

# Passover on Golan Heights

BY RABBI EZRA BOYARSKY

As Israel's withdrawal from Sinai is nearing the April 25 deadline, the permanent retention of the Golan becomes that much more indispensable for her security. With the total surrender of the Sinai, Israel cannot afford the luxury of exposing herself to yet another vulnerable border.

It will be recalled that from these Heights (1948 - 1967) Syrian artillery constantly shelled the Jewish settlements in the Jordan Rift Valley below, intermittently killing scores of Israeli civilians and rendering the normal course of agricultural and fishing activities inoperative.

And since the Yom Kippur War, Syria has copiously stockpiled her ammunition arsenal with sophisticated weaponry and radically modernized

her armed forces. And it is an open secret that it is the Soviet Union that serves her as the chief war material supplier and trainer to man the 8 and 9 missile systems.

These stark facts along with Israel's incontestable claim to this region, it being an integral part of Eretz Israel's mainland, since the days of Joshua's conquest, more than justified the Knesset vote to reaffirm this fact by legally incorporating the Golan into Israel. A significant role leading to this decision has been the growing consensus within Israel not to relinquish control over the Golan Heights, poignantly recalling that the Syrians used its terrain as a launching pad to attack Israeli settlements below and to divert the vital headwaters of the Jordan River.

With the passage of the Golan law, the Knesset by a 63 - 21 vote, had a dual motive - to give notice to the world that the Camp David peace arrangements with Egypt by no means serve as a precedent with regards to Syria and

to reassure the Israeli public of its inviolability. It seems that this notice was also meant for some American Jewish leaders who are still susceptible to the shopworn, exile-bred apprehension every time the Israeli government acts independently and with sovereign dignity.

In addition to the reasons cited above, other key factors undoubtedly played an important role in the legislative decision for annexation at this particular time.

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