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BRITAIN REITERATES STAND FOR FREE PASSAGE OF SHIPS THROUGH SUEZ

LONDON, March 19. (JTA) -- Britain's official policy holds that the Suez Canal must be operated as "an international waterway," in conformity with an agreement made at the United Nations in 1956, when Egypt agreed to permit "free and open transit, without overt or covert" discrimination against any user of the international waterway.

This policy was confirmed by the Government today in a statement made to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency by the spokesman for the Foreign Office in connection with Israel's complaint yesterday to the United Nations against Egypt's interference with Israeli shipping through the Suez Canal.

The spokesman declared that the Government's policy remains the same as enunciated some time ago in the House of Commons by Commander Alan Noble, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. In that statement, Commander Noble declared that the Government's policy is that the Canal must be operated as an international waterway in conformance with the "six principles" laid down at the United Nations.

Two of those six principles, to which Egypt agreed in 1956 and which the U.N. Security Council confirmed in a resolution adopted October 13, 1956, provide that: "The Canal must be open to transit without discrimination, overt or covert, both political and technical," and that operation of the Canal must be "insulated from the policies of any country."

Throughout the day today, officials of the Israeli Embassy, headed by Charge d'Affaires Arthur A. Liveran, have been in touch with the British Foreign Office. Hopes were expressed that Britain will now take a positive stand for the maintenance of the principles of free navigation through the Canal.

It is understood that the Foreign Office is studying another aspect of the latest United Arab Republic action in which the cargoes of foreign, non-Israeli owners were taken off at Port Said because the cargoes had originated in Israel. The British Government was presumed to have a special interest in the dispute because the cargo of one ship had been destined for Ceylon, a member of the British Commonwealth. The cargo of the second ship had been acquired by buyers in the British Crown colony, Hong Kong, and in Malaya, another Commonwealth member.

U. N. Delegations Briefed by Israelis on Egypt's Seizure of Cargo

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., March 19. (JTA) -- Israel today was continuing a most vigorous diplomatic campaign against the United Arab Republic's seizure of Israeli-originated cargoes being carried in foreign ships through the Suez Canal.

Joseph Tekoah, deputy permanent representative of Israel here, and Dr. Moshe Tov, Israel Ambassador to Mexico, conferred today with the representatives of three more members of the Security Council, the delegation chairmen for Japan, Italy and Panama. Abba Eban, chairman of the Israel delegation, had already been in personal contact with Sir Pierson of Britain, this month's Security Council president, and with Henry Cabot Lodge, head of the American delegation.

Later, Mr. Tekoah and Dr. Tov discussed the Suez issue, as it affects Israel with Andrew W. Cordier, executive assistant to Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold. Observers here predicted freely that Mr. Hammarskjold himself, who is now absent from Headquarters, might be asked to intervene personally with the U. A. R. government for release of the seized cargoes. A number of big maritime powers, it was learned here, have already voiced such demands through their diplomatic envoys in Cairo.

It was also freely predicted that Israel will most certainly take the issue to the Security Council, with a call for public airing of the entire Suez issue, unless the diplomatic pressures result in the release of the cargoes which, in Mr. Eban's view, have been "illegally plundered through piratical assault."

(Speaking at Eilat today, Israel Premier David Ben Gurion said that while the U. A. R. would not "dare" now to interfere with shipping to and from Eilat, "they are doing what is easy for them because they know we do not contemplate any action against Port Said.")

ISRAEL FINANCE MINISTER WILLING TO REDUCE COMPULSORY IMMIGRATION LOAN

JERUSALEM, March 19. (JTA) -- Israel's Finance Minister Levi Eshkol today told the Parliament that he is willing to reduce the rates of the compulsory immigration loan which has already passed the first reading in Knesset. The opposition parties demand that the loan be suspended pending clarification of the fate of further emigration of Jews from Rumania. Hope that Rumanian emigration would soon be fully resumed was expressed today by Premier David Ben Gurion at a press conference in Eilath.

Mr. Eshkol also told the Knesset that prospects were good for United States Treasury recognition of tax benefits granted by Israel to American investors in approved enterprises here.

Under the projected arrangement, the U.S. Treasury would consider Israel taxes from which investors here are exempted as paid in Israel. Thus, Israel tax exemptions would accrue to the benefit of the investors and not be paid as a United States tax. Currently, American investors are exempted from paying taxes on such profits only if they actually pay such taxes in the countries in which the profits are earned.

GOLDA MEIR CONFERS WITH ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ON MIDDLE EAST

PARIS, March 19. (JTA) -- Mrs. Golda Meir, Israel's Foreign Minister, held a 45-minute conversation today with Giuseppe Pella, the Italian Foreign Minister, at the latter's request. The Foreign Minister and Premier Antonio Segni are on an official visit to Paris.

Minister Giuseppe asked for the meeting to discuss the political situation in the Middle East with Mrs. Meir in view of recent developments and to obtain the views of the Israel Government.

At a press conference here Mrs. Meir said that there was little difference between the favorable attitude toward Israel of the De Gaulle Government and that of previous French governments. She said such changes as have occurred were matters of "style and not of concept." She asserted that relations between the two countries were very cordial.

Mrs. Meir stated that the question of a formal Franco-Israel alliance had never been raised by Israel representative. The Israel Government's position continues to be that the matter of such an alliance had to be raised, if it were raised, by France and not by Israel.

ISRAEL ARMY CHIEF CONFIRMS VERDICT AGAINST SHADMI FOR KFAR KASSEM

TEL AVIV, March 19. (JTA) -- Brig. Chaim Laskov, chief of staff of the Israel Defense Forces, today confirmed the conviction of Col. Issachar Shadmi, whom a military court had found guilty of "acting beyond authority" by ordering a border patrol under his command to fire against Arab civilians in the Israeli village of Kfar Kassem.

In confirming Col. Shadmi's conviction, Gen. Laskov also upheld the penalty imposed on the officer. That penalty, however, is nominal, involving a fine of a very small sum, amounting to less than one cent. Members of the border patrol who did the actual killing were given long prison sentences. They have appealed to a higher military court, which is expected to hand down its ruling next month.

ISRAEL RAISES FEES FOR ISSUANCE OF PASSPORTS AND EXIT VISAS

JERUSALEM, March 19. (JTA) -- Israelis discovered today that fees for issuance of passports and visas have suddenly been raised, in some cases to double the previous fees.

Without public announcement, the Ministry of the Interior, which is in charge of passport and visa issuance here, increased the fees for these documents from 25 pounds to 50 pounds. Exit visas for some trips now cost 50 pounds, compared with the previous fee of 30 pounds.

Israelis note that, if they wish to go ahead, they must pay at least 100 pounds--\$55 in American money--even before they purchase their tickets. The Ministry denied that the hike was intended to hinder travel abroad, as some complainants contend.

JEWISH AGENCY MERGES ITS RADIO BROADCASTS WITH KOL YISROEL

JERUSALEM, March 19. (JTA) -- Kol Zion Lagolah, the four-language radio service of the Jewish Agency to overseas communities, will be merged with the Government's Kol Yisroel April 1, the press reported today. The economy move will save the Agency 150,000 pounds a year, it was reported.

1,178,000 VOTERS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ISRAEL'S ELECTIONS

JERUSALEM, March 19. (JTA) -- A total of 1,178,000 voters will be eligible to participate in Israel's next general elections, scheduled for November. The figures were announced here by the Ministry of the Interior. The number of voters tops the total that participated in the last general elections by 55,000.

WORLD TRIBUNAL TO HEAR ISRAEL'S ARGUMENTS AGAINST BULGARIA TODAY

THE HAGUE, March 19. (JTA) -- Israel's side of the case it has brought against Bulgaria, at the International Court of Justice here, will be formally argued tomorrow, when oral presentations will be made before the full Court by Shabtai Rosenne, principal legal officer of the Israel Foreign Ministry.

The case, which arose out of Bulgaria's gunfire attack against an El Al Israel plane in 1955 causing a loss of 58 lives, has been pending for over two years before the Court. Israel claims monetary damages of \$7,462,803.

The court adjourned last night until tomorrow morning, after Bulgaria had completed its oral defense in arguments by its delegation head, Nissim Mevorach, a Bulgarian Jew, and Pierre Cot, a Communist attorney from Paris hired by the Bulgarian Government. The points made by the spokesmen for Bulgaria were as follows:

- 1) The court has no jurisdiction over the case, because Bulgaria was not yet a member of the United Nations in 1955, at the time of the plane incident.
- 2) Even if the court should reject Bulgaria's claim of non-jurisdiction, the Bulgarians hold that they are entitled to "reciprocal" damages from Israel.
- 3) If there is a case at all, it should be brought before a Bulgarian court, because it is an "internal" Bulgarian matter.
- 4) Israel's claim for damages is invalid because it was computed by an insurance company, and not by Israeli nationals.
- 5) The entire case constitutes "interferences" in Bulgaria's internal affairs.

AMENDMENTS TO AUSTRIAN RESTITUTION BILL DISCUSSED IN PARLIAMENT

VIENNA, March 19. (JTA) -- A discussion of amendments to the Austrian restitution bill for victims of Nazi persecution evoked sharp attacks on the measure in Parliament today from the extremes of right and left-wing representation.

A deputy of the neo-Nazi Freedom Party charged that the measure would benefit only residents who have emigrated from Austria, and that the bill was dictated by the United States, Britain and France. A Communist deputy declared that the bill did not fulfill the demands of the victims.

Members of the coalition parties conceded that the measure did not eliminate all inequities. Spokesmen for the Peoples Party and the Socialist Party said that the bill was only a first step toward further improvements.

SENATE COMMITTEE HEARS TESTIMONY ON SYNAGOGUE BOMBINGS, HATE MAIL

WASHINGTON, March 19. (JTA) -- Sen. Kenneth B. Keating, New York Republican, today told the Senate Judiciary Committee that a factor behind the bombing of synagogues and schools may be the fact "that too many of those responsible for the bombings have gone unpunished."

Calling for enactment of a federal anti-bombing bill, Sen. Keating told the committee that "a better record of successful law-enforcement would be a strong deterrent to the bombers." According to the senator, widespread southern defiance of the Supreme Court's desegregation decision "is a substantial contributing cause of these acts of violence." He cited a "tremendous increase in hate mail" as another contributing cause of violence. In his view, legislation should be adopted that would curb such hate mailings without interfering with freedom of speech.

Individuals who bomb synagogues deserve severe treatment, said Sen. Keating, since their deeds "have disgraced the whole nation!" On the basis of findings of Sen. Keating and Sen. Jacob K. Javits--a fellow Republican of New York--Sen. Keating said he thought an effective federal anti-bombing bill would be welcomed in southern communities where bombings have occurred.

"The plain truth is that only the FBI has the necessary jurisdiction, skills and manpower to do a thorough job on any interstate conspiracy," he said. He pointed out that this nation has federal laws controlling lotteries, mail fraud, and transportation of women for immoral purposes but has no legislation dealing with use of interstate facilities for bombing synagogues and schools."

Sen. Keating charged that "it is because of the absence of such a federal law that the Department of Justice has generally refused to intervene in these cases, and even in the case of Atlanta had to turn the defendants over to the state authorities for prosecution."

In Birmingham, Sen. Keating reported, bombing attempts against Jews and Negroes were found by local police to have the appearance of "an interstate conspiracy" but the FBI turned down a Birmingham police invitation to enter the case, according to Sen. Keating. He said the FBI claimed that federal law on the subject was absent. As a consequence none of the culprits in the Birmingham terror were caught.

GENERAL ZIONISTS ASK WORLD CONFERENCE OF BUSINESSMEN FOR ISRAEL

NEW YORK, March 19. (JTA) -- A proposal to convene an international conference of businessmen, economists and industrialists to discuss ways and means of attracting private capital to Israel received the backing of the World Confederation of General Zionists at a meeting of the executive of the Confederation, held here and presided over by Dr. Emanuel Neumann, president.

"Such a conference," the World Confederation declared in a resolution, "should be convened under the joint auspices of the Jewish Agency and the Government of Israel. It would serve as a great stimulus to the flow of private capital to Israel and would be of immense aid in bolstering the economy of the Jewish State.

"It is obvious by this time that philanthropic funds, plus funds derived from the sale of Israel bonds, will not suffice in view of the possibility of a vastly increased immigration into Israel," the resolution continued. "Moreover, if the projected conference is to succeed, it must concern itself seriously with basic economic problems in Israel and recommend ways and means of creating a new climate more conducive to the growth of private enterprise and the attraction of private investors from abroad."

At the same time, the World Confederation, in another resolution, warned against "any encroachment by the Israel Ministry of Commerce upon the prerogatives of the Jewish Agency in this field, which would be in contradiction to express provisions in the charter under which the Jewish Agency operates."

Pointing out that immigration of the middle classes from Western countries must not be neglected, despite the present Rumanian immigration, the World Confederation went on record as opposing the liquidation of the loan funds for middle-class settlers established by the Agency in partnership with the Government of Israel. It also called for the continued grant of premiums to new middle-class immigrants who bring \$10,000 or more with them, and protested against their proposed discontinuance on April 1.

SOVIET PRESS DEVOTES ARTICLES TO THE SHOLEM ALEICHEM ANNIVERSARY

VIENNA, March 19. (JTA) -- Every leading publication in the Soviet Union, including Communist Party, governmental and mass-circulation newspapers and periodicals, has been featuring materials laying Sholem Aleichem as part of the observance of the hundredth anniversary of Sholem Aleichem's birth.

Copies of Soviet newspapers and magazines received here today show laudatory articles in Pravda, Izvestia, Literaturnaya Gazeta, Sovetskoye Iskustvo, and Ogonok. The latter is a weekly having the largest circulation of any periodical in the U. S. S. R., considered by foreigners in Russia as the Russian equivalent of America's "Life" Magazine.

The Moscow radio reported today that four well-known Soviet artists-- Aleksandrovich, Gorovoy, Kaminskaya and Valter--left Moscow for Paris this week to participate in a Sholem Aleichem anniversary celebration in the French capital, under the auspices of an organization of Jewish Communists.

RIO DE JANEIRO MUNICIPALITY TO NAME STREET AFTER SHOLEM ALEICHEM

RIO DE JANEIRO, March 19. (JTA) -- The City Council today unanimously approved a proposal suggested by the Jewish press here to name a street after Sholem Aleichem. in connection with the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of the world-famous Jewish author. The proposal was presented to the Council by its member Dr. Isaac Izekson, a Socialists.

MAURICE BISGYER NAMED MEMBER OF U. S. NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO

WASHINGTON, March 19. (JTA) -- The Department of State today confirmed the appointment of Maurice Bisgyer, executive vice-president of B'nai B'rith, as a member of the United States National Commission for UNESCO. Mr. Bisgyer will represent his organization on the Commission which will hold its 7th annual conference in Denver in September.

552 JEWISH IMMIGRANTS FROM ARGENTINA CAME TO ISRAEL IN 1958

JERUSALEM, March 19. (JTA) -- A total of 552 Jewish immigrants came to Israel from Argentina in 1958, according to figures announced here today by the Jewish Agency's immigration department. Of the total, 323 were professionals and craftsmen.

DR. ISRAEL GOLDSTEIN ARRIVES IN INDIA; HONORED BY BOMBAY JEWS

BOMBAY, March 19. (JTA) -- Dr. Israel Goldstein, former president of the American Jewish Congress and member of the Jewish Agency executive arrived here yesterday. Speaking at a reception in his honor given today by the Central Jewish Board of Bombay and the Bombay Zionist Association, Dr. Goldstein described India and Israel as the "two great focal points of vital democracy spanning the continent of Asia."