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KNESSET TO HEAR TODAY ISRAEL'S STAND ON THE MERGER OF ARAB COUNTRIES

JERUSALEM, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Israel's stand toward the Egyptian-Syrian merger and the Jordan-Iraqi federation will be outlined in Parliament tomorrow by Foreign Minister Golda Meir. She will reply to a question posed by Herut deputies. It will be Israel's first official pronouncement on the subject.

Qualified approval of the mergers of Egypt and Syria and of Jordan and Iraq was expressed in unofficial comments for Arab listeners on the Israel Arab-language radio. The broadcasts have pointed out that Israel has always favored Arab liberation movements, as well as genuine unification moves, so that the Arab nations could establish a true independence and freedom from foreign pressures.

Declaring that Israel's specific attitude will be determined by the actions of the leaders of the new federations, the broadcasts stated that Israel would welcome the unions if their rulers use the opportunity to raise the Arab people's standards of living and improve the health, education and economies of the federated states.

Some broadcasts have expressed the cautious hope that the Arab leaders, in working for the real interests of their peoples, might be wise enough to make a genuine attempt at a peaceful settlement of the Israel-Arab dispute for the benefit of Jews and Arabs alike. The broadcasts have also emphasized that if the new Arab rulers try to utilize the merged states for aggression, Israel would have to take an entirely different position.

(From Paris it was reported today that Israel Foreign Minister Golda Meir is expected to arrive there from Israel Sunday night for a meeting on Monday with French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau. Afterwards, Mrs. Meir will visit a number of African countries. Meanwhile, the Israel Ambassador to Paris, Yacov Tsur, called at the French Foreign Office today to convey Israel's view of the recent mergers of Syria and Egypt, Iraq and Jordan. He also received the French feeling about the federations.)

Opposition to Merger with Egypt Spreads in Syrian Army

JERUSALEM, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Opposition in Syria to the merger with Egypt has spread to include many key Syrian army officers and leading government officials, it was reported here today on the basis of information from Damascus.

With initial enthusiasm about the merger beginning to chill, Syria's top military and government leaders are apparently beginning to wonder what their personal positions will be when the merger reduces Damascus to a "provincial capital," Israel experts reported.

These authorities said that the "popular referendum" due later in February to elect a president of the United Arab Republic would elect Nasser with the "usual 99 percent of the vote." The vote will be watched closely in Israel, nevertheless, on the theory that the degree of voter participation, as well as the circumstances preceding and accompanying the referendum, will influence the pace of actual merger.

Protests from Syria's merchant class has already indicated that actual economic merger will not be implemented for some time, according to reports received in Israel. The reports indicated that the abolition of Syria's political parties and the establishment of a single National Front party along Egyptian lines has been postponed.

TURKISH STATESMAN SUGGESTS FORMATION OF TURKO-GREEK-ISRAELI FEDERATION

ANKARA, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- A federation of Turkey, Greece and Israel as a counterweight against the new Arab blocs was urged today by Prof. Nihat Erim, former Vice Premier of Turkey and influential member of the Republican Party.

Prof. Erim, an authority on international law, told a Republican rally that geopolitical conditions made such an alliance "imperative." He said "these three countries could be a uniting counter-balance to the Arab and Slav blocs" in the Middle East.

SYRIAN TROOPS RESUME ATTACKS ON ISRAELI WORKERS IN LAKE HULEH AREA

TEL AVIV, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Syrian troops on the northeastern border of Israel resumed their attacks on Israeli workers today with sporadic sniping at farmers in the fields near Dardara, on the eastern banks of Lake Huleh.

Though no one was hurt, the continuing fire finally caused the Israelis to halt their work and seek shelter. A police escort did not return the Syrian fire, despite the fact that their car was hit by bullets.

U. N. ENVOY DENIES SLUR ON BEN GURION; LAUDS PRIME MINISTERS COOPERATION

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Dr. Francisco Urrutia of Colombia, Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold's personal representative, charged with trying to settle the Mt. Scopus dispute between Israel and Jordan, denied categorically today that he had ever said he had found dealing with Israel and Israel's Premier David Ben Gurion "impossible." Dr. Urrutia's denial concerned a press report yesterday originating in Jordan.

The press report had also said that Dr. Urrutia had asserted he does not plan to return to Israel. Denying the entire dispatch, the Colombian diplomat voiced high praise for the cooperation he had received during his recent mission from both Mr. Ben Gurion and from Jordan's Foreign Minister Rifai.

BEN GURION, DR. GOLDMANN MEET ON METHODS OF FINANCING IMMIGRATION

JERUSALEM, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Both Premier David Ben Gurion and Jewish Agency president Dr. Nahum Goldmann attended a meeting today of the Israel Government-Jewish Agency coordinating board.

Among the questions discussed today were methods of financing and sources of the anticipated immigration during 1958-59, which is expected to exceed last year's total. A mixed subcommittee of Ministers and Agency executive members was named to submit specific proposals in the near future.

COLD WEATHER IN CALIFORNIA BENEFITS ISRAEL'S EXPORT OF CITRUS FRUIT

TEL AVIV, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Israel increased its exports of citrus fruit to 8,000,000 cases this year, about 500,000 cases more than was originally estimated.

The increase was due in part to poor conditions in other citrus-raising areas and in part to Israel's successfully beating off a serious insect threat to its crop. A dry season in Spain and cold weather in California gave Israeli growers an opportunity to enter new markets, including Canada which normally purchases from California groves.

Zvi Isaakson, president of the Farmers' Association, who returned from Canada recently, said the Dominion's eastern cities are as close to Israeli ports as California. Thus far Canadian purchases from Israel have amounted to only 100,000 cases, but it is expected that this may yet be raised to 500,000 cases.

In Germany the only grapefruit on sale is Israel-grown. Reports from most European markets indicate that Israeli fruit is bringing a fair price all over.

BUILDERS OF JERUSALEM SWIMMING POOL REJECT NETUREI KARTA OFFER

JERUSALEM, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- The ultra-Orthodox Neturei Karta sect, which has tried everything from mass demonstrations to threats of violence and clashes with the police to halt the construction of a swimming pool with mixed bathing facilities, offered 500,000 pounds today to prevent completion of the construction.

The sect offered the proprietors of Jerusalem's President Hotel, who are financially interested in the pool, 150,000 pounds in cash and the remainder of the half million after it conducted a fund-raising campaign in the United States. An additional 100,000 pounds would be contributed, sect leaders pledged, if the pool were converted into a "mikvah," a ritual bath for women.

The builders of the project rejected the offer. They announced that the pool would be open for swimming on the Sabbath but users would be required to purchase tickets during the week.

ISRAEL FARMERS AND LAND WORKERS SIGN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PACT

JERUSALEM, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- The first collective bargaining agreement covering farm hands in Israel was signed here between the Farmers Federation and the Agricultural Workers Union.

It guarantees each permanent employe--any worker who has been employed at least six months--20 days a month employment, even in the slack season; 12 to 18 days of vacation annually; family allowances and severance pay.

U. N. CHIEF MAY DISCUSS ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM IN MOSCOW AND LONDON

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Feb. 18. (JTA) -- The possibility that the Middle East problem may be considered by United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold with the heads of the Soviet and British Governments was seen here today when Mr. Hammarskjold announced two itineraries which indicate he will definitely visit both Moscow and London in the next few weeks.

The UN official confirmed the visit to Moscow today in an oblique manner, commenting that he had proposed to the Soviet Government that his visit be scheduled for March 16. In making this statement, he confirmed previous reports that the Soviets had invited him to visit Moscow.

While it was certain that proposals for a Big Power summit conference and disarmament talks would be the principal items on the UN official's agenda when he visits Moscow and London it was believed he would also discuss the Middle East. Mr. Hammarskjold has stated many times in the past after visits to foreign capitals that he always discusses all outstanding issues affecting the United Nations and the countries he visits.

NO EXTENSION FOR GERMAN INDEMNIFICATION CLAIMS; FILING ENDS IN MARCH

FRANKFURT, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- There is no foundation to reports that the Social Democratic Party is planning to introduce an amendment to extend the deadline for filing claims under the West German Indemnification Law beyond its present March 31, 1958 cut-off date, it was established here today. The deadline is final, according to all informed sources.

However, the Socialists did seek an extension of the deadline for filing claims under the Restitution Law, whose present cut-off date is also March 31, 1958. The proposed extension would carry the deadline to December 31, 1958.

PARDON OF NAZI WHO MURDERED JEWS PROVOKES CRITICISM IN GERMANY

WIESBADEN, Germany, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- The Minister-President of Hesse, Dr. Georg August Zinn, came in for heavy criticism today from his own Social Democratic Party. The party hit its leader for having pardoned Hans Bodo Gorgass, convicted of the mass murder of thousands of Jews and others in the so called Hadamar Sanatorium during 1940 and 1941.

Gorgass was once sentenced to death for his crimes against humanity and, in 1949, had his sentence commuted to life imprisonment. The provincial Minister-President is reported to have acted to release the ex-doctor on the grounds that he had shown repentance.

JEWISH WAR VETERANS OPPOSE RETURN OF NAZI ASSETS IN U. S. TO GERMANY

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- National commander Benjamin H. Chasin of the Jewish War Veterans assailed today an Administration plan for Congressional action that would, according to the JWV, make U. S. taxpayers assume double liability for former Nazi assets valued at over half a billion dollars.

"The Jewish War Veterans along with other veterans organizations representing more than 21,000,000 American veterans and their families, has repeatedly gone on record opposing return of this so-called alien property," Mr. Chasin said. The German Government agreed by treaty to reimburse its nationals for the value of that property in return for the American Government's agreement not to ask for reparations or for any of the money advanced to the new German Government up to the time of the Bonn 1952 treaty."

According to the JWV leader the new plan would force American taxpayers to pay Germans "out of their own pockets for having started and lost World War II." Jewish veterans will oppose the proposed legislation with "every resource" at their command, said Mr. Chasin.

JEWISH CONGRESS WARNS ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CANADIAN SCHOOLS

OTTAWA, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- The Canadian Jewish Congress warned here today against the "pressure" to include religious education in the school systems of the eight Canadian provinces which do not presently have denominational educational systems. It voiced its concern over the "tendency to throw religious instruction into the lap of public education" in a memorandum presented to a Canada-wide conference on education which opened here today.

The CJC, noting that the Jewish community does not feel threatened by this development, said that its misgivings were being aired because it is mindful of the unity of the nation and the ideals of Canadian citizenship. It also stated it was not attempting to "dispute or intrude upon" the denominational school systems of Quebec and Newfoundland.

In another memorandum, on inter-cultural education, the Congress suggested that the educators recommend a program of inter-cultural education for Canadian schools. The document further stressed the need for teachers' awareness of social and inter-group implications of their subject matter.

ARGENTINE JEWS CALLED UPON TO PARTICIPATE IN SUNDAY'S ELECTIONS

BUENOS AIRES, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- The DAIA, central representative body of Argentine Jewry, called on all Jews in Argentina to participate fully as citizens in next Sunday's national elections, the first since the overthrow of the Peronist regime. It urged all Jews to be "aware of the importance" of their ballot and to thus participate in restoring the country to normalcy.

Noting that it was the only Jewish body in the country authorized to speak for the Jewish community, the DAIA reiterated its traditional position that every Jew had the right and the obligation to vote for any candidate of his choice. The statement stressed that Jewry as such did not participate in politics.

BOMBAY'S CHIEF MINISTER RECEIVES DELEGATION OF INDIAN ZIONISTS

BOMBAY, India, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Bombay's Chief Minister, Y. Chaven, received today a delegation of Indian Zionists, led by Zionist Federation president H. Cynovitz, and accepted an invitation to be guest of honor at a reception to be given by the Zionist group.

During their conversation the Minister asked about the employment and housing conditions of Indian Jews who had immigrated to Israel. He was pleased to learn that they had overcome an initial language difficulty and were well settled. Mr. Cynovitz stressed the role of Indian Jews as a bridge between India and Israel.

WOMEN'S DIVISION OF NEW YORK'S U. J. A. RAISES \$1,000,000 IN ONE DAY

NEW YORK, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Contributions of slightly more than \$1,000,000 were announced yesterday at the opening rally of the Women's Division of the United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York. Some 600 volunteers braved transportation difficulties created by the blizzard to attend the rally which opened the annual campaign for UJA.

Israel Consul General Simcha Pratt, addressing the women, said that the success of the UJA campaign this year will affect the future of the rising Israeli generation, as well as the speed of immigrant absorption in his country. "You are taking a direct and intimate part in the rising of our next generation by helping to feed, clothe, house and educate the youngsters of Israel," he stated. "By doing so, you also aid immeasurably in instilling that sense of good citizenship upon which the growth of a democracy is based."

Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman, executive vice-chairman of the national UJA, told the women that their achievements would influence the course of the UJA campaign throughout the country. He underscored the urgency of immediate help for tens of thousands of Jews in Eastern Europe, Egypt and North Africa who must be helped to migrate to freedom and safety in Israel and other democratic lands.

JUDGE FRIEDE, LEADER OF POLISH JEWRY, HONORED; IS ACTIVE IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Leaders of all walks of Jewish life last night honored Judge Maximilian Friede, former Jewish leader in Poland now active in the United States on behalf of Jews who left Poland since the war.

The dinner, tendered in recognition of his 50 years of service to Polish Jewry, was addressed by Dr. I. Schwarzbart, former member of the Polish Parliament, and other prominent personalities. Messages of greetings were received by Judge Friede from many Jewish organizations.

PROF. MARCUS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Prof. Jacob R. Marcus, of Cincinnati, was elected president at the 56th annual meeting of the American Jewish Historical Society which concluded here yesterday. Three vice presidents elected were Prof. Moshe Davis, New York; Dr. Ezra W. Korn, Philadelphia, and Prof. Abraham A. Neumann, Philadelphia. Dr. Solomon Grayzel was selected as recording secretary; Prof. Hyman B. Grinstein, corresponding secretary.

GEN. DAYAN TO INAUGURATE ISRAEL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN U.S.

TEL AVIV, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Gen. Moshe Dayan, recently-resigned Chief of Staff of Israel's defense forces, will help inaugurate the American celebration of Israel's tenth birthday, at a meeting at the Polo Grounds in New York on April 27. Gen. Dayan today accepted an invitation to address the April meeting from former United States Senator Herbert H. Lehman, who is general chairman of the American Committee for Celebration of Israel's Tenth Anniversary.

DR. SAKIN, NOTED PHYSICIAN AND WRITER, DIES IN NEW YORK; WAS 70

NEW YORK, Feb. 18. (JTA) -- Dr. Benjamin M. Sakin, noted physician, writer and medical columnist of the Jewish Daily Forward since 1946, died here last night. He was 70. Born in Tulchin, the Ukraine, Dr. Sakin came here in 1906. In 1917 he received his medical degree from Fordham University.