



Alfred Friendly

Israel Sees No Early Peace With Nasser Blocking Way

JERUSALEM—Despite the buoyant joy and enthusiasm with which it has just celebrated the 20th anniversary of its existence, Israel entertains no illusions about a serene future. It knows that peace is a long way off, and the best it can hope for is the avoidance of war.

For the present and many months or years to come, the expectation of a negotiated settlement of its conflict with the Arab states is forlorn. The peace mission of United Nations envoy Gunnar Jarring, to bring about action on the U.N. resolution of last November, is deadlocked.

Officials here feel that there would be a chance for fruitful negotiations with Jordan—if only King Hussein and his government could be insulated from the political stranglehold of the other Arab states, mainly Egypt. But at present, they cannot: against Arab objections, Jordan is powerless to move toward peace.

Abba Eban, Israel's foreign Minister, expresses the consensus when he declares that Egyptian President Nasser not only does not want a settlement but cannot, because of his past, make one.

EBAN IS almost willing to embrace the proposition that "any" new Egyptian leader would be preferable to Nasser. Can a man who has said "Never" so often, Eban speculated in an interview this week, ever find his way to the conference table? There might be a better chance, he added, from new leaders not burdened with the public statements, positions and political baggage of the last 15 years.

Nasser, Eban argued, probably believes that Egypt can survive in the present situation for some time. The Sinai, per se, is no great loss and the Egyptians have come to realize that the Suez Canal was not the trump they thought.

"They seem to have developed a new philosophy, a kind of fatalism. They say, 'We have to take time.' But just what the passage of time will change is not clear," Eban said.

Meanwhile Nasser "equates negotiation with surrender. But negotiation is an indispensable technique."

In recent weeks, the Arab states, insisting that the word "negotiation" was never used in the U.N. resolution, have mounted a loud campaign charging that it is Israel's refusal to say that it will "implement" the resolu-

tion that blocks a settlement.

Eban rejects the assertion, forcefully, if wearily, as puerile semantics. Egypt, he points out, has rejected the four or five cardinal points of the resolution: direct or indirect negotiation with Israel, recognition of Israel, the principle of a peaceful settlement, and free passage of Israeli ships through the Canal. Israel will not "implement" the resolution until there is agreement, which can be reached only through negotiation, on the terms to be "implemented."

ISRAEL HAS repeatedly said it will talk with the Arab countries on "all" matters in the resolution, Eban recounted. By early March, he continued, "Dr. Jarring said that while each party had expressed itself in its own way and accepted the resolution as a point of reference, the resolution was without meaning unless both sides came together.

"Therefore, he asked our cooperation on a position under which he would write to the Secretary General that the three governments have accepted the resolution as a basis for the establishment of a peaceful settlement and that accordingly they should meet under his auspices in order to achieve it.

"He made it clear to us that we should meet together" in conditions similar to those at Rhodes when the armistice agreements after the 1948 war were reached, with the parties sometimes apart, sometimes in the same room. Israel accepted.

"Egypt rejected the proposal with vehemence. It said it wanted nothing to do with negotiations in any form or with any agreement, that there was nothing to negotiate or agree to and, in effect, said that the only thing necessary was for Israel to get up and go away (from the Sinai). In other words, would we please get into a position in which they could destroy us on the next attempt."

EBAN DOES NOT believe that the Arabs will soon take the issue back to the Security Council to seek another way out. If they did, he argues, they would either have to reveal their commitment to the Khartoum resolution (in which the Arab states rejected peace, negotiation or recognition of Israel) and therefore their nonacceptance of the U.N. resolution, or renounce the Khartoum decision.

Meanwhile, in the opinion of other Israeli officials, the continuation of the Jarring

mission is greatly to be desired, no matter how empty its results have been so far. Continuing discussion of the U.N. resolution spares the Arab nations from having to embark on some new course of action which could be worse than the present stalemate.

The same thought may have been in the mind of King Hussein when he asked Nasser earlier this week not to torpedo the mission.

"All sides are marking time now in preparation of the next step," a top executive of the Israeli government declares. "Dr. Jarring is holding up any serious degeneration. If he had not done so, a new crisis would have developed. He holds the key to Pandora's box."