; another group of soldiers will come along and say: We are not prepared to fight for another issue. This thing is impossible and I am sure that the IDF will deal with the matter as it should.

[Question] Maybe we will move on to our northern area. The Syrians are in fact waging a war of extermination against the Christian population in Lebanon. What, in your view, should Israel's reaction be?

[Answer] The reaction of the Cabinet of Israel to what the Syrians are doing to the Christians in Lebanon has already been given several times and full expression on this matter was also made by the prime minister in a special television broadcast. Of course there are also additional problems here, problems of Israel's security and the Syrian presence in Lebanon where, in fact, they have no business.

[Question] They have in fact taken over control of Lebanon.

[Answer] Correct, and so the problems are very complicated. What I can tell you for the moment is that the Cabinet of Israel is following closely whatever happens there.

COMMENTATOR ON POSSIBLE ISRAELI 'SCRIPT' AT CAMP DAVID

TA251421Y Tel Aviv HA'AREZ in Hebrew 25 Aug 78 p 14 TA

[Dan Margalit commentary]

[Text] The government has refrained from taking at their face value the reports from the Israeli Embassy in Washington about the U.S. preparations for the Camp David conference. The cabinet convened in its capacity as a Ministerial Committee on Security Affairs, in order to read the telegrams from the United States, and got the impression that at the present stage of the political contacts Washington lets Jerusalem and Cairo hear only such sounds as are pleasant to their ears. The U.S. tranquilized Israel with formulations which try to emasculate the declaration of principles by sterilizing UN Security Council Resolution 242, and what has been hinted to Egypt is not known in Jerusalem. It is assumed, therefore, that the time of pressure will only come at the Camp David meeting.