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LAST MINUTE NEWS

SHARRETT ANNOUNCES CONCLUSION OF ISRAELI-SYRIAN PACT IN KNESSET; EXPLAINS SIGNIFICANCE

TEL AVIV, July 20. (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett today formally announced in the Knesset that Syria and Israel have concluded an armistice agreement. He emphasized the importance of the pact, both from a political and strategic point of view and noted that this was the last armistice treaty to be signed with the Arab states which attacked Israel last year. (See page 1 for details of the pact.)

"It took six months and one week for securing the whole string of these agreements," Mr. Sharett stated. He pointed up that the negotiations with Syria alone required 20 meetings, involving major difficulties arising from military and geo-political problems. Military issues were raised with the Syrian negotiators, he explained, because only the Syrian Army succeeded in holding Israeli territory wrested in battle.

Problems of a geo-political nature were raised at the negotiations with the Syrians, Mr. Sharett continued, because the Syrians occupied a territorial strip along Israel's northern frontier extending across a waterline which previously was in Israeli territory by virtue of the former international boundary. Israel's armistice negotiators steadfastly refused to entertain the Syrian claim of holding territory beyond the waterline area, the Foreign Minister stated, and the Syrians finally yielded.

Says Certain Foreign Countries Prevented Reaching Truce Earlier

One of the difficulties preventing the conclusion of an armistice agreement with Syria much earlier rested in the influence of certain foreign countries which led the Syrians to proffer "irreducible claims," the Israeli Foreign Minister reported to the Knesset.

"It appeared at a certain stage that the Israeli-Syrian negotiations would definitely be severed," he said, "but thanks to the intervention of Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, U.N. acting mediator for Palestine, who understood our point, the withdrawal of the Syrian forces from Israeli territory was finally obtained with a compensational guarantee that the Israeli Army would not advance into the evacuated area."

Syria's decision, he continued, was obviously propelled by her desire not to defy the world authority, with its obvious consequences. Mr. Sharett expressed the hope that Syria will now seek to establish peaceful and appropriately neighborly relations with Israel. He paid tribute to the patience and skill of the United Nations representatives who were directly involved in the achievement of the armistice.

Following Mr. Sharett's report, deputies of the left-wing Mapam and the right-wing Herut demanded an immediate parliamentary debate on the terms of the armistice pact. It was decided to hold such a debate at next week's session of the Knesset.

Neither Side May Retain More Than 2,000 Troops in Demilitarized Zone

Release of an annex to the Israeli-Syrian armistice agreement today revealed that the demilitarized area between the two nations, as well as troops in the immediate vicinity, will be effectively demobilized.

The annex stipulates that neither side's defense force in the region may exceed 2,000 troops, bearing small arms only. All effective fighting armament--armor, tanks, armored cars, air and water craft--are excluded from the sector.

ISRAELI DELEGATES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN U.N. GROUP'S MEETING IN EGYPT

LONDON, July 20. (JTA) -- Israeli delegates will not be allowed to enter Egypt to take part in the Mediterranean regional conference of the World Health Organization, which is scheduled to open in Alexandria in September, a dispatch from Cairo reported today.

As a member of the United Nations, which sponsors the W.H.O., the Jewish state will be formally invited to participate in the parley. However, Egyptian newspapers, commenting on the forthcoming meeting, emphasized today that Egypt does not recognize Israel. Prior to World War II, when diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt did not exist, Moscow delegates were not permitted to attend international meetings held in Egypt, the newspapers pointed out.

SPEAKER OF KNESSET ASSUMES ACTING PRESIDENCY OF ISRAEL; 430 IMMIGRANTS ARRIVE IN HAIFA

TEL AVIV, July 20. (JTA) -- Joseph Sprinzak, Speaker of the Knesset, today assumed the post of Acting President of Israel during the absence of President Chaim Weizmann, who is now in Switzerland.

A group of 430 Jewish immigrants, most of them from Czechoslovakia, arrived in Haifa today aboard the Rumanian vessel, S.S. Transylvania. The ship sailed from a Rumanian port.

HEARING OF ISRAELI ARMY OFFICER HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR EXECUTION OF TOBIANSKY IS POSTPONED

TEL AVIV, July 20. (JTA) -- The hearing of Lt. Col. Isar Besri, who is held responsible for ordering the summary execution of Meyer Tobiansky, which was scheduled to begin in Ramleh this week has been postponed for a week. The postponement will give the court time to consider Besri's plea that he be summoned before a military tribunal since he was an Israeli Army officer at the time he played a role in ordering the execution of Tobiansky.

The execution of Tobiansky was termed a "tragic mistake" by Premier David Ben Gurion several weeks ago when it was revealed, following a prolonged investigation, that the execution of the late Hagannah member on charges that he supplied information to the British for the use of Arab artillery units outside Jerusalem was erroneous. The executed man was entirely absolved and was recently reburied in a military cemetery with full honors.

SUPREME JEWISH RELIGIOUS COURT OPENS SESSION IN JERUSALEM; COMPOSED OF SIX JUDGES

JERUSALEM, July 20. (JTA) -- The Supreme Jewish Religious Court which deals with appeals from local rabbinical tribunals and rules on general questions concerned with Jewish religious life opened its sessions here today.

The court is composed of six judges, including the Sephardic and Ashkenazic Chief Rabbis. The other four are chosen in rotation from among the country's outstanding religious scholars.

RELIGIOUS ZIONIST PARLEY IN BRITAIN DECIDES TO SPEED TRANSFER OF COLONISTS TO ISRAEL

LONDON, July 20. (JTA) -- A decision to speed the transfer from Britain of Orthodox Zionist colonists to Israel was taken here today at the tenth annual conference of Beshad, religious Zionist youth group in Britain. More than 200 delegates attended the parley, which was held at the organization's Farm Institute in Essex.

TURKISH JEWS RETURN FROM ISRAEL TO ISTANBUL; CANNOT ADAPT THEMSELVES TO LIFE THERE

ISTANBUL, July 20. (JTA) -- A total of 1,000 Jews, most of them young men and women, emigrated from Turkey en route to Israel during the month of June, it was reported today. The figure for last month represents a considerable reduction in the number of Turkish Jews immigrating to the Jewish state since the start of large-scale migration to Israel last October. To date a total of approximately 20,000 Turkish Jews, most of whom were economically insecure, have proceeded to the new state.

Meanwhile, a number of Turkish newspapers in Istanbul have launched a drive to prove that life in Israel is "intolerable" because of the economic difficulties which the Jewish state is now passing through. The papers claim that Turkish Jews who settled in Israel are living under "miserable conditions."

Precipitating the campaign was the return to this country of a small number of Turkish Jews who recently immigrated to Israel. These Jews--the first such group to return to Turkey--were reported to have complained that they could not adapt themselves to life in Israel because of the present hardships there.

LITHUANIAN JEWS IN BRITAIN FORM COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE NAZI CRIMES IN BALTIC LANDS

LONDON, July 20. (JTA) -- Prominent Lithuanian Jews here today took the initiative in setting up the Committee to Investigate Nazi Crimes in Baltic Countries, aiming at bringing to justice German murderers of Jews and their collaborators. Headed by H.H. Michelson, the committee said it would "not rest until the present policy of the British Foreign Office is modified and the criminals brought to justice."

The Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad announced today that the problem of providing relief supplies to Jews in Berlin has been resolved following the complete lifting of the Berlin blockade. Food, clothing and other supplies have already reached the Jewish community in Berlin, the Committee said, adding that it plans to send four rabbis to Germany to officiate at High Holiday services.

AVERAGE AGE OF JEWS LIVING IN WESTERN GERMANY IS 50-60. JEWISH REFUGEE GROUP REPORTS

MUNICH, July 20. (JTA) -- The average age of Jews living in Western Germany is between 50 and 60, the Central Committee for Liberated Jews in Germany reported today. Only 6,000 German Jews lived in Germany in 1945, of a pre-war total of 600,000, the Committee said, adding that approximately 250,000 Jews from this country emigrated before the outbreak of war.

The condition of Jews living in the Soviet zone of Germany is "deplorable," the Committee said. Western Germany has become an asylum for Jews expelled from Eastern Europe, the group added.

FORMER VICHY OFFICIAL ON TRIAL IN PARIS IS ACCUSED OF INCREASING ARRESTS OF FRENCH JEWS

PARIS, July 20. (JTA) -- Witnesses testifying today at the trial of 39 former members of the "Commissariat for Jewish Affairs" established during the Vichy regime said that Paul Besson, one of the defendants who replaced Joseph Antignac following the latter's relinquishing the post of secretary-general of the Commissariat, launched a drive to increase the arrests of French Jews during his tenure of office.

ALL JEWISH SPORTS GROUPS IN POLAND WILL BE ABSORBED BY JEWISH COOPERATIVE UNION

WARSAW, July 20. (JTA) -- All Jewish sports groups in Poland will be merged as part of the program to centralize all sports organizations in this country, it was reported here. The Jewish sports clubs will be attached to "Solidarity," the union of all Jewish cooperatives in Poland.

AMERICAN LABOR LEADERS, RETURNING FROM ISRAEL, DIFFER IN THEIR REPORTS ON JEWISH STATE

NEW YORK, July 20. (JTA) -- Differences of opinion with regard to Israel developed yesterday between Louis Hollander, president of the New York State C.I.O., and Israel Feinberg, a vice-president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, both of whom were members of a delegation which visited Israel recently under the auspices of the Jewish Labor Committee.

Reporting their impressions at a luncheon of the American Trade Union Council, one of the groups supporting the Histadrut, Mr. Hollander decried the unwillingness of visitors to Israel to criticize the Jewish state in any particular, while Mr. Feinberg disagreed with most of Mr. Hollander's views.

"Some of the Zionists," Mr. Hollander said, "work the same system towards Israel that the Communists use when they see nothing wrong in Russia. In Soviet Russia, if they dare to criticize the country, they are called red-baiters. Then Zionists who don't say everything is wonderful in Israel should be called Jew-baiters."

Declaring that he is not a Jew-baiter, Mr. Hollander urged Jews "to analyze the situation" in Israel. He asserted that despite the best efforts of the United Jewish Appeal, the Jewish state will need \$900,000,000 in the next three years to build up her industry. This money, he declared, can and should come largely through Marshall Plan aid. The Government of Israel, he declared, has refused to request that aid for fear of antagonizing the Mapam and other leftist groups.

Distorted Picture on Jewish Life in U.S. Given in Israel

Mr. Hollander said that something must be done in the United States to counteract misconceptions in Israel on the status of the Jews in this country. He charged the Israeli press with giving a distorted picture of the life of the Jews in the United States, spreading the impression that there is far more widespread anti-Semitism here than actually exists. "I would not want to see 'Israel over everything' but 'Israel part of everything,'" he stated.

The C.I.O. leader also criticized the Histadrut for assuming leadership in the field of enterprise in Israel. He called for a division of the Histadrut functions, with the labor organization giving up its control over various industries. Both Mr. Hollander and Mr. Feinberg agreed that the Jews in Israel would die rather than yield the country to Stalin. They emphasized that Russia and its satellites are not popular in Israel.

In taking issue with Mr. Hollander on other aspects of his report, Mr. Feinberg said that Israel's was essentially an economy offering equality of opportunity. With such an outlook, he stressed, Histadrut was not being inconsistent in aiding workers and at the same time operating industries.

Mr. Feinberg predicted that Israel would soon receive Marshall Plan aid. He said that while he is strongly opposed to Communism, as indicated by his past record, he could understand the Israeli Government's caution about offending Russia, especially since that nation had supported Israel in the United Nations.

On the question of "Israeli chauvinism" raised by Mr. Hollander, Mr. Feinberg said that during the early years of a nation when great sacrifices are necessary in war and in peace, it is natural for young people to be enthusiastic about their country. "This is not chauvinism but the kind of patriotism necessary for the building of the new state," he pointed out.