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KNESSET VOTES HIGHEST BUDGET IN HISTORY; INCREASE DUE TO IMMIGRATION

JERUSALEM, March 4. (JTA) -- The Kneset passed the first reading of the new 1,478,000,000-pound (\$812,900,000) budget last night and immediately began a second reading in an effort to complete the debate before the start of the new fiscal year April 1.

The total budget approved in the first reading is 142,000,000 pounds (\$78,100,000) higher than the original draft. The increase was created by the higher immigration absorption needs involved in the new exodus from Rumania and other East European countries. Another 50,000,000 pounds (\$27,500,000) is expected from Jewish Agency participation in providing housing for the newcomers and will be added before the second reading is completed, Kneset sources said.

Meanwhile, the Israel Treasury reported today that in the first nine months of the 1958-59 fiscal year a budget deficit of 74,000,000 pounds had been accumulated. This represented about 10 percent of the total nine-month portion of the budget.

A proposal for the convening of a Jewish assembly to launch an investors' movement which would operate on a large scale to bring to Israel more investment capital and industrial experience was, in the meantime, made here today by Pinhas Sapir, Minister of Trade and Industry.

Mr. Sapir made the proposal in Parliament, where he asked for a special budget allocation that would be used by his Ministry for the purpose of organizing the assembly. According to the plan, the investors' movement would be on a scale corresponding to the United Jewish Appeal and the Israel Bond Organization.

"We need Jewish energy, Jewish capital, knowledge and industrial experience," Mr. Sapir told the Parliament. Pointing out that industrial output last year totalled a value of 1,700,000,000 pounds (\$935,000,000) as against 1,500,000,000 pounds (\$825,000,000) in 1957, the Minister said that Israel itself is already making every effort to build industrial output.

Mr. Sapir reported that government loans promised to approved industries increased last year by 13,000,000 (\$7,150,000) in comparison with 1957. Despite a decrease in world prices, he said, last year's exports rose above the value of the exports sent out in 1957, reaching in 1958 a total of \$340,000,000.

The Minister stated that industry in Israel, which had been geared primarily to production of consumer goods, is now being centered primarily on such production as machinery for production of metals, foodstuffs and paper. He announced that his Ministry is now planning the establishment of a credit-rating service similar to a service like that provided by Dun & Bradstreet. Such a service, he said, would be found valuable by potential investors.

SHARETT CALLS FOR INCREASED AID TO ABSORB IMMIGRANTS FROM RUMANIA

STOCKHOLM, March 4. (JTA) -- A call for increased contributions from Jewish communities abroad to enable Israel to absorb the new waves of immigrants from Rumania and other East European countries was issued here today by Moshe Sharett, former Israel Premier and Foreign Minister, upon his arrival from Paris. He will make a goodwill tour among the major Jewish communities in Scandinavia.

Mr. Sharett also stressed the need for increased private investments in Israel. He emphasized that such investment will help in the industrial development of the country, upon which the Israel Government is now beginning to concentrate, and will thus provide employment for many of the newcomers.

Israeli Leaders Arrive in U.S. on Emergency Mission

NEW YORK, March 4. (JTA) -- Joseph Burg, former Israel Minister of Posts and a member of the Israel Parliament, and David Hacohen, also a member of Parliament and former Israel Ambassador to Burma, arrived here today by El Al Israel Airlines. They join an 18-man Emergency Mission of Israel's leaders, some of whom are now visiting key American Jewish communities to help leaders of the 1959 United Jewish Appeal seek enlarged aid on behalf of new immigrants now coming into Israel from Eastern Europe.

HUGE RESERVOIR OF NATURAL GAS DISCOVERED IN NEGEV NEAR BEERSHEBA

JERUSALEM, March 4. (JTA) -- A reservoir of natural gas believed to be the largest in the Middle East has been discovered in the Negev, about 20 miles from Beersheba, according to an announcement today by the Naphta Oil Company.

The company brought in natural gas from one well recently, and has now struck a second pocket, about two miles from the first. The new bore is producing daily about 90,000 cubic meters of gas, almost all of it methane, ready for industrial use.

Construction of the huge water pipeline that will bring waters from the Jordan River southward to the Negev Desert was begun today. Specially-fitted freight cars took the pipes, each with a bore of more than eight feet, and weighing 30 tons, from the factory at Migdal Ashkelon to the vicinity of the construction site. The plans are to place 15 pipe sections, each a little over 16 feet in length, into position, each day until the project is completed.

AMERICAN SETTLERS IN ISRAEL HOLD CONVENTION; DISCUSS VARIOUS PROBLEMS

TEL AVIV, March 4. (JTA) -- Claims that the Jewish Agency does not give the same financial aid to immigrants from North America as it does to other immigrants were aired and refuted at the opening session today of the eighth annual convention of the Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel.

S. Z. Shragai, head of the immigration department of the Jewish Agency, told the 200 delegates and hundreds of guests that the Jewish Agency has "spent much more on aiding immigrants from North America than from any other single country." He added that "you can quote me as saying that there is not a single case of a North American immigrant not coming because he did not get the help of the Jewish Agency."

A representative of the Minister of the Interior similarly rebutted a complaint that the Government was making difficulties for "temporary residents." He said that such a resident could not expect to retain that status permanently. Referring to the many American and Canadian settlers who still held that status, the representative said that "in three years or so a person should decide whether he wishes to become an immigrant or not."

Reports on the Association's activities were presented by Carl Alpert, president, and M. Grienfeld, secretary. They said that in its ten years of existence, the Association had served American settlers in various ways and was recognized recently by the Jewish Agency American department as the official branch of that Agency department. They reported that the Association was dealing with problems involving pensions of aged Americans in Israel. The pensions now total half a million dollars a year. They also told the delegates that the association has undertaken a housing program for its members.

ISRAEL PLANS PERMANENT TRAINING OF AFRICAN AND ASIAN LEADERS

JERUSALEM, March 4. (JTA) -- Plans to establish in Israel a permanent Institute for economic training of African and Asian leaders were under consideration today by the Government, the Histadrut and the Jewish Agency.

The idea was evolved as a result of the great success of several Afro-Asian seminars held in Israel recently. These included seminars on cooperation and one for youth leaders. The permanent institute would provide training in the fields of agriculture, cooperatives, industrial planning and related areas.

Meanwhile, another project of Israel-Asian cooperation neared the implementation stage with the scheduled establishment of a joint Israel-Burmese Construction Company. The partners in the new firm are the Burmese Ministry of Development and Israel's Solel Boneh. The company will engage mainly in construction and housing projects.

Ghana Farmers, Trained in Israel, Laud Israeli Methods

ACCRA, Ghana, March 4. (JTA) -- Five members of the Ghana Farmers Council, who had attended a two-month seminar for Afro-Asian cooperation, concluded last week in Israel, returned home today full of praise for Israel and for the seminar which they attended. The Ghanians said they learned much from the seminar that will enable them to help solve economic problems facing farmers in this country.

Israeli Ambassador Ehud Avriel returned here today after a three-week visit to Jerusalem, where he had been summoned for governmental consultations. Mr. Avriel said he reported to his Government about the work being done in this country by Israeli experts called here to aid in many economic affairs.

ISRAEL CABINET SETS DATE FOR ANNUAL MEMORIAL OF JEWISH MARTYRS

JERUSALEM, March 4. (JTA) -- The Cabinet voted today to set aside the Hebrew calendar date of Nissan 27--which falls this year on May 5--as the annual memorial day honoring the Jewish martyrs and heroes of the period of the Nazis.

TERRORISTS IN ALGIERS THROW GRENADE INTO JEWISH CAFE; FOUR WOUNDED

ALGIERS, March 4. (JTA) -- Algiers police reported today that a hand grenade was thrown by an unidentified terrorist into a Jewish-owned and Jewish-frequented cafe here last Sunday. Four persons, including three Jews, were wounded. A number of such attacks have taken place in this entirely Jewish section of Algiers in recent weeks, it was reported.

DELEGATION CONFERS WITH WEST GERMAN PRESIDENT ON ANTI-SEMITIC INCIDENTS

BONN, March 4. (JTA) -- Deep concern over the resurgence of neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic incidents in West Germany was expressed here today by a delegation of Christians and Jews calling upon President Theodor Heuss of the West German Republic. The delegation represented the German Coordinating Council of the Society of Christians and Jews.

Dr. Heuss, a patron of the society, pledged his support to the delegation for a far-reaching educational program to acquaint German youth with the crimes of Nazi Germany. Leopold Goldschmidt, general secretary of the Council, headed the delegation.

RABBINICAL CONFERENCE ASKS CONGRESS FOR STRICTER LAWS ON BOMBINGS

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., March 4. (JTA) -- The Rabbinical Council of America, an Orthodox body, today called upon the United States Congress to adopt legislation which would make it a Federal crime to bomb centers of worship, schools and other places of assembly anywhere in the United States.

The action was taken in a resolution adopted at the closing session of the midwinter conference of the association of Orthodox rabbis. The resolution asked that the legislation empower President Eisenhower to utilize the services of the FBI in carrying out prosecution of such bombings.

In another resolution, the 500 delegates urged Congress to adopt legislation banning use of the mails for propagation of racial and religious hate literature. The delegates also called on the United States to include Israel within the framework of the NATO organization.

The conference called on the Federal and State civil service bureaus to abolish giving of competitive examinations on the Jewish Sabbath. In another resolution, the delegates urged the states to enact fair Sabbath laws to relieve the hardships imposed on Sabbath-observing Jewish merchants.

The delegates asked the members of the Jewish communities in the United States to intensify and double their support of such Israel fund-raising undertakings as the United Jewish Appeal and Bonds for Israel, in the light of the increased immigration to Israel from East European countries.

Last night the conference adopted a resolution asking the Soviet Government to permit Jews to emigrate from the Soviet Union "to lands of their choice." At the same time the resolution said that "in the face of recent Soviet denials that it has any intention of permitting such immigration, we strongly urge the Soviet Government to grant a greater measure of religious freedom with the right to religious education as well as worship for all ethnic groups."

N. Y. SENATE PASSES LAW PROVIDING HIGH PENALTIES FOR BOMBING SYNAGOGUES

ALBANY, N. Y., March 4. (JTA) -- A proposed state law providing penalties ranging from 20 to 50 years' imprisonment for "malicious" damage by explosives to churches, synagogues or cemeteries was passed by the Senate last night, and has been forwarded to the State Assembly.

Under the draft measure, the 50-year prison sentence could be given for such bombings that endanger human life. In cases where no human lives were endangered, the maximum penalty would be 20 years' imprisonment.

"HUMANE SLAUGHTER" BILL, OPPOSED BY JEWS, SHELVED IN OHIO LEGISLATURE

COLUMBUS, Ohio, March 4. (JTA) -- A proposed "humane slaughter" bill, which has been pending in the State Legislature here, was shelved today and is unlikely to be brought up again at this year's session.

All Jewish congregational and rabbinical organizations have been among the staunchest opponents of the draft measure. Last night, the agricultural committee of the State House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly--by 14 to 1--to postpone bringing the bill to the floor for an indefinite period.

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HONORS EBAN; NAMES HIM HONORARY CITIZEN

PHILADELPHIA, March 4. (JTA) -- Abba Eban, Israel's Ambassador to the United States, and permanent representative to the United Nations, yesterday was named an honorary citizen of the City of Philadelphia at a farewell luncheon in his honor here. Mr. Eban is leaving his posts in Washington and at the UN at the end of May.

CONSERVATIVES ESTABLISH MARRIAGE COUNSELING UNDER RABBINICAL COURT

NEW YORK, March 4. (JTA) -- A new cooperative understanding between rabbinical scholars and practicing psychiatrists has led to the establishment of a marriage counseling service under the auspices of the Beth Din--the rabbinical court--of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and the Rabbinical Assembly of America. This was announced jointly today by Dr. Louis Finkelstein, chancellor of the Seminary for training Conservative rabbis, Dr. Isaac Klein, president of the Rabbinical Assembly, and Dr. Mortimer Ostow, psychiatrist who heads the Department of Pastoral Psychiatry at the Seminary here.

"The new marriage counseling service," according to Dr. Finkelstein, "will use the combined skills of the rabbinic scholar and the psychiatrist to resolve marital conflicts. This service, under the auspices of Beth Din, will protect the divine element which exists in every true marriage and through the cooperation of skilled psychiatrists will enable the parties to the marriage to find fulfillment within the contract they have entered into before God and man."

Speaking of the psychiatric aspect of the new service, Dr. Ostow said, "the conscientious psychiatrist who is often called upon to mediate in marital problems will welcome the opportunity to restrict his work to clinical study, leaving the ethical issues to the clergy. This will enable the clergyman to confine his efforts to fields in which he is competent, relying on his medical colleague to clarify clinical issues and motivational dynamics."

In outlining the development of the new project, Dr. Finkelstein praised the efforts of Rabbi Klein, a member of the Beth Din since its inception in obtaining acceptance of the new Ketubah--the traditional Jewish marriage agreement--adopted in 1954. This change in the religious marriage agreement requires both bride and groom to acknowledge the authority of the Beth Din or its representatives to counsel them in the light of Jewish tradition. Dr. Finkelstein characterized it as the first step in making possible the new marriage counseling service.

Dr. Finkelstein reported that when experimentation started with the new Ketubah, there was a backlog of 22 purportedly insoluble cases of marital conflict in which a civil divorce had already been granted but in which it was apparently impossible to obtain a Get, or Jewish Divorce. He added that at present there are no such cases remaining before the Beth Din. The counseling service, which is being launched immediately at the Seminary, is to be regarded as a pilot project, Dr. Finkelstein said.

SHOLEM ALEICHEM'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY OBSERVED IN MOSCOW, WARSAW

LONDON, March 4. (JTA) -- Countries behind the Iron Curtain, including the Soviet Union itself, are participating actively in the world-wide celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sholem Aleichem, noted Jewish author, according to dispatches and foreign radio broadcasts monitored here.

In Moscow, last night, a meeting was held at which leading Soviet writers read papers devoted to the works of the late Sholem Aleichem. Boris Polevoi represented the USSR Ministry of Culture as well as the All-Union Writers Union. Prominent actors read from the works of Sholem Aleichem in Yiddish, while Yiddish songs were rendered at the meeting. Paul Robeson, American basso, appeared at the meeting and sang some Negro spirituals as well as Yiddish songs.

The Moscow radio today broadcast reports of the meeting, adding that the Jewish Ghetto conditions described in the works of Sholem Aleichem "are gone forever." The Jewish people in the USSR, stated the broadcast, "received equality in the Soviet Union, like all underprivileged people." Pravda, organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, carried an article devoted to Sholem Aleichem and to the "classic Yiddish literature."

In Poland and Rumania other special events were held and scheduled in honor of Sholem Aleichem's memory. In Jassy, Rumania, the late satirist's famous story, "The Lottery," was produced by a theatrical group which introduced the dramatization with a note stating: "Sholem Aleichem himself was the greatest gift won by the Yiddish mass culture."

BUENOS AIRES, March 4. (JTA) -- "Sholem Aleichem Year" was launched here last night at a festive meeting conducted at the headquarters of the organized Jewish community. An announcement at the meeting made public plans for the year's observance.

At the opening of the meeting, Abraham Mittelberg, chairman of the Sholem Aleichem Committee, pronounced a eulogy on the late Zalman Shneur, Hebrew-Yiddish poet-novelist, who died two weeks ago in New York.

MEXICO CITY, March 4. (JTA) -- The hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sholem Aleichem was observed festively here last night at the Jewish School here, largest school of the kind in the country. More than 1,200 students of the school rendered a program of readings, dramatizations and songs related to Sholem Aleichem's works--all in Yiddish. This was the first of many special Sholem Aleichem celebrations scheduled in Mexico.