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"THERE IS NO JEWISH PROBLEM IN THE SOVIET UNION," MIKOYAN CLAIMS AT U. N.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Jan. 15. (JTA) -- "There is no Jewish problem in the Soviet Union at all. This problem is created by those who wish to impede good relations," Anastas I. Mikoyan, First Deputy Premier of the USSR, declared here today at a press conference. He was answering a question posed to him by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency correspondent here.

The correspondent, Saul Carson, asked: "Mr. Mikoyan, during your current trip in the United States you have disassociated yourself from the late Mr. Beria. Mr. Beria was apparently largely responsible for the liquidation of Jewish culture, particularly Yiddish culture, in the Soviet Union. As a member of the government, do you contemplate any steps in the near future to reinstitute the free exercise of the Yiddish theatre, press and other Jewish cultural activities in the Soviet Union?"

Mr. Mikoyan's answer to the question was: "In my country all peoples enjoy freedom, and freedom for the development of their culture. They can have their theatres, their literature, and that includes the Jews. However, the Jewish population has merged with the Russians in Russian culture so fully that Jews participate in general culture and literature, on the Russian stage and in Russian literature. There are many Jewish writers who consider themselves Russian and prefer to write Russian. We cannot interfere in that matter. This is a matter of the Jewish intelligentsia.

"We do create all conditions in which Jewish and Russian literatures and the literatures of all other Soviet peoples should have full opportunities for their development, writing and creation," the Soviet Deputy Premier continued. "There is no Jewish problem in the Soviet Union at all. This problem is created by those who wish to impede good relations."

Shortly after this response, Mr. Mikoyan was reminded by another journalist that the Jewish Labor Committee had left a memorandum for him yesterday at the headquarters of the USSR delegation to the United Nations, referring specifically to the liquidation and the killing of Jewish writers. Mr. Mikoyan's reply was:

"I am not acquainted with these persons and I cannot comment on the authors of this memorandum. You call them a labor committee; I do not hear anything that smacks of labor in what they have to say. In my country all peoples enjoy freedom and the development of culture and that includes the Jews. I have many friends who are Jews. Many of our most prominent leaders, in fact, have married Jewish girls and they have excellent relations. I would say, let others have relations that are as good."

In response to the question about Russia's attitude toward Arab nationalism, the Soviet leader reiterated the well known Soviet attitude on that score, declaring: "We regard Arab nationalism as a progressive force designed to emancipate the Arabs from the colonial yoke which enslaved them, and to achieve independence, and bring about the flowering of Arab culture. The unity of the Arab peoples is a progressive phenomenon."

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE MEETS WITH MIKOYAN ON FATE OF SOVIET JEWRY

NEW YORK, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- Anastas I. Mikoyan, Soviet First Deputy Premier, and the Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Mikhail A. Menshikov, met at a luncheon conference here today with four top leaders of the American Jewish Committee.

The principal subject discussed at the meeting was the situation of the estimated 3,000,000 Jews in the Soviet Union, their cultural and religious institutions, their status, minority rights, and related matters. One of the specific topics of grave concern expressed by the Committee to the Soviet officials involved reports that a large-scale movement of Soviet Jews to Biro-Bidjan in Siberia may be proposed to the Soviet Party Communist Congress, opening January 27, in Moscow.

Conferring with the Soviet Deputy Premier and the Ambassador were: Former Herbert H. Lehman, honorary vice president of the American Jewish Committee; Irving M. Engel, president of the Committee; Jacob Blaustein, honorary president of the Committee; and Ralph Friedman, chairman of the AJC foreign affairs committee.

During the conference Mr. Mikoyan said that the Soviet Government has no intention of setting up any separate region of Jews in Biro-Bidjan. However, he did not indicate whether

his reply meant that the question of transferring Jews to Biro-Bidjan would not come up at the forthcoming congress of the Communist Party in Moscow.

The full text of the statement by the American Jewish Committee on the Biro-Bidjan situation, reads:

"Recent published reports from reliable sources indicate that at the forthcoming Twenty-first Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union next January, a renewed plan for the settlement of a large number of Jewish citizens of that country in the so-called 'Autonomous Jewish Region' of Biro-Bidjan will be presented. These reports have not been refuted by any responsible Soviet source.

"The history of the original Biro-Bidjan settlement itself presages the failure of any attempt directed at further voluntary resettlement. The fundamental right of the individual to preserve or to change his dwelling place and cultural environment in accordance with his own needs and aspirations has been sanctioned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"The basic obstacle with regard to Biro-Bidjan consists in the inherent artificiality of the idea of settling an urban European element in a primitive Asian area adjacent to the Chinese border, to which no historic, sociological and spiritual ties bind them. Spontaneous interest in this kind of project can only be very sporadic at best. In the case of Biro-Bidjan, even the last traces of such interest have been wiped out by the failure of the original scheme, and particularly by the repeated purges, in 1937-39 and 1948-53, of its Jewish leaders.

Stress Opposition to Open or Disguised Pressure on Soviet Jews

"Today, Jews constitute only one-fifth of the population of this so-called 'Autonomous Jewish Region' in which almost all expressions of Jewish cultural life such as schools, theatres, publishing houses, have been suppressed. The renewal of the scheme would, therefore, be completely devoid of any incentive for Jews to accept voluntarily the enormous sacrifices and burdens involved. This means that if the project is undertaken in the absence of genuine interest on the part of Jews, it can clearly be carried out only by means of overt or covert compulsion.

"Regarding the nature of compulsory transfers of populations, there should be no difference of opinion. In his Special Report to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Khrushchev himself stated: 'More monstrous are the acts whose initiator was Stalin and which are rude violations of the basic Leninist principles of the nationality policy of the Soviet state. We refer to the mass deportations from their native places of whole nations, together with all Communists and Komsomols, without any exception.'

"The American Jewish Committee urges that no transfers of populations by compulsion, direct or indirect, of Jews or others be undertaken in the Soviet Union; that, in particular, Jewish citizens of that country will not be forced by open or disguised pressure to leave their present homes, and that, above all, only such proposals be entertained for the future of Soviet Jewry as are entirely compatible with the exercise of free choice by the individual.

"We sincerely trust that the disturbing reports will prove unfounded and that such measures, if contemplated, will not be undertaken by the Soviet authorities."

United Hias Seeks Mikoyan's Intervention for Jewish Child

NEW YORK, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- The United Hias Service today followed up a promise by Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas I Mikoyan to Philipp Heller, a Czechoslovakian refugee, that he would "look into the case" of Heller's 14-year-old daughter whom he left behind in Prague when he fled to the West in 1948. Mr. Heller accosted Mr. Mikoyan in San Francisco during the Soviet leader's visit there and appealed to him, in the spirit of Mr. Mikoyan's goodwill mission, to help obtain an exit visa for the girl.

Subsequently, Mr. Heller informed United Hias Service of Mr. Mikoyan's pledge, and asked the organization's assistance. James P. Rice, United Hias executive director, wired Mr. Mikoyan that his agency "stands ready to take responsibility for all transportation arrangements provided your kind intervention with the Czechoslovakian authorities would make possible the issuance of an exit permit." Mr. Heller, a resident of Sacramento, Calif., has enlisted the aid of Congressmen and Senators and, reportedly, Secretary of State Dulles, in his campaign for reunion with his daughter.

TRIAL OF SUSPECT IN BOMBING OF ATLANTA SYNAGOGUE SLOWS DOWN

ATLANTA, Ga., Jan. 15. (JTA) -- Numerous objections and motions, most of them overruled, today slowed down the trial of George Bright who is accused of bombing the Atlanta Jewish Temple last October 12.

Three stern reprimands were addressed to defense attorney Reuben Garland by Judge Jephtha Tanksley because of Garland's tactics in defense of Bright, an anti-Semitic agitator. At one point, Judge Tanksley threatened to take steps because of what he termed the contempt and disrespect of the court displayed by Garland in defense of the anti-Semite.

ISRAEL'S ARMY CHIEF CONFERS WITH U. N. COMMANDER ON BORDER INCIDENTS

TEL AVIV, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- Israel's Army Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Haim Laskov, conferred here today with Lt. Gen. E. L. M. Burns, commander-in-chief of the United Nations Emergency Force, whose troops are spread out along the Israel-Egyptian border in the Sinai and Gaza areas and at Sharm el Sheikh, overlooking the entrance to the Gulf of Akaba.

The official communique issued after their luncheon and subsequent 50-minute conference at a seaside hotel said only that they had discussed "questions of mutual concern." Each was accompanied by several aides.

The laconic communique was widely interpreted to mean that the two military men had discussed recent border incidents, including the two brushes between Egyptian MIGs and Israeli Mystere fighters in the area over the Negev. They are also believed to have considered the renewed infiltration by Arabs from Egyptian-controlled territory into Israel.

As late as last Friday, an Israeli patrol found a three-man gang of saboteurs planting mines inside Israel. There has also been a heavy non-military infiltration from the Gaza Strip which is believed to be the result of worsened conditions resulting from the drought. When newsmen questioned Gen. Burns afterwards to explain the infiltration from the Gaza area, he replied: "I wish I knew."

SYRIANS OPEN FIRE ON ISRAELI FISHERMEN; SECOND TIME WITHIN WEEK

TEL AVIV, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- For the second time in less than a week, Syrian gun positions on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee opened fire today on Israeli fishermen hauling in their nets.

Israeli police boats, which escort the fishermen on their trips to the fishing grounds, returned the fire. There were no casualties among the Israelis.

EBAN CONFERS WITH HAMMARSKJOLD ON PROVOCATIONS ON ISRAEL'S BORDERS

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Jan. 15. (JTA) -- Abba Eban, Israel's permanent delegate to the United Nations, today complained to Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold about a series of incidents provoked in recent days by the United Arab Republic along Israel's southern and northern frontiers.

Accompanied by Joseph Tekoah, his deputy, Mr. Eban told the Secretary General about his government's reaction to Egyptian violations of Israel air space in the south, and to attacks by Syria on the Sea of Galilee. He also referred to the kidnapping of two Americans from Israel's side of the Israel-Syrian border. On his side, Mr. Hammarskjold gave the Israeli representatives his impressions of his latest trip to the Middle East. The conference lasted almost an hour.

CORRESPONDENTS END BOYCOTT OF KNESSET NEWS COVERAGE; DISPUTE SETTLED

JERUSALEM, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- Foreign press coverage of the Parliament of Israel will be resumed as a result of the abolition of a number of restrictions, including the presence of a bullet-proof glass wall between the House and the press gallery, to which correspondents had objected. For the past three weeks, foreign correspondents have refused to attend and file stories reporting Knesset developments. This boycott ended today.

In agreeing to remove the glass partition, the Knesset presidium specified that only regular members of the Foreign Press Association would be allowed into the press gallery. Newspapermen who cover Knesset news on a part-time or irregular basis and are not members of the FPA will be seated in the front row of the public gallery, which is farther removed from the deputies.

The presidium also removed restrictions on the use of the Knesset restaurant by newspapermen. Reporters and correspondents insisted on access to the restaurant and lobbies of the building on the grounds that they made working contact with important political figures in these informal meetings.

ISRAEL PARLIAMENT PASSES LAW ESTABLISHING GOVT. LABOR EXCHANGES

JERUSALEM, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- The law establishing Government-operated labor exchanges, replacing those presently operated by the trades unions, will enter into effect on April 1. The law was passed by the Israel Parliament this week.

Non-Governmental labor exchanges will continue to exist as the Government agencies will not deal with all types of jobs. But the non-governmental agencies will work only in those fields not covered by the official exchanges. Jobs requiring manual labor will be filled through the government facilities.

NEW YORK, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- The first year's experience of the ORT program in Poland among 15,000 repatriates from the Soviet Union will be reviewed at the national conference of American ORT Federation which takes place this week-end at the Hotel Commodore here. The conference, attended by 500 delegates from various parts of the country, will also discuss new approaches to relieving the economic situation of the Jews in North Africa and Iran and the expansion of vocational training in Israel.

"The decisive question before the conference," declared Dr. William Haber, ORT president, "is to face up to the serious threat of a financial deficit in the ORT budget at a time when its services and the demand for them are at an all time high. The conference will have to give first consideration to finding additional funds to permit ORT to meet its obligations to the trade schools in Israel and in other countries."

In his presidential report, made public today, Dr. Haber said: "The battle for increased productivity is the Number One economic problem of Israel in its second decade; and one of the decisive elements in this battle is the necessity to sharply upgrade skills and render larger portions of the population productive." He announced that during the first ten years of ORT activity in Israel, a total of 20,000 persons received instruction in technical skills at the ORT trade schools. During 1958 alone, more than 7,500 attended ORT courses in 22 localities.

"Despite an eleven-fold increase in enrollment, ORT has not been able to keep pace with the rising demand for vocational education, especially among the youth of Israel," the report noted. Some 1,200 youngsters were turned away for lack of space at the opening of the current school year. Each year the primary schools graduate larger numbers, many more of whom want to continue their secondary education in a vocational or technical school. Even if the proportion does not increase, the number of trade school applicants is expected to double in the next three years. The problem is to find significant additional funds to permit the Israel program to keep pace with these requirements.

U. S. JEWISH LEADERS HEAR REPORT ON PROGRESS OF HEBREW UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- A report of the continuous research being conducted by the Hebrew University in the fields of solar energy, nuclear physics and medicine was presented here last night by Bernard Cherrick, director general of the University's Board of Governors, at a dinner meeting of the board of directors of the American Friends of the Hebrew University.

He disclosed that staff members of the Hebrew University-Hadassah Medical School were doing especially significant work on cancer in the Experimental Medicine and Cancer Research Department. In this department several scientists working under the guidance of an American doctor, Prof. Jack Gross, are developing a technique to cut in half the X-ray dosages in the treatment of cancer by using a synthetic hormone experimentally. This technique aims at rendering the cancer tissue more sensitive to radiation.

Mr. Cherrick commended the important role played in the construction of Hebrew University's new campus by American Friends and reported that the University was putting a great deal of stress on relations between Israel and the newly-established nations of the Middle East and Africa. He said that Hebrew University, which now has an enrollment of 5,000 students, had recently matriculated students from Ghana, Ethiopia, Burma, Thailand and Japan, and that 100 Arab students and over 100 Americans are studying there.

On behalf of the Hebrew University, Mr. Cherrick presented an honorary fellowship to Moses A. Leavitt, executive vice chairman of the Joint Distribution Committee, at the meeting held in the Harmonie Club. In accepting the honor, Mr. Leavitt reviewed the history of the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work at the Hebrew University which was established with the aid of a grant of \$500,000 from the Joint Distribution Committee. He emphasized that the School will fill a vital need in the Israel educational structure and lauded Dr. Eileen Blackey, prominent American educator and social work expert who directs the School.

CHIEF RABBI OF FRANCE BECOMES ALSO CHIEF RABBI OF ALGERIA

ALGIERS, Jan. 15. (JTA) -- Chief Rabbi Jacob Kaplan has accepted the additional post and duties of Chief Rabbi of Algeria in a compromise of an internal struggle within the Algerian Jewish community, it was revealed here today. As a result, there will be no separate function for a Chief Rabbi of Algeria.

Another aspect of the compromise was the naming of Rabbi M. Morali of metropolitan France, Chief Rabbi of Algiers, a post which had not been filled in over a year. Differences over the filling of a number of important communal posts have played havoc with communal unity in recent months.

Chief Rabbi Kaplan came here last week to iron out these differences. In the course of his efforts he met with the new French Governor General of Algeria, the Chief Rabbis of various districts in Algeria and Algerian delegates to the Consistory of French Jews.