

SETTLEMENT CONTROVERSY CONTINUES

TEL AVIV (WNS) -- The controversy over Israel's settlement policy continued to divide Jews in Israel and abroad. Some 30,000 persons, responding to a call from the Peace Now Movement, massed in Tel Aviv to protest the Jewish settlements on the West Bank and specifically the new Gush Emunim settlement of Alon Moreh, near Nablus.

A cable was read, signed by 62 prominent American Jews, warning that the new settlement undermined Israel's credibility in the eyes of the world. Among the signatories were Nobel Prize winning novelist Saul Bellow, conductor and composer Leonard Bernstein and actor Theodore Bikel. The Prime Minister's Office claimed June 17 it had not received the cable, Leonard Fein, a Harvard professor and editor of Moment, told the rally that he questioned the

statement by Theodore Mann, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, that the consensus among American Jews was that the settlements are legal and necessary for security.

Fein said there is no consensus among American Jewry on this issue. He said that many American Jews feel the settlement policy can create serious divisions. The cable from the U.S. expressed concern about the decision to establish a settlement as Israel was negotiating with Egypt. "Alon Moreh undermines the credibility of Israel in the eyes of the West

Bank people and the nations of the world," the cable said.

"The distinguished men and women who signed the June 15 communication to Prime Minister Begin have unfortunately allowed their concern over a single settlement, Alon Moreh -- a concern which I share -- to color their views about all future settlements on the West Bank," Mann said. He said that after his conversations with Begin, Defense Minister Ezer Weizman, Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, Interior Minister Yosef Burg and other leaders, "I have utterly no doubt that Israel intends to carry out the letter and spirit of the Camp David accords.

But if the West Bank is not to become a staging ground for PLO terrorism against Israel -- as Jordan was once and Lebanon is now -- the full autonomy can be achieved only in the context of effective security arrangements for Israel's protection."

ISRAEL, EGYPT END AUTONOMY TALKS

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- Israeli and Egyptian negotiations ended two days of talks on autonomy at Herzliya June 20 with little substantial progress on working out an agenda for the negotiations. Meir Rossene, legal advisor to the Foreign Ministry, told re-

porters that "certain progress had been made. It was reported that 'experts will deal with some obstacles, although no indications were given as to what the obstacles were. Observers speculated that Israel has rejected a demand by Egypt to place on the agenda the issues of Jerusalem and the West Bank settlements. While no substance may have been produced by the talks, the Egyptian delegation was taken on a tour of Tel Aviv by night and were reportedly impressed by the crowded streets and cafes.

Meanwhile, Israel

is reportedly satisfied by a "clarification" from the United States on the American role in the negotiations. "The U.S. endorses our position entirely," a Cabinet source said after Premier Menachem Begin received the clarification from U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. A U.S. Embassy spokesman in Tel Aviv said that if Israel saw the U.S. reply as endorsing Israel's position he was delighted. Israel has stressed that the U.S. role should be that of "full participation" in the talks but not a "party" to the final agreement and its implementation.

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