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## EGYPT PROMISES TO RELEASE "BAT GALIM"; CREW TO BE FREED ON JAN. 1

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Dec. 23. (JTA) -- The Egyptian delegation at the United Nations today informed the UN Security Council that the crew of the Israel vessel "Bat Galim" seized by Egypt would be set free on January 1, and that the ship will also be released. No date for the release of the ship was mentioned.

The Egyptian move followed an announcement earlier in the day that the UN Security Council would meet on January 4, 1955, to consider Israel's grievances against Egypt in connection with the anti-Israel blockade of the Suez Canal with special reference to the seizure of "Bat Galim." Setting the date for the session on January 4 removed Lebanon's Dr. Charles Malik from further direct participation in the case since Lebanon's seat on the Security Council expires December 31.

The letter sent by the Egyptian delegation to the Security Council was addressed to Dr. Malik, who is still Council president for the remainder of this month. It reads as follows:

"The Egyptian authorities are in the process of making the necessary preparations to turn over on January 1, 1955, to the Israeli authorities through the intermediary of the Mixed Armistice Commission the crew of the Bat Galim. The Egyptian Government is also prepared to release the Bat Galim. The Egyptian Government, as I have already stated in the letter of December 4, is still prepared to release the cargo."

### Israel Sets Conditions for Cancellation of U. N. Council Meeting

Arab circles here expect that the meeting of the Security Council announced for January 4, will now be cancelled since Egypt pledged to release the vessel. However, the Israel delegation at the UN issued a statement declaring:

"Israel will be ready to discuss cancellation of the Security Council meeting only if and after release of the Bat Galim, its crew and cargo together, and when the Bat Galim with its crew and cargo has started northward through the Suez Canal to its original destination, which is Haifa."

Dr. Malik, who has been the Arab League's mouthpiece in the Security Council has only a week left to help his colleagues in the Arab League in their anti-Israel strategy. Lebanon's place on the Council will be taken on January 1 by Iran. Two other present Council members, Denmark and Colombia, are leaving the Council. Their places are being taken by Belgium and Peru. The president of the Council will be Leslie Knox Munro of New Zealand.

ISRAEL'S GAINS AT U. N. ASSEMBLY OUTLINED; INFLUENCE CITED

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Dec. 23. (JTA) -- Israel's impact upon the United Nations General Assembly this year was far greater than the size of the Jewish State might indicate, members of the Israel delegation to the U. N. told correspondents here today. Evaluating the results of the General Assembly which adjourned its session last week, the Israel delegates said:

1. Israel gained an important direct victory when the Assembly voted to extend until 1960 the life of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees.
2. Israel benefited directly, yet less obviously, from explosion of the myth that there was a solid bloc in the United Nations composed of states belonging to the Arab League, Asian nations, and Latin American republics.
3. Israel's prestige was enhanced, and its influence increased, by selection of the Jewish State and members of its delegation for representation on a number of important commissions and committees continuing the Assembly's work beyond its sessions.
4. Israel's influence behind the scenes was felt and, at times, solicited by many delegations here, including some representing the Big Powers.

The survey of Israel's position was given the correspondents principally by Mordecai R. Kidron, Permanent Deputy Representative to the U. N., who was assisted by Arthur C. Liveran, First Secretary of the Israel delegation, and Mrs. Zena Harman, who represented Israel during the Assembly on the very important Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee. Mr. Liveran served on the Budget and Administrative Committee during the Assembly session, and was that committee's rapporteur.

An indication of Israel's prestige in the UN was seen in the fact that this small country is a member, and has again been designated to membership on the Assembly's "peace watchdog" group, the Peace Observation Commission. Mrs. Harman, since 1951 a member of the executive committee of the United Children's Fund, was elected to the second highest post in UNICEF, the job of chairman of the all-important Program Committee which decides what UNICEF shall do, where, and at what cost. Mr. Liveran was named to a committee to consider review of procedures of the UN's administrative tribunal. Dr. Jacob Robinson was selected to membership on a commission that will attempt to find a definition of the term "aggression." Eban, with Kidron as alternate, is a member of the "peace watchdog" commission.

"All in all," Israel delegates pointed out, "Israel came out of this year's assembly with considerable advantage. The Arab bloc, on the other hand, has had its feathers ruffled, and found some of those feathers missing."

BEN GURION HOPES FOR JEWISH IMMIGRATION FROM RUSSIA AND U.S.

TEL AVIV, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- The hope that the Soviet Union will lift the curtain for immigration of Jews from Russia to the Jewish State and that Jews from the United States will also come to this country, was expressed today by former Premier David Ben Gurion at the opening session of the 68th annual convention of the Histadrut, Israel's general federation of labor.

Presiding at the opening session of the convention, Mr. Ben Gurion spoke on the historical significance of immigration before the State of Israel was established and on the role of Jewish labor in shaping the ideals and aims of the state. President Itzhak Ben Zvi, who spoke briefly, noted the implications of the immigration. Premier Moshe Sharett spoke in a similar vein. The opening of the convention in Petach Tikvah, near here, was preceded by a huge festive parade through the city's streets. At the head of the marchers were the President, Premier, Speaker of the Parliament Joseph Sprinzak, Mr. Ben Gurion and many leaders of the labor movement.

RABBI OHRENSTEIN'S PRISON SENTENCE CONFIRMED; FINE LIFTED

MUNICH, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- Suspended Chief Rabbi of Bavaria Dr. Aron Ohrenstein was again sentenced to a one-year prison term yesterday at the conclusion of his second trial here on charges of fraud in connection with certification of claims of victims of Nazism. It is expected that Dr. Ohrenstein, who was granted a second trial after he appealed his first conviction, will file a new appeal.

On his original appeal, the German Supreme Court at Karlsruhe upheld his first conviction, in 1952, but ordered a new trial because it did not agree with the sentence meted out to him. That sentence was one year in prison and a fine. Yesterday the court here changed the earlier sentence only to the extent of omitting the fine.

The court also refused to include Dr. Ohrenstein in the general amnesty in effect in Germany since early this year, asserting that the refusal was based on his "abuse of the rabbinical office." A number of other charges still hang over Dr. Ohrenstein.

Dr. Ohrenstein, a 45-year-old native of Poland, lived in Berlin before and during the early years of the Nazi regime. He has long been active in Jewish affairs. He has strenuously, and thus far successfully, fought off efforts by some communal quarters to separate him from his rabbinical post.

J. R. S. O. DISCUSSES 1955 SETTLEMENT OF ITS CLAIMS AGAINST GERMANY

NEW YORK, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- The successful negotiation in 1955 of bulk settlements of its claims to heirless Jewish assets against the German Federal Republic and the City of West Berlin remain the outstanding problems facing the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization, the board of directors was informed at its seventh annual meeting held yesterday. The successful negotiation of these settlements would bring the JRSO substantially closer to the completion of its entire restitution program.

The JRSO, which was formed in 1947 by a group of leading Jewish organizations in the U.S., Great Britain, France and Germany to press its claims against Germany to Jewish assets, has successfully settled to date the overwhelming bulk of these claims within the Laender of the U.S. Zone of Germany.

The annual meeting elected Dr. Israel Goldstein president for 1954-55. Monroe Goldwater was chosen chairman of the executive committee. Other officers elected included: vice-presidents: Jacob Blaustein, Randolph Bohrer, Frederick Borchardt, Nahum Goldmann, Dr. Isaac Lewin and Edward M. M. Warburg; co-treasurers: Dr. Herman Gray and Shad Polier; and secretary, Saul Kagan. The JRSO also ratified an agreement with the Council for the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Jews from Germany which was recently negotiated in Paris.

AUSTRALIA REPORTED FAVORING JEWISH REFUGEES AS IMMIGRANTS

NEW YORK, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- Morris Ashkanasy, president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, here for a brief visit, today told a meeting of officers of United HIAS Service, the Jewish international migration agency, that the Australian Government shows no discrimination against immigrants of the Jewish faith.

Mr. Ashkanasy, a leading attorney of Melbourne, explained to the meeting, held in the Hotel Commodore, that the question, "Are you Jewish?" which appeared on applications for Australian immigration permits for years following the start of World War II, until recently, was not discriminatory in intent. He said that the government's explanation for this pointed question was that it was intended to give immigration priorities to victims of Hitlerism and Old World oppression. "Our surveys proved that this was actually the case and that many of the some 30,000 Jews who found homes in Australia since the beginning of World War II received priorities if they answered the question affirmatively," he said.

J. D. C. OUTLINES PLANS FOR AID TO JEWS IN EUROPE IN 1955

NEW YORK, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- Plans for aid to Jews in France, Germany, Austria and other European countries during 1955 were made public here today by the Joint Distribution Committee in a report which outlines the situation of the Jews in Europe, and the needs of the Jews there. The JDC also operates in Israel and North Africa.

The JDC's 1955 budget for France - \$1,667,000 - reflects the fact that nearly two-thirds of the Jewish population of continental Western Europe, or nearly 300,000, currently live in France. "JDC provides some 60 percent of the budget of the Fonds Social Juif Unifié, the French fund-raising campaign whose member agencies carry on a wide welfare program on behalf of French Jewry," the report states. "Some 14,000 men, women and children in France will benefit from JDC's assistance during the coming year."

Regarding Germany, the JDC states: "Some 25 percent of the 22,000 Jews at present in Germany receive assistance from JDC welfare, medical, legal, emigration or other services on a more or less continuous basis. These will continue to be the responsibility of the JDC in 1955." The report points out that JDC's program in Camp Foehrenwald presents serious problems. Of the more than 1,600 persons in Camp Foehrenwald, about 30 percent have had some kind of TB history or other hospital treatment.

A large percentage of the Foehrenwald residents has been presented and rejected for emigration to the United States or Canada. The JDC has set up a schedule of grants for families with emphasis on those emigrating for South America, where the local Jewish communities are incapable financially of assuming their integration. For those unable to emigrate, and who must remain in Germany, the local authorities have agreed to provide housing in various cities in Western Germany. While the German Government has not yet begun to implement this program, it is expected that the Foehrenwald families will be installed in the communities in 1955 and 1956.

200 Families to Leave Foehrenwald in 1955

"It is expected that approximately 200 families can be aided to leave Foehrenwald in 1955. In the meantime, JDC must continue with its program of welfare, medical, religious and cultural services in the camp," the report states. "In other German communities, the JDC must continue aid to the aged where local authorities and restitution grants are insufficient, as well as aid to escapees from Eastern Germany."

In Austria, the lack of emigration opportunities and the fact that a large part of Austria's 10,400 Jews is in the older age brackets will make it necessary for the JDC to continue its aid here for some time to come. In the Vienna area, where the Kultusgemeinde currently provides cash aid to 660, some 50 percent of this group is over the age of 60 and an additional 25 percent is classified as permanently unemployable.

The JDC is also aiding a number of refugees in the Vienna area and some 350 in two DP camps - Asten and Glasenbach - in the U.S. Zone, and in the Rothschild Hospital. The JDC must also continue to operate a canteen, now serving 180 persons, or about 7,000 meals monthly, and to give medical and dental services to those clients who do not have access to public facilities.

"Intensified efforts must be made to find additional emigration opportunities from Austria. Permanent arrangements in institutions outside of Austria are being sought for those persons requiring life-time care," the JDC reports.

JEWS STATE THEATRE IN RUMANIA CELEBRATES FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

PARIS, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- The Jewish State Theatre at Jassy, Rumania, has just celebrated its fifth anniversary by presenting its 1,000th performance, the Rumanian Legation here announced today. The announcement declared that during the five years the troupe presented 26 different Yiddish plays, five of which were from the classical Yiddish repertoire.

NEW YORK'S CHANUKAH FESTIVAL BRINGS \$2,500,000 IN ISRAEL BONDS

NEW YORK, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- The Jewish community of New York commemorated Chanukah, the Feast of Lights, tonight at a colorful city-wide festival that provided \$2,500,000 in Israel Bond proceeds for the economic development of Israel.

More than 20,000 Israel Bond purchasers filled Madison Square Garden to participate in the festival, which paid tribute both to the historic victory over oppression won by Judah Maccabee and the people of Israel 2,119 years ago, and to Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, on the 50th anniversary of his death.

The high point of the celebration came when Levi Eshkol, Minister of Finance of the Israel Government, who was guest of honor, officially presented a Chanukah Torch of Freedom to the people of New York as an expression of thanks for the support they have given to Israel's efforts to win economic independence with the aid of the State of Israel Bond drive. The Torch was accepted by Ira Guilden, chairman of the New York campaign for the Israel Bonds.

Declaring that the Chanukah festival marked the climax of the 1954 campaign for Israel Bonds in New York, Mr. Guilden, who is chairman of the Board of the Trade Bank and Trust Company and of the Title Guarantee and Trust Company, announced that the festival also initiated the beginning of "an even greater and more vigorous effort to sell Israel Bonds."

Stressing the importance to Israel of the \$2,500,000 in bonds sold for the festival, Mr. Eshkol declared that as Minister of Finance he was "keenly aware of the unique role which the Israel Bond campaign has played in strengthening Israel's economic foundations."

U.S. GENERALS ATTEND CHANUKAH PARTY AT ISRAEL EMBASSY

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- Military attaches of many nations last night attended a Chanukah party given at the Israel Embassy by Col. K. Salmon, chief Israel military attache.

The military department of the Embassy tendered the reception because Chanukah represents the victory of Israel armed forces. A number of American generals and other high ranking officials attended in addition to military attaches from virtually all countries.

J.N.F. ACHIEVEMENTS LAUDED BY MIZRACHI LEADER AT CHANUKAH AFFAIR

NEW YORK, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- Of all the "miracles which led to the establishment and the consolidation of the State of Israel," the miracle "wrought by the Jewish National Fund in preparing the land for more than 600 Jewish colonies in the Galilee, the Jerusalem Corridor and the Negev is, perhaps, the greatest," Rabbi A. L. Gellman, world president of the Mizrahi Organization, declared here at a Chanukah dinner of the JNF. Rabbi Gellman added that without the JNF "the miracle of the resurrection of the State of Israel would have been impossible."

Mendel N. Fisher, JNF executive director, called upon the State Department "to stop the shipment of American arms to the Arabs, thus permitting Israel to continue its land reclamation and land development policy in an atmosphere of as much peace as is possible under the present circumstances, which certainly should not be aggravated by an American encouragement of the Arabs to wage war on the Jewish State." More than 1,000 persons attended the dinner, which had been arranged by the JNF religious department together with all religious Zionist groups in this country.

ESKHOL HONORED BY LABOR GROUP; RETURNS TO ISRAEL TODAY

NEW YORK, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- Levi Eskhol, Israel's Minister of Finance, was the guest of honor at a farewell luncheon arranged by the National Committee for Labor Israel today. Mr. Eskhol is leaving the country tomorrow after a series of speaking engagements in the United States.

The luncheon was held at Histadrut House, with representatives of trade unions, Labor Zionist groups and other organizations affiliated with the NCLI attending. Berl Locker, chairman of the executive of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, was among the guests at the luncheon and he addressed the group. Isaac Hamlin, national secretary of the Histadrut Campaign, acted as chairman.

The Israel Minister of Finance told the gathering that he leaves the United States with a feeling that the Jews of this country are determined to give wholehearted assistance to Israel and to see the Jewish State progress in its economic development. He stressed the importance of the work done by the National Committee for Labor Israel in this country.

TWO GROUPS IN PITTSBURGH TO MERGE INTO UNITED JEWISH FEDERATION

PITTSBURGH, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- The boards of the United Jewish Fund and Federation of Jewish Philanthropies have voted to merge these two organizations into the United Jewish Federation. The new organization will come into being following the approval of the local agencies affiliated with the Fund and Federation and of the general membership of these two organizations.

The decision to merge the Fund and Federation was the result of years of study and discussion. The joint committee on merger, made up of representatives of both boards, reported that the current programs of the Federation and the UJF "represent two sides of the same coin - they are largely inter-dependent and affect one another in almost every phase of their operations."

The report emphasized that the merger "will enhance and strengthen the primacy and influence of the new UJF, and will contribute to a greater understanding and appreciation of all forms of need wherever they may exist." The committee said that "merger provides the best chance for raising money because it will reverse the present trend of less givers and dollars."

MEMORIAL SERVICES HELD FOR JEWISH HOSTAGES SHOT BY NAZIS

PARIS, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- A memorial service was held here yesterday for 48 Jewish hostages shot at Mont Valerien by the Nazis in 1941. Representatives of all Jewish organizations and institutions filled the synagogue where the services were held. Chief Rabbi Jacob Kaplan was one of the speakers. Wreaths were later laid on the site of the executions at Mont Valerien and then services were concluded at Pere Lachaise Cemetery where the hostages were buried.

PRESIDENT OF GENERAL ZIONISTS IN COLOMBIA DIES IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK, Dec. 23. (JTA) -- Joseph Kushelevitch, president of the General Zionist Party of Colombia, died here yesterday after an operation. The 53-year-old resident of Bogota was an industrialist with major investments in Israel, which he visited a number of times, most recently last Summer.