



Jewish Telegraphic Agency DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

660 FIRST AVENUE

NEW YORK 16, N.Y.

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Vol. XXIII No. 73 - 38th year

Monday, April 16, 1956

ISRAEL CELEBRATES INDEPENDENCE DAY TODAY; UNDETERRED BY WAR SHADOWS

JERUSALEM, April 15. (JTA) -- Undeterred by the shadows of a possible war hovering over Israel, people throughout the country prepared today to celebrate tomorrow its eighth Independence Day with military and other parades.

The signal for the celebrations was given tonight by Premier David Ben Gurion in a radio broadcast in which he emphasized that "during the ninth year of Israel's renewed independence we may have to face a supreme test which will be grave and difficult." He emphasized that there was no "helplessness or fear" when the people of Israel faced their enemies before and there will be none if they have to face them again.

Israel will deliver two blows for everyone from the enemy, Mr. Ben Gurion assured the Israelis in his broadcast. At the same time, he stressed that "although our military defense has become our chief concern, we shall not interrupt even for one moment our creative work." He reiterated Israel's loyalty to its proclaimed principles of in-gathering the exiles, developing the country for the benefit of its inhabitants, and building the state on principles of liberty, justice and peace.

The largest military parade marking Independence Day will be held tomorrow in Haifa where the streets were beflagged today and the windows of many shops and homes were decorated. About 500,000 Israelis are expected to flock into the city to witness the parade and special stands have been erected for visitors, including hundreds of tourists from abroad.

President Itzhak Ben Zvi, in an Independence Day message to the people of Israel and the Jews of the world, said that Israel's enemies have recently received assistance from Israel's foes and from nations that declare themselves Israel's friends. He charged that the rights of small nations proclaimed solemnly and publicly when the United Nations was established have been "shamefully disavowed," that obligations to Israel have not been observed. But, he added, "we are confident this design will surely fail and that justice will triumph."

Today Israel honored the memory of its war dead who fell in fighting for the country's independence. Flags on all government buildings and national institutions were flown at half-mast, military and civilian memorial services were held in cemeteries where Israel's war dead are buried and black-clad relatives of the young men and women who died in the War of Liberation visited cemeteries.

Synagogues throughout the nation lit candles tonight and offered special prayers, in addition to the chanting of the traditional memorial prayer "El Molei Rachamim," in connection with the observance of Memorial Day, which precedes the celebration of Israel's Independence Day. Special prayers were also offered for the welfare of the state, "its statesmen, leaders and defenders."

ISRAEL REPORTED SEEKING 40 JETS IN BRITAIN; GETS 12 IN FRANCE

LONDON, April 15. (JTA) -- British official sources declined comment today on reports that Britain is considering a request from Israel for 40 jet fighter planes and 30 Centurion tanks. The Ministry of Supply referred questions to the Ministry of Defense. A spokesman said such details could be divulged only by the country to which supplies are shipped.

Meanwhile, it was reported here today from Paris that 12 jet planes have been delivered by France to Israel. (In Washington it was reported that the Israel Embassy in Ottawa was negotiating with the Canadians for the purchase of 20 F-86 Sabre jet planes.)

An appeal for immediate action by the Western Powers to supply Israel with defensive arms as a deterrent to Egyptian Premier Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser launching war against the Jewish State was voiced here tonight by Israel Ambassador Eliahu Elath. Addressing an Israel Independence Day dinner under the auspices of the Jewish National Fund, Ambassador Elath stressed that while Israel will firmly resist any suggestion of unilateral concessions to the Arabs, it is always ready to meet with the Arabs for a full and free discussion of outstanding differences and the working out of a peace.

WAR POSSIBILITY STRESSED BY BEN GURION IN MESSAGE TO AMERICAN JEWRY

NEW YORK, April 15. (JTA) -- American Jewry was told today by Israel Premier David Ben Gurion that it is Israel's "fervent hope" that peace may be secured for the Jewish State. He added, however, that "if war should come, we shall acquit the name of the Jewish people with courage and honor."

The Israel Prime Minister made this statement in a Independence Day message cabled from Jerusalem to William Rosenwald, general chairman of the United Jewish Appeal and Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman, UJA executive vice-chairman. The message will be read tomorrow, on Israel's Independence Day, at more than 500 UJA meetings in cities from coast to coast at which the eighth anniversary of Israel's independence will be celebrated.

Mr. Ben Gurion, who is also Israel's Minister of Defense, declared in his message: "Although we are living under the shadow of aggressive war by an enemy armed by the Communists, we are working hard at our constructive tasks building as of old with one hand, while with the other we maintain the defense of our freedom, sovereignty and democracy. Even in this hour of peril we must carry on our mission of rescue, and save those Jews in danger in other lands."

In response, Mr. Rosenwald, Rabbi Friedman and UJA president Edward M. M. Warburg cabled Mr. Ben Gurion and Israel President Itzhak Ben Zvi assuring them of American Jewry's fullest support. Asserting that "the Nazism of yesterday has been replaced by the Nasserism of today," the UJA leaders declared: "We are filled with a sense of horror that there are those who would seek to destroy the monumental achievements of Israel's people in the saving and rebuilding of lives and in the creation of free institutions." They pledged that "the United Jewish Appeal will continue with the greatest vigor and effort" its two-fold 1956 campaign, and would call upon American Jews "to redouble" their support.

Israel's Independence Day Celebrated in New York; Mayor Participates

Israel's eighth anniversary of its independence was celebrated at an outdoor festival in New York's Central Park today which drew more than 8,000 people despite rainy weather. Chief speakers at the festival, sponsored by the American Zionist Council, included Israel's Ambassador Abba Eban, New York's Mayor Robert F. Wagner who characterized as "not only imprudent but unethical" the denial of defensive arms to Israel when the Arab states are being supplied with jet planes, tanks, big guns and other weapons.

Rabbi Irving Miller, chairman of the American Zionist Council, saluted Israel as a "democratic commonwealth" and as a "vital outpost of democracy and freedom in the Middle East" as well as a bulwark of American security. Underlining that war in the Middle East cannot be isolated, Rabbi Miller asserted that in America's own interests the U. S. Government must immediately supply Israel with defensive weapons to match those obtained by Egypt from the Soviet bloc.

Organized American labor joined in the celebration through a message sent the festival by George Meany, AFL-CIO president, who called on President Eisenhower to ask Congress for advance authority to carry out the U. S. pledges under the Tripartite Declaration of 1950. Mr. Meany further recommended that the U. S. furnish Israel with defensive arms, noting that an arms race "is already on and Israel may soon be out of the running. Beyond this," said the labor leader, "the free world should take the lead in promoting a permanently peaceful agreement between the Arab nations and Israel, supplemented by a program of technical, economic and financial assistance which would permit all nations in that area to work for a brighter future for their people in peace."

Many of the major American Jewish organizations issued Israel Independence Day messages appealing for aid to Israel. In a special anniversary message, the State of Israel Bond Organization said "the Middle East crisis poses a most serious menace to Israel's economy, as well as to her security" and the "results of eight years of heroic self-sacrifice and historic effort are at stake." It called on American Jews to "support with our dollars the projects Israel's people have undertaken with their hearts and hands."

EDEN CONFERS WITH BRITISH MILITARY LEADERS ON ARAB-ISRAEL SITUATION

LONDON, April 15. (JTA) -- Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden conferred this week-end with the chiefs of the British armed forces on the Arab-Israel situation, it was learned here today, while more than 1,000 delegates attending the annual conference of the Zionist Federation of Great Britain adopted a resolution calling upon the British Government and the other signatories to the Tripartite Declaration "to take immediate steps" to restore the military balance between Israel and the Arab countries by supplying Israel arms for self-defense.

Sir Winston Churchill told the British people this week-end that it would be a matter of both prudence and honor to see to it that Israel should "not be the losers" if they exercise restraint in the tense situation in the Middle East. He spoke at the Primrose League, leading Conservative organization. Sir Winston said:

"If Israel is to be dissuaded from using its life force in its race to ward off the Egyptians until the Egyptians have learned to use the Russian weapons with which they have been supplied, and the Egyptians then attack, it will become not only a matter of prudence but a measure of honor to assure that they are not the losers for waiting."

JEWISH CONGRESS HITS U.S. MIDDLE EAST POLICY; APPEALS FOR SOVIET JEWS

NEW YORK, April 15. (JTA) -- The American Jewish Congress closed its four-day biennial convention here today with the adoption of a resolution severely criticizing United States policy in the Middle East and with an appeal to the Soviet Government to restore Jewish cultural and religious life in the USSR and to permit "freedom of movement" to Jews there. Dr. Israel Goldstein was re-elected president of the organization.

In criticizing American policy in the Middle East, the AJC resolution says that while the U.S. Government professes a policy of "friendly impartiality" toward the Arab nations and Israel, "its words are negated by its actions. It charges the U.S. with denying defensive arms to Israel and with being quick to join in the censure of Israel for its retaliatory raid against Syria, but has made no effort to have any of the Arab states censured for their organized raids across the border of Israel and the 'wanton maiming and murder' of Israeli men, women and children.

"Egypt is permitted to continue its illegal blocking of the Suez Canal which she has maintained deliberately and openly for years in flagrant violation of two United Nations orders to desist," the resolution pointed out, adding that the present U.S. policy "is clearly one of appeasement of the ruling groups in the Arab states whose continuance in power depends on the suppression of democratic processes. This is a policy that has been tried many times, most notably in the notorious debacle at Munich," the convention declared.

The convention urged that the "United States immediately commence to sell and license the sale of arms for defense to Israel and to render such other assistance as may be needed for the resistance of aggression." Delegates called upon the United States "immediately to fulfill all the obligations assumed under the Tripartite Agreement of 1950, without delay or evasion," and to "make plain that it will impose economic and moral sanctions unless the Arab states immediately cease all acts of aggression against Israel."

U.S. Urged to Act on Arab Discrimination Against American Jews

Citing the issuance on Saturday of the American Jewish Congress "White Paper" documenting evidence of Arab discrimination against American Jews, the convention called upon the President and the Secretary of State to take immediate counter-measures. It was emphasized that the discrimination takes the following forms: 1. Denial of entry or transit visas to Jewish citizens of the United States; 2. Barring Jewish personnel for serving in American diplomatic missions and military installations on Arab soil; 3. A boycott of American businesses owned or operated by or employing Jews; and 4. The dissemination by Arab propaganda centers in the United States of anti-Semitic literature.

"Acquiescence by agencies of the United States Government in these discriminatory practices has resulted in depriving American citizens of the Jewish faith of their constitutional rights," the AJC convention charged. "The Jews who served our country in the wars of these United States and the men and women who are serving in the Armed Forces today must particularly resent the insult necessarily resulting from the action of the State Department and the Armed Forces in accepting the anti-Semitic demand of the Arab States that no Jewish personnel serve there. We believe that our government, in its international relations, has the moral and legal obligation to insist, as it has done in numerous instances in the past, that equal treatment be accorded to all of its citizens, regardless of race, religion or national ancestry.

The convention recommended that no trade agreement be concluded unless all American citizens are permitted to participate in the trade regardless of religious affiliation; that no contract be negotiated which allows American Jews to be excluded from employment; American subsidies for trade in Arab countries should be discontinued unless American Jews are allowed to participate; no governmental agency should be permitted to consider religious affiliation in selecting personnel for assignment to Arab countries; no discriminatory hiring practices should be condoned because of the possible exclusion of Jews from Arab lands.

Also, that the U.S. should prohibit immigration from any Arab state which bars entry to any American citizen because of his religion; any diplomat to this country indulging in anti-Jewish activity should be expelled; any diplomat who refuses to process documents because they are offered by Jews should be expelled; foreign students engaging in anti-Jewish activities should lose their student visas, and finally, the U.S. delegation at the United Nations should seek an official inquiry into violations by a member state of the pledge to respect human rights.

The convention concluded tonight with a dinner honoring the eighth anniversary of the State of Israel and the forthcoming 60th birthday of Dr. Israel Goldstein. Addressing the 1,000 delegates last night, Simon Sobeloff, Solicitor General of the United States, said that "the essence of American freedom is to be free to be different." Mr. Sobeloff received the first Louis D. Brandeis Award of the American Jewish Congress at the convention.

Dr. Franz Boehm, the head of the German delegation which negotiated the Bonn-Israel reparations agreement, received the Stephen S. Wise Award--a bronze plaque and a \$1,000 check--from the Congress for his "untiring efforts to combat anti-Semitism in Germany" and for his role in negotiating the reparations pact. The presentation was made by Dr. Joachim Prinz, AJC leader, who was driven from his synagogue in Germany by the Nazis.

NEW YORK, April 15. (JTA) -- For the first time since the death of Stalin, the Soviet press admitted this week-end that anti-Semitism had been practiced in the Soviet Union during the post-war period when many Jewish intellectuals were annihilated and the entire Jewish cultural life was liquidated.

Reports from Moscow quote Voprosi Istorii, leading Soviet organ, as declaring that "serious errors in the leadership of the party" have been made during the post-war period with regard to national minorities. The journal recalls Lenin's rejection of anti-Semitism and says that his views were "misinterpreted" in the country today.

A report from Prague to the New York Times says that Czechoslovakian Premier Viliam Siroky declared this week-end that "certain manifestations of anti-Semitism" had been incorrectly introduced into the trial of Rudolf Slansky in November, 1952. He said that the prosecutor "had erred" in bringing out that most of the defendants were Jewish and added that there was still a difference between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism.

The Czechoslovak Premier revealed that Mordecai Oren, an Israeli who was tried secretly and sentenced to 15 years in prison, recently asked for a pardon and that his case was being reviewed. Slansky, the former Secretary General of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, was executed with 13 others after a trial in which he was found guilty of having engaged in a "Zionist conspiracy" against the Czechoslovak Government.

U.S. Communists Urge Moscow to "Explain" Soviet Anti-Semitism

NEW YORK, April 15. (JTA) -- A request that the Soviet Government should issue a public statement explaining what has actually happened to the leaders of Jewish cultural life in the USSR, who are the elements guilty of their liquidation, and what is being done now by the Soviet authorities to restore Jewish cultural life and to make certain that there will be no "violation" of the Soviet constitution with regard to national minorities in the future was the subject today of an editorial in the Freiheit, pro-Communist Yiddish daily newspaper published here.

American Communists were instructed yesterday by the Daily Worker, official organ of the Communist Party in the United States, to call for an explanation by Soviet leaders who shared the responsibility for anti-Semitism practiced under Stalin. In a column-long editorial, the Daily Worker expressed "indignation" at the fact that Jewish intellectuals had been "framed up and executed" in the Soviet Union and that "Jewish culture has virtually been wiped out." The editorial also expressed "strong dissatisfaction" with the fact that "the Soviet leaders have not offered any explanation of what took place."

U.S. Jewish Groups Ask Moscow to Release Exiled Jews

NEW YORK, April 15. (JTA) -- The American Jewish Committee declared today that the current revelations in the Communist press about past excesses of Soviet anti-Semitism can be regarded only as "camouflage and propaganda so long as tens of thousands of Jews still are held in Russian prisons and slave labor camps on charges publicly confirmed now as completely and utterly false."

In a statement released by Irving M. Engel, president of the American Jewish Committee, the AJC declared: "Only by releasing the tens of thousands of Jews they now hold prisoner solely because of their religion, can the Soviet Government hope to prove that they have abandoned anti-Semitism as an official or unofficial government policy. Even though the charges against these prisoners are now confirmed as false, there is nothing to indicate that the Soviet Government officially has taken any steps to correct these unjust imprisonments."

"If it wishes to show the world that its 'new look' is genuine, the Russian Government at least must make partial amends for all their anti-Semitic excesses of the past. This can be done by the releasing of all persons unjustly imprisoned, by publicly repudiating its shocking methods of discrimination against, and persecution of, minorities, including Jews, and repairing, insofar as possible, the injuries suffered by innocent victims in the past."

The Jewish Labor Committee announced today that it is arranging a "public trial" on April 30 in New York "to focus attention on the incontrovertible tragedy that Jewish schools are still closed, Jewish newspapers are still not permitted to be published, Jewish books are not issued, and that the majority of the Jewish writers and poets are still kept in cultural exile--if in fact they are alive." Adolph Held, national chairman of the JLC, said that names of "witnesses" for the "public trial" will be made available within the coming week.

40 U.S. CITIES ANNOUNCE PROGRAMS TO FIGHT JOB DISCRIMINATION

WASHINGTON, April 15. (JTA) -- More than 40 cities in this country have scheduled programs during April to assist in ending discrimination in employment, the President's Committee on Government Contracts announced here last night. Cooperating in these programs are: the national and local organizations of the American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, National Conference of Christians and Jews, American Friends Service Committee and National Urban League.