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BEN GURION SAYS ISRAEL CAN ABSORB THREE MILLION BUT DAY IS 'FAR OFF'

TEL AVIV, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Premier David Ben Gurion fervently believes that Israel can absorb 3,000,000 Jews from East Europe, he said this week-end, but expressed regret that "I cannot see this yet--it is very far off."

In a wide-ranging discussion of issues connected with the new large-scale immigration Israel is receiving, the Prime Minister rejected Arab contentions that immigration would force Israel to seek territorial expansion. He noted that in Egypt alone, the population increased by a half-million annually. He likewise repudiated an Arab assertion that Communist agents might be among the immigrants.

He expressed the belief that the Rumanian Government had decided to permit the exit of the Jews for the humanitarian reason of reunion of families. "We consider all Jews one family," he said, adding that Israel was ready to receive the entire Jewish community of Rumania. Israel, he said, relied on world Jewry to finance the absorption and he hoped that aid would be adequate.

(In Moscow, the official newspaper Izvestia declared this week-end that the Soviet Government would not alienate its Arab friends by permitting emigration of Jews to Israel. It condemned Zionism as "a reactionary movement.")

(In Jerusalem, a Foreign Ministry official said today that the immigration was an "internal affair" of this country and expressed the hope that Arab interventions would be "rebuffed" by the governments to whom the Arabs addressed themselves.)

Peace with Arabs Possible 'Within One Hour'

Turning to the question of Arab-Israel relations, Mr. Ben Gurion reiterated his belief that peace was possible "within one hour" whenever the Arabs were ready. He expressed hope that the Arab leaders would recognize that peace with Israel was in their own interests. Egypt, as the strongest Arab country, would have to be the first among them to make a peace move, he said.

Mr. Ben Gurion disclosed that Israel was ready to resume participation in the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission but repeated that Israel considered the Egyptian commission as non-existent because the Egyptian armistice agreement was "null and void."

Three factors that would favor an Israeli-Arab peace, Mr. Ben Gurion said, would be the development of democratic governments in the Arab countries, the realization by the Arabs that they could not destroy Israel and, finally, a lessening of world tensions.

Mr. Ben Gurion welcomed the announcement of independence for Cyprus and said this was an example of how long-standing hostility could be settled by the disputants sitting down together to negotiate. He expressed the hope that if the United Nations did the same for the Arab-Israel dispute, there might be similar results.

He said Cyprus independence meant for Israel "the positive fact" of having "in the neighborhood" a peaceful country with which Israel will be able to trade, give aid, and be aided.

In reply to a question as to whether he planned to visit the United States, Mr. Ben Gurion said that he did not think he would be able to make such a visit while he was Prime Minister.

REPORT AGREEMENT ON IDENTITY CARDS IN 'WHO IS A JEW?' DISPUTE

JERUSALEM, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- A major point in the dispute over "who is a Jew?" which shattered the Government coalition unity last Summer seemed resolved today with an agreement between Minister of Religions Yaakov Moshe Toledano and Minister of the Interior Israel Bar Yehuda.

Under the new agreement, all Israeli identity cards will state the religion of the father and of the mother of the minor bearer without actually stating his own. When he reaches the age of 16 and applies for his own card, his religion will be established by examination of the facts in the case. The rabbinate is expected to welcome this solution.

ISRAEL CABINET INCREASES BUDGET \$93,000,000 FOR IMMIGRATION NEEDS

JERUSALEM, Feb. 23. (JTA)-- A special session of the Cabinet has been called for tomorrow to complete final plans for increasing the next year's fiscal budget, beginning April 1, by 170,000,000 Israeli pounds (\$93,500,000) needed to meet the current, emergency immigration situation.

The regular 1959-1960 budget is before Parliament now. But yesterday, Finance Minister Levi Eshkol presented to the Cabinet's regular weekly meeting an emergency budget specially earmarked for settlement and absorption of the stream of immigrants arriving here from Eastern Europe.

Mr. Eshkol's supplementary budget envisages the receipt of half of the extra 170,000,000 pounds from abroad. A compulsory loan would be floated here among Israelis who would subscribe 35,000,000 pounds (\$18,150,000) through purchases equaling 15 percent of their annual income. An additional 50,000,000 pounds (\$27,500,000) would be raised through indirect taxes and local bond issues.

Tomorrow's extraordinary Cabinet meeting must make a final decision on Mr. Eshkol's proposals, and formulate for submission to Parliament the additional necessary legislation.

The Cabinet also discussed yesterday the latest proposals from United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold, who has suggested a plan whereby United Nations Truce Chief Carl G. von Horn would make a special study of tensions along the Israel-Syrian border. While the Cabinet's decision on this matter was not disclosed, it is understood that Israel will demand that Syria first permit implementation of an earlier agreement for demarcation of the border. Both the United Arab Republic and Israel agreed with Hammarskjold some months ago to allow such border marking, but Syria has to date failed to finalize the agreement.

Plans Made to Receive 150,000 Immigrants

It was indicated today that Israel is making plans to receive as many as 150,000 Eastern European immigrants this year although the present rate of entry is on the basis of 100,000. The immigration poses three major problems: dwellings for the newcomers, employment and vocational retraining for those whose skills have no outlet in the Israeli economy.

The most difficult problem is that of employment. Only ten percent of the immigrants have relatives here who can help them to find work. The others, unless they find work, must be given jobs by the Jewish Agency. Most of these jobs are in construction work or in tree-planting for which the newcomers are paid six pounds (\$3.60) a day. But as there is not enough of this work for all, they work only three days a week.

The Jewish Agency and the Ministry of Labor are optimistic that a solution to this will be found. The Jewish Agency helps artisans acquire tools and the Ministry organizes vocational retraining courses. Construction work on towns like Kiryat Gat will provide labor for about half the immigrants. Another 20 percent will find jobs in trade, commerce or services. But some 30 percent will be dependent on Government projects.

Special efforts are being charted to integrate the many professionals among the immigrants. The engineers do not represent a serious problem since they can go to work almost immediately. But physicians, lawyers, accountants and others are handicapped without a knowledge of Hebrew.

BRITISH FUND DRIVE FOR ISRAEL IS LAUNCHED WITH WHIRLWIND START

LONDON, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Six hundred guests attending the opening dinner of the Joint Palestine Appeal for 1959 on Saturday night pledged 250,000 pounds (\$700,000) to get the Anglo-Jewish campaign for Israel off to a whirlwind start. Within 24 hours of the opening of the campaign pledges reached a total of 700,000 pounds (\$1,960,000).

Sir Simon Marks, who was to have presided at the dinner but was unable to attend because of illness, made a contribution of 130,000 pounds (\$364,000) in behalf of his family. Some contributions announced to the dinner showed a tenfold increase over last year.

Speakers included Israel Ambassador Eliahu Elath, Sir Francis Evans, former British Ambassador to Israel, and Rabbi Israel Goldstein of New York.

Mr. Elath denied that Israel would need additional land to absorb current or future waves of immigration, describing Israel's expansion as "vertical and not horizontal--in depth and not in area."

Rabbi Goldstein, in appealing for financial sacrifices to meet the needs imposed by the new immigration, told the assemblage that some were paying "a much higher price for the immigration from Eastern Europe--Iran's and North Africa's Jews who were already sitting on their valises, have had to renounce their imminent departure so as to enable the hard-pressed Jewish Agency to deal first with the urgent case presented by Rumania's Jews who are threatened body and soul."

ASK LABOR ZIONISTS TO PLEDGE WEEK'S SALARY TO U. J. A. SPECIAL FUND

NEW YORK, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Members of three Labor Zionist organizations, the Labor Zionist Organization of America, the Farband and the Pioneer Women, as well as of Habonim, the youth organization, were called upon today by their national leaders to make an additional contribution of at least one week's income to the United Jewish Appeal Special Fund over and above their regular contributions. The three major groups number 80,000 members.

RABBIS ASK EISENHOWER TO OPEN GATES FOR EAST EUROPEAN JEWS

NEW YORK, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- The Rabbinical Alliance of America, an Orthodox rabbinic group, sent an appeal to President Eisenhower today urging that the American Government permit free immigration into this country for Jews from Eastern Europe "should emigration to Israel become impossible."

The appeal, adopted at the alliance's mid-winter conference here, said that while the present Jewish emigration from Rumania is voluntary in character, and not the result of revolt as in the case of the Hungarian emigration, the fact is that these Jews are "fleeing" from servitude.

COUNCIL CALLS INCREASED MIGRATION TO ISRAEL 'SOVIET GAME'

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Max J. Fischer, chairman of the Washington chapter of the American Council for Judaism, called on the State Department today to take a stand on the Jewish immigration to Israel. In a letter to the editor of the Washington Post, Mr. Fischer stated:

"By far the most distressing aspect of the problem is that some Americans--both Jews and Christians--indicate a willingness to play the Soviet game in the Middle East by calling for ever-increasing emigration to Israel and by hoping for the expulsion of Jews from Iron Curtain countries."

The letter held that the State Department cannot "continue to evade its own responsibilities in this regard by contending that this is somehow an intramural Jewish question." It added that "nothing less than the most crucial interests of the United States and the free world are at stake."

STATE DEPT. ADVISOR SAYS ARABS SUPPORT SOVIET MOVES ON SEA LIMITS

CHICAGO, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Loftus Becker, legal advisor to the State Department, declared here this week-end that the Arab states are supporting a Communist position by attempting to "extinguish Israel's right of passage" through the Gulf of Akaba. Israel has been insisting the Akaba waters are an international passageway.

Addressing the National Chambers Association here, Mr. Becker stated that Kremlin strategists had thought of the idea of extending the limit of "territorial waters" to 12 miles or more, in an effort to circumscribe the operations of the U. S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. The Arab states supported the Russian move at several international conferences, he charged.

DE GAULLE RECEIVES ISRAELI ENVOY FOR CORDIAL REVIEW OF SITUATION

PARIS, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- For the first time since Charles de Gaulle became President of France, he received Israel Ambassador Jacob Tsur here this week-end.

Gen. de Gaulle asked Mr. Tsur, during the half-hour meeting, about Israel's recent achievements and about the present situation in Israel. The Ambassador presented Israel's viewpoint regarding recent Middle East developments, and dealt also with general Franco-Israeli relations. It is understood that the subject of a possible, formal alliance between France and Israel was not discussed. The meeting between President de Gaulle and Ambassador Tsur was officially described as "very cordial."

HINDU LEADER CONDEMNS INDIA'S FAILURE TO SUPPORT ISRAEL

NEW DELHI, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- India's policy of coolness toward Israel and warm collaboration with the United Arab Republic was condemned sharply today by Prof. Ram Singh, president of the powerful All-India Hindu Mahasabha.

Delivering his presidential address today at Benares, where the Mahasabha opened its 45th annual convention, Dr. Singh stated:

"Extension of support to the UAR as against Great Britain was an act of extreme foolishness. Our Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, should know that a greater UAR means greater danger to India. The new Arab state endangers Israel, and our self-interest demands support of Israel because it is a strong wall against the Communist powers."

WOMEN ARE WARNED AGAINST AMERICAN JEWISH TREND TO SELF-SEGREGATION

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- A growing trend among Jews and other religious and racial groups in the United States to segregate themselves was reported today to the biennial convention of the National Council of Jewish Women.

Mrs. Joseph Willen, second vice-president, told the 800 delegates of the trend to develop "homogeneous communities which are, in essence, self-segregated, and which do not cross lines either in schools or in other community facilities." She said this pattern not only isolated American Jews but was "inherently dangerous to the democratic fabric since Americans are not learning to get along with people of other creeds and colors."

The speaker also told the convention that while the Jewish community is in the forefront in its programs for care of the aged, it is still far from recognizing many of the urgent needs of older people. She reported, too, that studies revealed that needs for Jewish education were not being adequately met.

Mrs. Moise S. Cahn, of New Orleans, opened the convention Sunday with an appeal for support of the United Jewish Appeal. She pointed out that "a quarter of a million Jews are about to leave the homes they have known all their lives to emigrate to Israel." She warned that when they step across the border "they will be impoverished." A telegram from Israel Foreign Minister Golda Meir appealing for support was read to the convention.

DR. BERTRAM W. KORN TO HEAD AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEW YORK, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Dr. Bertram W. Korn of Philadelphia, an authority in the field of American Jewish history, particularly on the Civil War era, was elected president of the American Jewish Historical Society at its 57th annual meeting here yesterday. He succeeded Dr. Jacob R. Marcus of Cincinnati who was elected honorary president of the society.

AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT HONORS J. D. C. AND ORT OFFICIALS FOR REFUGEE WORK

VIENNA, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Minister of the Interior Oskar Helmer presented medals of honor today to Theodore Feder, director of the Austrian Office of the American Joint Distribution Committee; Egon Fink, assistant director, and Albert Goldman, head of the Austrian division of ORT, for services rendered to Austria during the influx of refugees from Hungary in the Autumn and Winter of 1956. There were 18,200 Jewish refugees among the total of 170,000 who escaped to Austria.

MELBOURNE ORCHESTRA COMMISSIONS YOUNG ISRAELI COMPOSER

JERUSALEM, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- The Victorian Symphony Orchestra of Melbourne, Australia has invited Noah Sherif, 23-year-old prize-winning composer and conductor of the Hebrew University Orchestra, to dedicate a new composition to the Victorian orchestra. The orchestra recently presented Sherif's "Prelude" during a special concert in Melbourne marking Israel's tenth anniversary.

SON OF JEWISH IMMIGRANTS NAMED TO HIGH BRAZILIAN POST

RIO DE JANEIRO, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Dr. Henrique Henkin, the son of Jewish colonists in Brazil, was appointed today chief of police of the State of Rio Grande Do Sul. Dr. Henkin is an active member of the Jewish community in the city of Porto Alegre.

PRIVATE SERVICES HELD FOR ZALMAN SHNEUR, HEBREW POET, WRITER

NEW YORK, Feb. 23. (JTA) -- Private funeral services were held here yesterday for the late Zalman Shneur, noted Hebrew and Yiddish novelist and poet, who died Friday of a heart ailment at the age of 72.

The author of more than 60 works, Mr. Shneur's novels and poetry have been translated into twenty or more languages. Critics have placed his literary works on a par with those of Sholem Asch and I. J. Singer in prose, and with Chaim Nachman Bialik in verse.

Mr. Shneur was born in White Russia, and studied medicine in Berlin as a young man. However, he turned to writing and did many of his works in subsequent years in a number of European literary centers until he came to this country in 1941.

About 40 members of his family and close friends attended the funeral services. Among those present were Mrs. Golda Meir, Israel's Foreign Minister, and Simcha Pratt, Israel Consul-General in New York. Burial was private at the National Workers Alliance-Farband Cemetery in New Jersey.