

Serious consideration should be given to the establishment of a joint Israeli-Egyptian nuclear energy centre in Sinai, Technion professor Shimon Yiftah said yesterday at the opening session of a nuclear energy conference at the Technion (in Haifa).

Apart from that optimistic note, the conference atmosphere was gloomy owing to the continued delay of the U.S. government in supplying the nuclear reactor for Israel's first nuclear power plant.

The reactor was ordered by the Electric Corporation, but the Carter administration's review of its nuclear export policy has again delayed delivery.

The conference...is sponsored by Israel's five nuclear societies in the fields of nuclear sciences, radiation, and medicine.

Yiftah, who is president of the Nuclear Sciences Society and a member of the Atomic Energy Commission, proposed that while the U.S. reconsiders its nuclear export policy, Israel work out a nuclear policy of its own. He suggested that it be based on five points:

\*A clarification of whether the option for the supply of our first reactor from the U.S. is still open.

\*A study of the possibility of buying a reactor from France, Germany, Japan, or Canada.

\*A study of the feasibility of building our own reactor, possibly with the aid of other countries.

\*The immediate stockpiling of uranium fuel, and the production of uranium from Negev phosphates.

\*A serious study of the possibility of a joint nuclear energy centre in Sinai together with Egypt. He believed

that in view of the recent political developments in the region such a scheme was now "within the range of feasibility."

Yiftah proposed that the mooted Sinai center comprise large nuclear power plants linked to large-scale water desalination plants, which together would support a giant sub-tropical farming project to make the desert blossom. The centre should also include a large plant to produce nuclear fuel for both countries.

He believed that the farming project, with its use of modern methods and technology, would serve as an example for the whole world, while the centre as a whole would demonstrate the tremendous potential for developing the region. Israel would contribute its vast know-how in desert farming and water desalination to the project.

The centre would demonstrate the advantages of large-scale production for more than one nation at a time and would provide an answer to the fears about exporting sensitive technology to a single country, Yiftah said. He was sure that such a project would have no difficulty in attracting international financing.

Yiftah foresaw the possibility of a "nuclear isolationism" trend in the U.S. which might drive Third World nations to seek nuclear technology elsewhere or to make an even greater effort to develop their own.

He did not rule out the possibility of the cartelization of nuclear fuel supplies by the producing countries, possibly through the establishment of a "nuclear OPEC" (including South Africa).

## Is A Palestine Gov't In Exile The Next Break For Peace?

The question of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) forming a government in exile in preparation for negotiations has again come into the news.

A Palestinian government in exile could remove some major political stumbling blocks that have impeded progress toward a comprehensive settlement of the Mideast. Most importantly, Palestinians outside the PLO umbrella such as certain Palestinian West Bank and Gaza mayors could be brought into the government. As well, the constitution for such a government could be worded in such a way as to recognize the sovereignty of all nations of the Mideast — a de facto recognition of Israel.

After the summit of hardline Arab states at Tripoli last week, the French daily *Le Monde* reported that there may have been a reconciliation between PLO chief Yasser Arafat and the radical left-wing elements of the PLO led by George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh. In a report from Cairo, *Le Monde* noted that such a rapprochement might have been to bring these "rejectionist elements" within a framework amenable to setting up a Palestinian government. Since the Tripoli summit, only Zuhair Mohsin, the leader of the Syrian wing of the PLO

As-Saiqa, has demonstrated a willingness to undermine such a reconciliation, by making a grab for command of the liberation organization (see below).

*Reporter for Events magazine, Salim el Lozi, editorialized in the Nov. 18 issue of the formation of a Palestine government in exile. Here are excerpts:*

Many people in the Middle East, like myself, cannot understand why there has been so much delay in the announcement of a Palestinian government. The conditions are ripe, the provisions are available and many Arabs and Palestinians have come to believe that the formation of such a government would help solve the problem of a Palestinian representation in Geneva. The U.S., because of the nature of its administration and its international role, cannot deal with revolutionary movements.

More than once, the Americans have made it clear that they represent major international legitimacy, which is opposed to international revolution. Consequently, they cannot work with a revolutionary organization, whose program includes striving for the destruction of a state

which is a member of an international organization. Therefore, the U.S. insists on PLO recognition of Resolution 242, which recognises the existence of Israel.

The Palestinians gave an intelligent reply to this demand. They said it was addressed to states and governments and that they are neither a state nor a government. A revolution does not extend recognition to a state, indeed the reverse is the norm. This is what led President Sadat to put forward the idea, as far back as 1972 of the formation of a government in exile....

### PLO: Not 'Delighted' With Tripoli Summit

*Le Monde* correspondent Eric Rouleau last week interviewed PLO spokesman, Mahmud al-Labadi. Rouleau stressed that the moderate wing of the PLO for which Labadi speaks was more anxious about attending the refusal summit in Tripoli than was Syria, since the main body of the PLO favors a compromise with Israel. In this connection, Labadi told Rouleau:

"We are still prepared to establish our own state in the West Bank of the Jordan and in Gaza, or on a territory representing only 22 percent of Palestine. In plain language, that means that we are prepared to coexist with the State of Israel and to establish relations with it which remain to be defined. For the sake of this we are ready to go to the Geneva conference — on the condition, of course, that we are invited to it as the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people."

Rouleau further reported that the moderate wing of the PLO had refrained from calling Egyptian President Anwar Sadat a "traitor" as Damascus news media and Mr. Zuhair Mohsin, chief of As-Saiqa, the Palestinian organization with Syrian allegiance, are doing.

Rouleau concludes that the PLO's tactic is, despite appearances, not to desert the moderate Arab camp for that of the "rejection front" and to maintain the alliance with Syria without, however, altogether closing the door to dialogue with Egypt. This is why Yasser Arafat was not "delighted" with the Tripoli summit. Said Labadi: "We doubt that such a meeting can succeed. But we have

no choice. If we had refused to go there we would have been accused of betraying the Palestinian cause and of surreptitiously supporting el-Sadat's policy. By going there we are certainly risking attracting the displeasure of certain Arab countries, which would take a dim view of our rapprochement with Al-Qadahafi (President of Libya—ed.)."

### Saiqa Threats

*The following are excerpts from an interview given to the Italian magazine Espresso Nov. 27 by Zuhair Mohsin, head of the "Saiqa" branch of the PLO. Saiqa is run by British-controlled networks of Syrian intelligence, and Mohsin has often vied for the leadership of the PLO against chairman Yasser Arafat, as during the 1975-76 Lebanon war.*

*Q: What is your opinion of the idea of sending an American professor of Palestinian origins to Geneva, for which el-Sadat claims to have Arafat's agreement?*

*A: Arafat has no power to appoint anyone to any conference without the preliminary agreement of the PLO Executive Committee.*

*Q: Why do you Palestinians want to prevent every attempt by el-Sadat and Saudi Arabia to make peace with Israel?*

*A: I too want peace. But nobody can accept the unconditional surrender to which As-Sadat wants to lead us. If the Arabs' oil wealth is not to be used for a just peace, then it should be burned, destroyed.*

*Q: There is talk of the possibility of the Palestinian resistance splitting and of a new Palestinian front emerging from the agreement among all the forces opposed to negotiation under present conditions.*

*A: Why not? If the present leaders are leading us to defeat and liquidation, what reason is there for remaining united?*

*Q: From what people are saying, can it be deduced that before a war with Israel there will have to be a war among Arabs?*

*A: Why not? Even Saladin, before he defeated the crusaders, had to fight the Arab monarchs for 25 years.*