

FOR STRONG BORDERS

JERUSALEM (WNS) --- Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan has publicly declared his personal belief that Israel, for security purposes, must retain Sharm el-Sheikh, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights and that the Jordan River must be the Nation's eastern security border.

Gen. Dayan, noting that the Government had not taken any position on the future of any of the occupied areas because the Arab states have refused to directly discuss the issues with Israel, said his remarks before the Knesset, the political committee of the Labor Party-Mapam alignment and meetings held by various Israeli organizations were in personal opinion.

(Political observers noted that Israeli leaders and the country in general hold the same views about the future of the three areas expressed by Mr. Dayan.)

The Defense Minister declared that "Israel would have peace agreements on secure borders and will see to it that they are recognized and agreed to by its neighbors." Without defining the political future of the West Bank area, he said that the Jordan River must be Israel's eastern security border.

Retention of the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip implies that these areas will be added to Israel. A number of Israeli settlements have been built on the Golan Heights and more are planned by a number of agencies.

Plans for the economic development of the Gaza Strip have been completed by Israeli officials and are expected to be implemented by the end of the year. They include building factories and aiding agriculture with the aim of resettling the Arab refugees in the area in permanent homes.

Discussing Sharm el-Sheikh, an outpost on the tip of the Sinal Desert which guards the entrance to the Straits of Tiran and the Red Sea, Israel's waterway to Africa and Asia from the port of Ellat, Gen. Dayan said his views were in full agreement with Foreign Minister Abba Eban.

Mr. Dayan said that Israel would hold the strong-point and it would be linked to Israel "through territorial continuity."

Egyptian takeover of the outpost and its blockade the Straits of Tiran was the act of aggression which resulted in Israel launching defensive action in June, 1967.

The Defense Minister told the Knesset "I prefer to sit in Sharm el-Sheikh without peace than have peace and return Sharm el-Sheikh to Egyptian hands." He expressed his strong distrust of either Egyptian or United Nations forces based at the outpost or international guarantees on freedom of navigation through the Straits of Tiran, noting that all these actions failed in 1967.



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