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**A RESPONSE TO "JIHAD"**

BY RABBI WILLIAM BERKOWITZ

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Rabbi Berkowitz is President of the Jewish National Fund).

Now Israel's enemies are using religion to destroy the Jewish state. To affirm God is no longer to call for the good. This may not be a new realization, but it is one that we continue to see painfully in our times.

Just a few weeks ago, 400 Christian clergymen including anti-Vietnam war activists David and Philip Berrigan - men and women who proclaim their devotion to peace and justice -- joined in denouncing Israel and urging a PLO state. The Berrigans did not explain how they reconciled their pacifist commitment with their support for the PLO murderers who choose their targets on the basis of how helpless they are. A few days later in Taif, Saudi Arabia, Moslem leaders gathered at a conference held by Saudi Crown Prince Fahd, who called for a Jihad -- a holy religious war -- against Israel.

"We are for an all out holy Islamic struggle on all aspects with speech and all resources of the media, with men, material, with knowledge and with weapons," proclaimed Prince Fahd.

And to this Islamic conference, united in its opposition to the Camp David Peace Accords, united in its call for a Palestinian state and a return of Jerusalem to Arab control, united in its demand to extend the boycott of Israel, came as one of its speakers no other than the Secretary - General of the United Nations, Kurt Waldheim.

How disturbing that a man who heads an organization dedicated to peace should lend his name and presence to a conference which rejects the Camp David Peace Accords and calls for a 'holy war.'

How disturbing that while he gestures for peace with the left hand, he draws Yasir Arafat closer to him with the right hand.

How disturbing to see still another example of how low the UN has sunk in our times when its Secretary - General consorts with a known terrorist and murderer who has bowed to destroy a member state of the world community.

That is why Jewish religious leaders have a sacred obligation to speak the truth while Israel is being assaulted from all sides. What is the message that our rabbis should be giving: It is a message that makes the case of Israel heard loud and clear: If Jerusalem is the throbbing heart of the Jewish people, let American Jews

make their presence felt by going to Israel, by standing at the Western Wall, by proclaiming their identification with the Jewish state -- the one democracy, the one friend, the one strategic asset our country has in the Middle East.

If the Galilee is a challenge for the future demographics of Israel, if it is an area which the PLO only recently said they will "liberate from the Zionist aggressors," let our congregations go there and see the stake we have in this land and see how Israel is meeting the challenge in the North.

This is the message -- that a strong Israel is vital to our country and to the entire free world. There are no apologies here, no fear that some may accuse us of "dual loyalty." We wear the title "Zionist" proudly. The message we hear is one we are confident President Reagan and his administration share with us. We are confident that our government will recognize the military and moral value of this land to the United States.

**BURG URGES EGYPT TO RESUME AUTONOMY TALKS**

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- Interior Minister Yosef Burg has urged Egypt to resume the talks on autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza Strip as soon as possible. The two countries are committed under the Camp David accords to negotiate "continuously and in good faith" on an autonomy agreement "at the earliest possible date" Burg said. "A party who does not fulfill his commitment to negotiate brings down upon himself the suspicion that he will not be scrupulous in fulfilling other commitments which he has undertaken," Burg said. He said that Israel is not responsible for the suspension of the talks since last May and Jerusalem was ready to resume the talks at any time.

Burg's statement came in the wake of leaked reports of confidential cables from Israeli Ambassador Eliahu Ben - Elissar in Cairo to the Foreign Ministry of talks he had with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. Sadat had expressed some reluctance to resume the negotiations at this time. A furor has developed over the leak and David Kimche, director general of the Foreign Ministry, is reportedly conducting an investigation. In the leaked report, Sadat was said to have reaffirmed his support of Camp David and stressed that the initiative undertaken by the European Economic Community (EEC) "could certainly not replace, supercede or undermine" the Camp David process and the preeminent American peacekeeping effort in the Middle East.

But in a speech to the European Parliament in Luxembourg Sadat said the EEC could play "a positive role in the search for global peace in the Middle East." He said this role should be in "bringing about a mutual recognition of Israel and the Palestinians. Such a recognition would develop into the creation of a Palestinian entity, an important stepping stone in the peace process." He indicated that Egypt favors a European initiative if it does not run contrary to the Camp David agreements and is synchronized with Washington. At a press conference in Luxembourg, he said he favors "joint and simultaneous recognition between Israel and the Palestinians" but is opposed to the inclusion at this time in the negotiations of the Palestine Liberation Organization. He said that Jordan should not participate in the talks until "a full autonomy agreement is signed." Sadat repeated his views to French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing at a private meeting in Paris.

In Jerusalem, Foreign Ministry spokesman Naftalie Lavie expressed satisfaction with Sadat's reaffirmation of his commitment to the Camp David accords and peaceful negotiations. But he took issue with Sadat's support of Palestinian self - determination which Lavie said was a deviation from the Camp David accords. Premier Menachem Begin, talking to reporters, also said he was pleased with Sadat's solid commitment to the Camp David process, but was less happy with the Egyptian President's support of Palestinian self - determination. Sadat meanwhile, reaffirmed his support for the Camp David agreements when he told a French Jewish delegation in Paris that it is "the cornerstone of my peace policy in the Middle East." He told the delegation led by Alain de Rothschild president of the Representative Council of Major Jewish Organizations in France (CRIF), "I rejoice not only every day but every moment about the peace process between Israel and Egypt."

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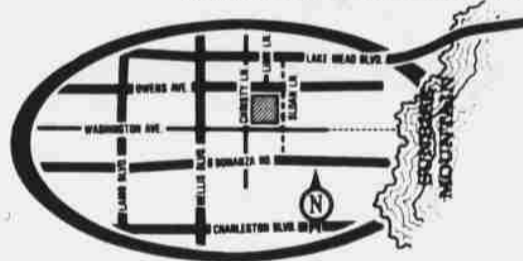
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