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AUSTRIA TO SET UP \$2,200,000 FUND FOR NAZI VICTIMS LIVING ABROAD

VIENNA, July 14. (JTA) -- The relief fund for victims of persecution in Austria who are now living abroad will come to an estimated \$2,200,000 according to the Neue Tageszeitung, a newspaper which usually reflects the views of Austrian Chancellor Julius Raab.

The newspaper declared today that Parliament, to which plans for such a fund will be submitted in the Fall, will accept it. It also said that payments by the fund to individual victims will be made upon application by the victims and will be graduated on the basis of need. Austrian persecutees abroad who have been receiving monthly pensions will receive lumpsum payments to prevent large parts of the grants being absorbed by taxes. The Neue Tageszeitung also reported that as much would be spent for persecutees who still reside in Austria as for those living abroad.

DR. KASTNER DEFENDS HIS ROLE IN HUNGARY UNDER NAZI REGIME

TEL AVIV, July 14. (JTA) -- Dr. Israel Kastner, former head of the Hungarian Jewish Rescue Committee who has been accused of collaborating with the Nazis during the war--and whose case precipitated the dropping of the General Zionists from the Israel Cabinet--made a lengthy report today on his role in Hungary during the Nazi occupation. He said that he hopes to clear his name when he appears in court on July 31 to testify on a complaint against him.

"It was not I who collaborated with the Germans, but some Germans, particularly the Nazi leader Col. Kurt Becher who collaborated with me," he stated. He insisted that not only had he and his colleagues "done nothing against Jewish interests, but (we) wrote an heroic chapter of devotion and sacrifice which deserves great appreciation."

Noting that some newspapers--chiefly the organs of the Mapam and Communist Parties--had demanded he be tried as a Nazi collaborator, he said that he had planned to write a book on the Jewish tragedy in Hungary but had postponed it for ten years to enable him to have a better perspective of events and to allow other people time to develop a similar perspective. The recent Gruenwald trial--at which he was a witness, not a direct party, although his role in Hungary was the essence of the case--had proved that the time was not yet ripe for such a book, he said.

He declared he was raising only the "simple question": "Could not the Germans exterminate all the Jews they could grab?" The Jews who remained alive at the end of the war in such camps as Belsen, Terezin and others, he said, had survived because Col. Becher, Himmler's deputy, was a "realist" who foresaw Hitler's collapse and therefore intervened because he wanted an alibi. Nevertheless, Dr. Kastner credited Col. Becher with having saved many thousands of Jews.

Dr. Kastner said that he had had "great ambitions to save the Jews," therefore he had joined the rescue underground as early as 1941. This underground, he noted, had helped Jews in all parts of Europe to find shelter somewhere. Many thousands of Polish, Slovakian and Czech Jews had been saved by this movement, he added. It was "natural" that when the Germans occupied Hungary that he--a member of the Mapai Party--should be added to the rescue committee which represented most of the Zionist parties.

This committee, Dr. Kastner said, decided to negotiate with the Germans on the basis of trading Jewish lives for money. This approach permitted the committee to gain time for its other activities, such as forging documents and providing funds for refugees from other countries.

The situation under the Nazis in Hungary differed from that in Poland or Russia, Dr. Kastner insisted. The Hungarians in the rural areas were hostile to Jews and waited for the moment when they could loot the Jews' property. In addition, there was no underground with which contact could be maintained.

According to Dr. Kastner the rescue committee's activities--specifically the negotiations with Becher and Himmler--were responsible for the saving of 15,000 Jews through their transfer to Vienna, the saving of 80,000 of Budapest's 170,000 Jews through forged documents and shelter in friendly homes, the saving of 1,600 more on a train heading for the Belsen camp and the saving of many thousands in various camps.

1,060,689 VOTERS REGISTER IN ISRAEL FOR FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS

TEL AVIV, July 14. (JTA) -- A total of 1,060,689 voters registered as of today for the forthcoming national elections, which will take place on July 26, it was announced this afternoon. This constitutes 62 percent of the entire population. Among those registered are 973,804 Jews and 86,885 Arabs. There will be over 2,000 polling stations set up in 901 localities.

AMERICAN MILITARY AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL PREDICTED IN WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, July 14. (JTA) -- Defense Secretary Wilson, in an unpublished memorandum to Congressional leaders, disclosed that plans are in motion in Washington to bring Israel and Egypt directly into the American military aid program, it is reported here today by Robert S. Allen, noted columnist, in his nationally syndicated column.

These plans, Mr. Allen says, are being pressed regardless of the forthcoming Big Four "summit" conference which opens in Geneva next Monday. They provide for the extension of American military aid to Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and Libya, he asserts. These Middle East countries, he states, will sign bi-lateral military treaties with the United States and thereupon will be supplied with arms and other military assistance of various kinds, including training missions.

"Congress has also been advised that discussions are underway on military treaties with Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and Libya," Mr. Allen writes. "It has been indicated that one or more of these agreements will be signed in the fall, and the others by next year. As part of this expanded strategic program in the Middle East, the following highly important economic aid is also contemplated there under the foreign aid budget: Developmental Aid--\$73,000,000, for projects of various kinds in the Arab States and Israel; Refugee Aid--\$65,000,000 for resettling the thousands of Arab refugees in the Gaza Strip section; Point Four Aid--\$4,000,000 for Egypt; \$2,000,000 for Israel; \$2,000,000 for Lebanon; \$2,000,000 for Libya."

EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SAYS ANTI-ISRAEL BLOCKADE WILL CONTINUE

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., July 14. (JTA) -- Egyptian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Fawzi said today that if Israel tries to "drive" its shipping through the Suez Canal, Egypt will counter force with force.

Speaking at a United Nations press conference, the Egyptian Minister said that the position of Egypt has not changed--namely, that Egypt has the right to oppose any ship passing through the Suez Canal which is trading with Israel. He said his government would not recognize Israel's existence.

SLIGHT PROGRESS REPORTED ON ISRAEL-EGYPTIAN TALKS AT GAZA

JERUSALEM, July 14. (JTA) -- Israel and Egyptian delegates met again today to continue their discussion of methods of easing the tension along the Gaza frontier, making what Israel and United Nations communiques both called "some progress." After the meeting, UN truce chief Maj. Gen. E. L. M. Burns, chairman of the meetings, said that the day's talks were carried on in a "friendly atmosphere" and that tomorrow's session is expected to be a decisive one.

An Israel Foreign Ministry spokesman said that the title of a draft of a local commanders' agreement and its preamble had been agreed upon. The document is entitled: "An Arrangement for the Maintenance of Security Along the Demarcation Line." According to the Israeli, the Egyptian delegate had asked more time to reconsider his position on direct telephonic communication between the local commanders. Then the meeting proceeded to a discussion of joint patrols and the erection of a physical barrier along the border. These points will be discussed further tomorrow.

Despite the Israel-Egyptian talks, Egyptian soldiers last night penetrated into Israel territory opposite the Gaza strip. They were forced to retreat when an Israel patrol opened fire. There were no Israel casualties.

HIGH ISRAEL OFFICIAL NEGOTIATES FOR PURCHASE OF OIL FROM MEXICO

MEXICO CITY, July 14. (JTA) -- Pinchas Saphir, director of the Israel Treasury, has been negotiating with the Mexican Government for the sale of refined oil to Israel, he revealed here today prior to leaving for the United States.

Mr. Saphir was accompanied here by two Israel oil experts, who advised him during the negotiations. Earlier, he had inaugurated the 1955 Israel bond sales campaign in Mexico.

PROF. RAPPARD RETIRES IN GENEVA; DEFENDED JEWISH RIGHTS IN PALESTINE

GENEVA, July 14. (JTA) -- Prof. William E. Rappard, who as a member of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations strongly defended Jewish rights in Palestine under the British Mandate, retired today as head of the Graduate Institute of International Studies after holding this post for the past 25 years.

PUBLIC POLL FAVORING LIBERAL IMMIGRATION PRESENTED TO CONGRESS

WASHINGTON, July 14. (JTA) -- A public opinion poll which found that the United States public favors a liberal immigration law was called to the attention of Congress today by Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey. He presented the results of a Gallup Poll showing that some 14 million adults who were familiar with the McCarran-Walter Act believed that the immigration law should be made more liberal.

Some of the results of the poll show that a majority--53 percent--when asked the question "from what you know, do you think there should or should not be changes made in the McCarran-Walter Act?" responded that changes should be made. Only 15 percent said "no." On the question "do you think this Act should be made more strict or more liberal?" Sixty-eight percent favored more liberal provisions and 26 percent more strict provisions.

Another result of the poll reveals that in all groups there is a definite majority approving the idea of European families coming into their neighborhood to take up residence. The degree to which different groups hold this belief is as follows:

1. People in the Far West are more inclined to think this a good idea than Easterners, followed by Mid-Westerners and Southerners, in that order.
2. By size of city, the idea finds greatest favor among persons in medium-size cities, than small towns, followed by big-city dwellers, and then those living in rural areas.
3. College-trained persons are more in favor than those persons with high school and grade school education.
4. Professional and business people look more favorably on the idea than other occupation groups. The farmers hold the smallest majority in favor of Europeans coming into their neighborhood.

AMERICAN-JEWISH COMMITTEE CLARIFIES STAND ON RELIGION IN EDUCATION

NEW YORK, July 14. (JTA) -- A statement clarifying the attitude of the American Jewish Committee on various aspects concerning religion in education was issued by the organization. The statement is doubtful about proposals to teach a "common core" of religion or basic theological principles. It also rejects the proposal to invite clergymen into the classroom to give religious instruction to children of their respective faiths.

The American Jewish Committee statement of views also makes clear the stand of the organization on the following issues concerning religion in education questions:

Released time: Opposed because "it threatens the independent character of the school" by providing a governmental constraint in support of religion; it is a "mechanism for divisiveness" that gives "over-zealous teachers" an opportunity to exercise "subtle sectarian pressures."

Bible reading and prayer in the schools: In principle, these are religious acts and therefore "inappropriate for classroom or assembly." In those communities, however, where classroom Bible reading has become traditional, efforts to end the practice may do more harm than good. But in no case should passages other than those "having universal acceptance" be read.

Use of school premises for religious purposes: School premises should be as available, after school hours, to religious groups as they are to other organizations. But using school facilities to conduct a sectarian religious affiliation census is probably unconstitutional.

Religious Holiday Observances: "This thorny patch in the school-church brambles cannot be resolved by a doctrinaire application of the separation principle," the statement cautions. These celebrations are "embedded in tradition." Experience proves that a dispassionate public discussion of local practices is difficult to attain. Making a public issue of such observances, therefore, "can lead to no beneficial results in the foreseeable future." However, informal discussions with teachers may make it possible to plan events acceptable to all.

On joint holiday observances such as Christmas-Hanukah celebrations, the statement notes: Some feel that such events foster intergroup understanding; others believe that they compound the violation of the separation principle. The statement does not recommend them but suggests that schools which do use them evaluate their effect on pupils.

Federal aid to the states: Favored for "tax-supported, publicly controlled elementary and secondary schools" only. Free lunches, medical and dental services, however, should be available to all children at public expense; while "fringe benefits" such as textbooks and bus transportation for non-public school children "should be considered on their merits in separate legislation."

REFORM TEMPLES TRAIN YOUTH FOR LEADERSHIP AT CAMP INSTITUTES

NEW YORK, July 14. (JTA) -- Hundreds of youth leaders from the nation's Reform temples are intensifying their attachment to Judaism through attendance at camp institutes conducted by the National Federation of Temple Youth, it was reported here today by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Theme of this year's youth encampment is "We Speak for Judaism," and the textbook by the young people is the prayerbook, the announcement said.

ESTABLISHMENT OF WORLD CONFEDERATION OF ORTHODOX RABBIS URGED

FALLSBURG, N. Y., July 14. (JTA) -- The 19th annual convention of the Rabbinical Council of America, an Orthodox group, concluded here last night with the adoption of a resolution urging the establishment of a world confederation of Orthodox rabbis embracing spiritual leaders in every country and with headquarters in Jerusalem. The resolution suggested that a world conference of Orthodox rabbis be convoked within the coming year in Israel to establish the federation.

The convention also adopted a resolution on Israel, urging President Eisenhower "to use his good and great office to expedite the completion of a defense pact between this government and Israel in that vital and tense area of the Middle East where the Jewish State is setting a vivid and concrete example of democracy in a region from which it has long been absent."

The delegates called for "full fledged support of the United Jewish Appeal and the Israel bond drive as important instrumentalities for our support of Israel during these crucial times." A special resolution passed by the convention expressed appreciation to the U. S. Government for taking a strong stand at the United Nations against calendar reform which "would endanger the observances of the Jewish Sabbath day." Rabbi David Hollander was re-elected president of the Rabbinical Council for a second term.

JEWISH GROUP IN EDMONTON OPPOSES RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOLS

MONTREAL, July 14. (JTA) -- The Joint Public Relations Committee of Edmonton, Alberta, and the local community council has decided to present the committee's viewpoint against offering religious instruction in the city's public schools, it was announced here by the Canadian Jewish Congress. The committee, on a national scale, represents the CJC and the B'nai B'rith.

A request for the introduction of religious instruction in the schools, permitted by Ontario legislation at the discretion of individual school boards, was made by a delegation of the Edmonton and District Council of Churches. The delegation, which said that 90 percent of all Protestant churches in the city favor such instruction, admitted under questioning by school board members that the Jewish congregations of the city are among the 10 percent which do not favor such instruction.

BOSTON CHURCHES BACK ADOPTION OF CATHOLIC CHILD BY JEWISH FAMILY

BOSTON, July 14. (JTA) -- New criticism of the Massachusetts state law banning interfaith adoptions were voiced here today as Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Ellis continued their legal fight to retain custody of their four-year-old foster daughter, Hildy McCoy, whose natural mother is a Catholic.

Rev. Myron W. Powell, secretary to the Massachusetts Congregational Christian Conference, expressed his belief that the law under which a Massachusetts court has ordered the Ellises to surrender the child "is not in keeping with American principles of religious freedom and that it ought to be amended." Granting that religion should be recognized as a major factor in the original placement of a child, he said that the Massachusetts law appears to violate the principle of separation of church and state.

Dr. Kenneth L. Patton, Minister of the Charles Street Universalist Church, called for abolition of the state law, charging that the idea on which it is based--that a child is born into the religion of its parents--is "abhorrent." Rev. Charles N. Forsberg, field secretary to the Massachusetts Baptist State Convention, hit the law as "contrary to the purpose of adoption" by subordinating the concern of a suitable home for the child to the question of religious preference.

YOUTH ORGANIZATION LEAVES GENERAL ZIONIST PARTY IN MEXICO

MEXICO CITY, July 14. (JTA) -- A split within the General Zionist Organization of Mexico deepened here with the announcement that another section of the centrist movement was joining the newly-organized Progressive Party.

The announcement, made in the form of a statement published in the Yiddish press, was by the General Zionist youth group Hanoar Hazoni, which walked out en masse to join the new group. Earlier, also in press statements, more than 100 members of the General Zionist Organization had announced their withdrawal and affiliation with the Progressive movement.

CEREMONY MARKS NAMING OF STREET IN BRAZIL AFTER DR. THEODOR HERZL

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 14. (JTA) -- A street in this city was named for Theodor Herzl, founder of modern Zionism, at a ceremony attended by leaders of the city administration, of the Jewish community and hundreds of residents, Jewish and non-Jewish, of the city.

Addressing the gathering, Levi Neves, municipal councillor, who was president of the city council last year when a bill was passed to name a street for Dr. Herzl, praised the vision of the Zionist leader and hailed the contributions of Brazil's Jews to the country's cultural and economic life. Among the others who spoke were Dr. Aron Steinbruch, a deputy.