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TUNISIA DISCUSSES STATUS OF JEWS; PREPARES NEW CIVIL RIGHTS LEGISLATION

TUNIS, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- A major debate on the personal status of the Jews of Tunisia in relation to forthcoming legislation on civil rights took place here today at a meeting of a commission set up by the Tunisian Government to plan legislative reforms and to study Rabbinic jurisdiction in the country.

The meeting, at which these questions of basic interest to Tunisian Jewry were discussed, was held under the chairmanship of the Minister of Justice, Ahmed Mestiri. Members of the commission include Tunisian Chief Rabbi Moise Cohen, former Jewish member of the Tunisian Cabinet Albert Bessis, president of the Jewish community Elie Nataf, and a number of other prominent Jewish leaders.

The Minister of Justice stressed the intention of the government to introduce a civil rights code covering the entire population of Tunisia. However, he pointed out that the government does not plan to present the code as a "fait accompli" but wants to work it out after consultations with representatives of various faiths and with respect for these religions.

The discussion today between the Minister and the Jewish leaders was conducted in a cordial atmosphere, with the Jewish leaders bringing out points which are of particular concern to the Jewish community. They emphasized that Tunisian Jewry always ordered its life according to the Mosaic code. They also stressed that in a number of Moslem countries punishment for crimes varied according to religious faiths of the criminals.

In the course of the discussion, it was recalled that a precedent was created by Napoleon who convened a Sanhedrin of French Jews with the result that the Jews were given equality of rights. However, it was pointed out that there was one fundamental difference between those times and today's conference. Today's consultations, it was stressed, preceded any decision on the part of the Tunisian Government. For this, the Jews said, the government should be complimented. It was emphasized that a solution to the problems which were posed at today's meeting must be found rapidly.

The Minister of Justice asked the Jewish leaders a number of questions about the application of the Mosaic code to Jews in Israel and those in the United States. After this information was given to the Minister, it was decided to hold another meeting for further discussion of the issues involved.

EDEN'S POLICY ON ISRAEL CRITICIZED IN COMMONS; NASSER'S THREATS CITED

LONDON, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- The danger to Israel posed by Egyptian President Nasser's constant threats was raised in Commons today as the House continued its debate on Egypt's seizure of the Suez Canal. The question was raised by Labor leader Hugh Gaitskell who, at the same time, urged that Britain's arms freeze on Egypt be extended also to Syria and Lebanon.

Mr. Gaitskell insisted that Nasser had given "clear enough notice" of intention of aggression against Israel and warned that the Suez seizure will constitute a greatly increased threat to Israel. He warned that Britain was obligated under the Tripartite Declaration of 1950 to go to the assistance of either Israel or any Arab state if it were attacked.

Pointing out that at this very moment a ship was being loaded with munitions for Syria and Lebanon, he asked that the government place those states under the same arms ban as Egypt. The Labor leader recommended the building of an oil pipeline between the Gulf of Akaba and Haifa which, he said, could be done in a matter of months.

Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden drew severe criticism from the House when he made a statement today that British policy in reference to the Suez Canal was "always" based on freedom of passage. He was interrupted by shouts of "Israel" from the Labor benches.

After an exchange between the Prime Minister and Sidney Silverman, Labor M. P., Sir Anthony admitted that his use of the word "always" had not included consideration of the Egyptian blockade of the Canal against Israeli shipping. In the course of the discussion, Sir Anthony insisted that Israel's case was in another category, because the current Egyptian action would make the future use of the canal solely dependent on Egypt.

Mr. Silverman told him that if Britain had held to the principle of "always" and had fought in Israel's behalf Britain's position now would be much stronger. The Prime Minister

noted that the last Labor Government had taken the question to the United Nations and it had been dealt with then.

In a parallel debate in the House of Lords, Lord Stansgate asked that no attempt be made to "use Israel as a pawn in the game of fighting the Arabs. It is a fatal mistake," he added. He warned those who wanted to obtain a base at Haifa that they would be doing Israel a disservice. Finally, he stressed the need for protecting Israel.

BRITAIN REITERATES REVOCATION OF ARMS EXPORTS LICENCES TO EGYPT

LONDON, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- A British Government spokesman reiterated today that Britain had frozen all arms shipments to Egypt. He made his statement in response to questions asked of him in Commons:

Peter Thorneycroft, president of the Board of Trade, said that "all valid export licenses for export to Egypt of arms and munitions, including armored vehicles and parts and aircraft and aircraft engines, have been revoked." No further licenses are being issued for the supply of these goods to Egypt.

Asked if he would give notice when licenses were reinstated, Mr. Thorneycroft replied that licences have been "effectively revoked." When Alfred Robens, Labor, asked about the two Egyptian destroyers currently being prepared to sail from Portsmouth, the president of the Board of Trade said he did not issue licences for the export of destroyers.

(In Washington, it was announced today that the United States is continuing aid to Egypt already contracted. This was made known by John B. Hollister, chief of the International Cooperation Administration. He said he had no intention of changing matters until ordered by the State Department.)

ARMISTICE BODY FINDS ISRAEL AND JORDAN GUILTY IN AIRPLANE INCIDENT

JERUSALEM, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- The Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission, in two separate resolutions, condemned both states for an incident last Wednesday in which Jordan anti-aircraft batteries shot and forced down an Israeli plane flying near the border.

The Israelis protested their condemnation, on the grounds that the MAC had not proved that the plane was an army aircraft and therefore should not have been in the area. The plane landed inside Israel and its crew was unhurt.

"WILL TO PEACE" EXISTS IN ISRAEL AND ARAB LANDS, HAMMARSKJOLD REPORTS

UNITED NATIONS, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold still feels now, as he did last Spring upon his return from his formal peace mission to the Middle East, that "there is a will to peace" on the part of all the governments in the region. On the other hand, the "will to peacemaking," which he sees as the next stage, is still lacking. "Views are still far apart when it comes to peace-making in legal definite form," he declared.

Mr. Hammarskjold made these statements here today at his first press conference since his latest visit to the Middle East, where he had discussed the Israel-Arab conflicts with both Israel's Prime Minister David Ben Gurion and Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

The Secretary General disagreed, but with extreme politeness, with Israel's alleged viewpoint that as of now it is "useless" for Israel to take Jordanian complaints to the Mixed Armistice Commission. He said: "I do not share the view that it is useless to go to the Mixed Armistice Commission. Of course any party can stay away, but that would stymie the operation of this machinery. However, I would not give permanency to this declaration. I would say it was probably more a statement of frustration than statement of policy."

The status of Maj. Gen. E. L. M. Burns, UN truce chief, was clarified by Mr. Hammarskjold. The Secretary General said he had heard nothing but some newspaper reports about allegations that Jordan was planning to ask for the recall of Gen. Burns on grounds that the Chief of Staff was "prejudiced" on behalf of Israel. Right now, he declared, Gen. Burns' "legal status" is that he is remaining until the end of this year.

Refusing to go into detail about his conversations with the Soviet leaders whom he visited in Moscow recently, the Secretary General did say that the Middle East was discussed and that in the talks the Johnston Plan for the development of the Jordan River Valley had come up.

Mr. Hammarskjold said that earlier plans for another trip to the Middle East have not been shunted aside because of his latest hurry-up visit to Jerusalem and Cairo. He said that the subject of another trip in October has been discussed with the governments concerned and "I may go a little later if all of us feel that such a trip would be useful."

The Secretary General expressed his "deep regret" at the latest flare-up between Israel and Jordan, but was gratified that "developments stopped short" of a situation in which an "accident might develop into an incident."

ANTI-SEMITISM GAINING GROUND IN FRANCE; PROVOKES CONCERN IN GERMANY

PARIS, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- Anti-Semitism is gaining ground in France and arousing increased concern in West Germany, the European office of the American Jewish Committee disclosed here last night after completion of a survey of anti-Semitism in 12 Western European countries. The survey was based on the opinions of Jewish community leaders throughout Europe.

"The electoral campaign and subsequent victory of the Poujade movement at the French polls last January have given definite impetus to anti-Semitism in France," the AJC reported. There has been a "noticeable increase" in unfavorable comments about Jews, in the appearance on street walls of signs like "Jew, Go Home" and in the arrogance of the French anti-democratic and anti-Semitic papers. New publications with anti-Semitic tendencies have, moreover, appeared in France in recent months, the report emphasizes.

"While Poujadists have not been effective in the French Parliament and while there has been some internal dissension in the Poujade movement, there is no real evidence that its strength has diminished since last January," the AJC report stressed. "In fact, French troubles at home and in North Africa can give Poujadism an even greater appeal than before."

In West Germany, the AJC survey noted, many Germans are now warning with increased urgency of the need to take vigorous counter-action against a renewed flow of neo-Nazi literature, against the German public's tendency to excuse and ignore the evils of Hitlerism, and against the infiltration of former Nazis into important posts. They point out that present democratic progress in West Germany has been made in a period of outstanding economic prosperity and political stability and that the German public's attitude toward democracy has not yet been tested by difficulties such as those which beset the Weimar Republic in the 1920s, for example.

Among the evidence of increased West German apprehension that anti-democratic attitudes may be gaining strength has been, in recent months: 1. The declaration by Bundestag Speaker Eugen Gerstenmeier of the "real danger (represented) by those people who, silently, begin with the premise that Hitler was only a little too dumb and clumsy, but that otherwise he was right"; 2. The campaign by groups of German journalists and writers to call greater attention to infiltration by former Nazis into posts of influence, to bring test cases against publishers of neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic literature, and to seek laws to punish the dissemination of hate propaganda.

Outside France and West Germany, anti-Semitic elements constitute a "nuisance" but pose no serious problem at the present time, according to the reports received by AJC from the European Jewish communities. In addition to France and West Germany, the survey included Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

"Open anti-Semitism is still considered a 'political mark of Cain' in post-war Europe, a fact recognized even by the anti-Semites themselves," the report continued. "As a result, they prefer to work anonymously and under cover, or deny their anti-Semitism even while engaged in anti-Semitic activities. Jews are worried, however, that the success of the Poujade movement and the present resurgence of neo-Nazis and anti-Semitic literature in West Germany might, if unchecked, 'help make anti-Semitism a marketable commodity once more, and may taint those countries where, until now, anti-Semitism has made no real post war headway,' according to the AJC.

WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT ORDERS SEIZURE OF ANTI-SEMITIC PAMPHLETS

BONN, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- The Bonn Government has ordered the seizure of a quantity of anti-Semitic pamphlets printed by the Bavarian publishing house of Widar Verlag of Oberammergau. The West German Ministry's action affected 9,000 pieces of literature.

The last Gestapo chief of Bochum, Herbert Raschik, and two of his aides have been acquitted by the local jury court, which found they had illegally killed 19 prisoners in the cellar of Bochum Gestapo headquarters, but ruled that their comprehension of the criminal nature of the shootings had not been shown with absolute certainty. The three, who had been convicted of murder some years ago, were freed by a higher court. It was this acquittal which had been appealed by the prosecutor.

GERMAN AND ISRAELI STUDENTS HOLD JOINT CONFERENCE IN STUTTGART

STUTTGART, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- Sixteen students from Israel currently enrolled at various European universities, and a larger number of German students, were among the guests at a week long conference held near here and sponsored by a German association of democratic student organizations. The conference, in which some students of other nationalities also participated, was supported by the "Central Council of Jews in Germany" and by the "Congress for Cultural Freedom."

The scheduled topic was "Small States and Big Politics," but on this first occasion that a substantial number of Israeli and German students gathered together in Germany, most of the discussions turned to questions of German-Israel relations and to problems of Jewish significance.

EISENHOWER CONDEMNS RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS BIAS IN ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- President Eisenhower sharply condemned yesterday those who invoke racial and religious prejudice in the current elections. He spoke at his press conference against those who incite racial and religious hatred for personal political advantage.

"I believe," he said, "that anyone that stirs up racial hatreds and other antagonisms that are based upon race or religion or differences in basic philosophy--it is always a mistake. It is a very grave error and a disservice to the United States. Extreme statements of this kind can do no one any good."

"The path of human progress is not along the path of hatreds; it is not along the path of extremes. It is along the path that represents the road where people of good will and real sensibilities can get together and say, 'Here is a way we can go together.'"

JEWISH CONGRESS FILES COMPLAINT AGAINST U.S. FIRM REFUSING TO HIRE JEWS

NEW YORK, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- The American Jewish Congress today, in a complaint filed with the New York State Commission Against Discrimination, charged that the Arabian American Oil Company refuses to hire Jews both for its Saudi Arabian and its New York operations. The oil company, ARAMCO, operates the American oil concession in Saudi Arabia.

Shad Polier, vice-president of the American Jewish Congress, who signed the complaint stated: "The refusal of ARAMCO to hire Jews for its overseas work has long been notorious. Indeed, in a prior proceeding before SCAD in 1950, ARAMCO advised the State Commission that 'it had an understanding with the Saudi Arabian government to screen all prospective employees for work in Arabia before they applied for Arabian visas, for the purpose of excluding persons of the Jewish faith to whom visas will not be granted.'"

"Perhaps the Saudi Arabian government will persist in its flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter by its discriminatory anti-Jewish policies, but there is no reason to allow it to export its anti-Semitism to American soil. Nor is ARAMCO entitled to take advantage of the incomparable procurement and hiring facilities of New York State unless it lives up to the requirements of New York laws that forbid religious discrimination in hiring."

Mr. Polier revealed that in 1950 when the issue first arose before SCAD, the Political Advisor for the Office of African and Near Eastern Affairs of the State Department urged SCAD not to have "anything interfere with the existing relationship between the Arabian government and the Arabian American Oil Company" and that SCAD had accordingly held that religion was a "bona fide occupational qualification" for employment in Saudi Arabia.

The American Jewish Congress leader declared: "We hope that SCAD will not again yield to this type of pressure from the State Department. Indeed in view of the unanimous adoption by the United States Senate on July 25, 1956, of Senate Resolution 323 in which it declared that 'any attempt by foreign nations to create religious distinctions among our citizens in the granting of personal or commercial access or any other rights otherwise available to the United States citizens generally is inconsistent with our principles,' it is hoped that the State Department will cease its interference in behalf of Saudi Arabia and ARAMCO."

Mr. Polier pointed out also that the American Jewish Congress complaint charges ARAMCO with a refusal to hire Jews even for its United States operations, a policy which cannot be defended by citing the visa requirements of Saudi Arabia.

DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT NOT DECREASING IN NEW YORK STATE

NEW YORK, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- The number of complaints of discrimination in employment and public accommodation filed with the New York State Commission Against Discrimination for the first half of 1956 almost equalled the total for 1955, Charles Abrams, chairman of the commission, announced yesterday.

Of a total of 332 verified complaints in the first six months of this year, 313 involved discrimination in employment and 19 in accommodations. Sixty-eight percent of the complaints were lodged against employers, 22 per cent against unions, four per cent against employment agencies and six per cent against operators of public accommodations.

400 FRENCH CATHOLIC STUDENTS VISIT ISRAEL; CROSS FROM JORDAN

JERUSALEM, Aug. 2. (JTA) -- A party of 400 French Catholic students from the Sorbonne entered Israel today for a five-day stay. They crossed from Jordan via the Mandelbaum Gate in Jerusalem. The party is led by a Bishop.

A group of 25 Finnish pilgrims has just completed a tour of the Holy Places in Israel, and a party of 32 women students and two professors from Western College of Ohio visited the country last week.