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STATE DEPARTMENT EXPRESSES 'REGRET' OVER JTA EXCLUSION INCIDENT

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- The State Department officially agreed today that Milton Friedman, Washington correspondent of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, should have been admitted to a background briefing in the Department on January 28, and attributed his exclusion to an official "misunderstanding."

Assistant Secretary of State Robert Manning, replying to the protest made on behalf of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency by Philip Slomovitz, its vice-president, conceded that the matter "should have been handled more wisely." Once Mr. Friedman had made known his desire to attend the briefing, Mr. Manning said, "he should have been invited. I regret that he was not."

Mr. Manning said in his reply that he had looked into the incident at the request of Secretary of State Dean Rusk and stated, "I can assure you that no affront to Mr. Friedman or to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency was intended. Nevertheless, a misunderstanding occurred, and I welcome this opportunity to explain the circumstances that apparently occasioned it."

In his reply, the State Department official described the background briefings held by the Department from time to time, and pointed out that invitations to these briefings "are likely to range from the all-inclusive downward to a handful of correspondents who have a special interest in a subject or who have been seeking individual interviews. Attendance at backgrounders is often limited, since it would be impractical in most cases to invite the 211 correspondents accredited to the Department."

Friedman 'Should Have Been Invited to Briefing,' Letter Declares

"The background briefing in the present case," Mr. Manning said, "concerned the resignation of Dr. Joseph E. Johnson as Special Representative of the Palestine Conciliation Commission. It was set up by the Deputy Public Affairs Adviser of the Bureau of Near Eastern and Asian Affairs with the concurrence of the Bureau of Public Affairs, and was given by Mr. Robert C. Strong, Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs. A small number of reporters were invited, representing major American newspapers and wire services, namely: New York Times, New York Herald Tribune, Baltimore Sun, Washington Post, Washington Star, Time Magazine, Associated Press and United Press International.

"The principle followed in compiling this list was to invite correspondents who cover the Department regularly and who had been asking questions virtually every day about the Johnson matter. When Mr. Friedman subsequently inquired about the briefing, he was told that it was limited to those who had been invited. This should have been handled more wisely; once he had made known his interest in the subject, he should have been invited to attend the briefing. I regret that he was not."

The Assistant Secretary of State denied that dissatisfaction in the Department with Mr. Friedman's reporting had any connection with his exclusion from the briefing. He said that "in talking with Mr. Friedman, Mr. Strong explained that he had not determined who was to be invited to the briefing. Mr. Strong then mentioned an article written by Mr. Friedman a short time ago. Mr. Strong questioned the accuracy of the report on which the article was based, and offered the services of his office for the purpose of checking such reports in the future. There was no connection between this part of the discussion and the fact that Mr. Friedman was not invited to the background briefing. You may be sure that the Bureau of Public Affairs, the Office of Near Eastern Affairs and Mr. Strong would be most happy to see Mr. Friedman or any other representative of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency at any time."

In its formal protest to the Secretary of State over the incident, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency expressed concern that "such acts of discrimination not be repeated and that representatives of this Agency should not be barred from access to news being made available on other information media." The JTA protest pointed out that such actions "served to deprive large segments of the American Jewish community of information made public by the Department in which they were especially concerned and in which it was in the best interests of American policy that they be fully informed."

JEWISH HEAD OF RED AIR FORCE 'REHABILITATED'; MURDERED UNDER STALIN

LONDON, Feb. 26. (JTA)-- Soviet General Jacob Shmushkevitch, twice awarded highest Communist honors as a "Hero of the Soviet Union" and top commander of the Soviet Air Force during World War II, was "rehabilitated" today in a eulogy in "Red Star," organ of the USSR armed forces, 21 years after he had been murdered during the Stalin purges of prominent Jews, according to a Moscow dispatch received here today.

General Shmushkevitch was the son of a poor Jewish shoemaker in a small Lithuanian town. He joined the Red Army in 1918 and rose to great heights as military strategist and administrator. Among other distinctions he held was that of candidate for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. He disappeared in 1942. "Red Star" hailed his memory today as a "genius" who had been a victim of the "personality cult"--meaning Stalinism.

EURCART SESSION STALLS ON ISRAEL'S BID FOR E. E. C. LINK

BRUSSELS, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- The Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community ended its February session today with a communique which indicated that virtually no progress had been made on Israel's bid for some kind of link with the six nations of the Common Market.

The final communique of the meeting stated, with regard to Israel, that "a number of questions remain to be clarified." The communique added that the Council instructed the committee of permanent representatives of the member states "to resume work in collaboration with competent experts and to report to it at its first and second April session." The statement indicated that similar instructions were issued about the application by Iran.

Observers here indicated an opinion that the two-day session was negative both with regard to Israel and Iran, as well as with the application of Algeria, consideration of which was likewise postponed.

SUPREME COURT RULING ON MIXED MARRIAGES SEEN 'ENDANGERING' ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Nissim warned today that last week's Supreme Court decision, ordering the Interior Ministry to register mixed marriages contracted abroad by Israelis of different faiths, is "endangering the unity of the nation." Noting that Israel's marriage and divorce laws were aimed at unifying Jewry, Rabbi Nissim declared in a statement released by the Chief Rabbinate that the Court ruling would make a "mockery" of these laws, and force the State to recognize the marriages of persons seeking to circumvent the law.

The Rabbinate also announced that Rabbi Nissim would convene a special session of the Chief Rabbinate Council to discuss the situation arising from the Supreme Court ruling.

BEN-GURION ANNOUNCES DEVELOPMENT OF SOLAR ENERGY MOTOR

JERUSALEM, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- A motor which draws energy from the sun, with sufficient power to generate electricity for a small settlement, has been successfully developed by the Israel National Physics Laboratory, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion announced today in the Knesset, Israel's Parliament.

Addressing the House on the budget of his Office, Mr. Ben-Gurion lauded the achievements of his Ministry's National Council for Research and Development in discovering new sources of energy. He said Israel already occupied a prominent position in nuclear research for peaceful purposes.

ISRAEL, BRAZIL FORM JOINT FIRM TO DEVELOP WATER RESOURCES

RIC DE JANEIRO, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- Israel and Brazil signed today an agreement for the incorporation of a joint firm to engage in locating water resources and irrigation work in the underdeveloped northeastern area of this country. The company will have a capitalization of 100,000,000 cruzeiros (\$210,000), the majority shares to be owned by Brazil.

Under the pact, Israel will train a number of Brazilians in Israel in locating water resources and will also subsidize the technical training of Brazilian students in this country. Israel will also supply equipment for water resource identification and for irrigation.

AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT APPROVES ISRAEL TALLOW PURCHASE WORTH \$500,000

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- The United States Department of Agriculture today announced issuance of an authorization to Israel to finance purchase of \$500,000 worth of inedible tallow under the Food for Peace Program. The authorization, under Public Law 480, provides for purchase of about 2,900 metric tons of inedible tallow in 50-55-gallon drums, or in bulk.

FIRST 1963 SHIPMENT OF JAFFA ORANGES REACHES PORT OF NEW YORK

NEW YORK, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- The first shipment of the year of Jaffa oranges from Israel arrived in the port of New York today, and will be distributed throughout the eastern part of the United States. This year, 120,000 to 150,000 crates are expected to be sold in supermarkets and food stores in the United States.

19 STATES OPPOSE 66 JEWISH GROUPS IN HIGH COURT PRAYER CASE

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- The attorneys general of 19 states will line up against representatives of 66 Jewish organizations when the United Supreme Court opens hearings here tomorrow, expected to take two full days of the High Tribunal's schedule on the constitutionality of religious exercises in the public schools.

The 19 state representatives have filed a "friend of the court" brief, seeking to uphold the constitutionality of Bible-reading requirements in the public schools of Baltimore. The Jewish organizations, led by the Synagogue Council of America and the National Community Relations Advisory Council, are arguing in a brief they filed yesterday not only against the Maryland case but also against a Pennsylvania ruling permitting the recitation of the Lord's Prayer in the public schools. Another "friend of the court" brief, opposing religious practices in the public schools, was also filed today by the American Ethical Union.

The states whose attorneys general joined in their brief are: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota and Tennessee. Their joint brief urges the High Court to sustain a decision of the Maryland Court of Appeals that found the Bible reading measure to be constitutional.

"Reversal of the decision in this case," the 19 states argued, "will require by necessary implication the prohibition of all public acknowledgments of the divinity and the theistic concept of our origin and end." A reversal would also "by necessary implication impose upon the police an atheistic or at least agnostic concept of our origin and end and will itself constitute the establishment of religion," the brief declared.

American Jewish Committee Issues 'Fact Sheet' on Opposing Views

NEW YORK, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- The American Jewish Committee made public today a fact sheet "to aid public understanding" of two cases testing the constitutionality of the Lord's Prayer and Bible reading in the public schools scheduled for argument tomorrow before the United States Supreme Court.

A. M. Sonnabend, AJC president, said the fact sheet was "purely educational." The document stressed that the basic question awaiting court determination was whether Bible readings and recitation of the Lord's Prayer were "essential religious services, thus constituting an 'establishment of religion' in violation of the U. S. Constitution."

The fact sheet also noted a variety of contradictory state court decisions on religious practices in public schools. In the two cases up before the Supreme Court for hearings, the lower courts also issued conflicting rulings. The Maryland Court of Appeals upheld the practice of Bible reading and use of the Lord's Prayer. But, in Pennsylvania, the courts ruled these practices unconstitutional under the First Amendment.

Canadian Clergyman Quits in Protest Against Religion in School

TORONTO, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- The Rev. Karl J. Schweder, a Lutheran clergyman of a Toronto suburb, has resigned his position as a teacher of religion in a public school in the community, in protest against the teaching of religion in the public schools.

Mr. Schweder, of Willowdale, president of the North York Ministerial Association, urged in an article published in the Willowdale Enterprise, a suburban weekly, that formal Christian emphasis in public schools be confined to the opening devotion where a portion of Scripture and a prayer are read.

MASS. RABBIS PUSH PLEA FOR SABBATH EXEMPTIONS IN BLUE LAWS

BOSTON, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- The Mercantile Affairs Committee of the Massachusetts Legislature had before it today an urgent plea from the Massachusetts Council of Rabbis and the Orthodox Rabbinical Council of Greater Boston for a Sabbatarian exemption to the state's blue laws.

Rabbi Samuel J. Fox, speaking for the two organizations, urged the Committee to take action "to end the outright discrimination against Sabbatarians, including the Seventh Day Adventists of the Christian Church and Orthodox Jews."

He told the Committee that "pressure groups" were using the Legislature as a tool to discriminate against such Sabbath observers and that more than 40 categories of business were given exemptions from the blue laws last year but that no measure of relief of any kind had been given to such Sabbatarians.

The rabbi said he had been advised that there was no chance of getting such an amendment to the blue laws through the current session of the Legislature. However, Rep. Julius Ansel, a committee member, said the committee would give serious consideration to Rabbi Fox's plea.

A number of Massachusetts representatives and Senators provided supporting statements to Rabbi Fox's appeal, as did the Jewish Community Council of Greater Boston, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress and Americans for Democratic Action.

HIAS TO STEP UP RESETTLEMENT OF CUBAN JEWISH REFUGEES THROUGHOUT U.S.

NEW YORK, Feb. 26. (JTA) - James P. Rice, executive director of United Hias Service, announced today that the agency was participating in plans to step up the resettlement of Cuban refugees now in Miami in communities throughout the United States. Mr. Rice said that these plans were set forth at a meeting in Washington, D. C., of four sectarian and nonsectarian voluntary migration agencies, with John F. Thomas, the new director of the Government's Cuban refugee program, and other officials of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Mr. Thomas asked the agencies to accelerate their programs of resettling Cuban refugees from the Miami area to other parts of the country. Mr. Rice and Ann S. Petluck, director of U. S. Operations of United Hias Service, who also attended the meeting, pledged the continued cooperation of the agency which, to date, has resettled more than two-thirds of the Jewish refugees from Cuba who came to Miami.

TWO ARRESTED AS ROCKWELL TALKS TO JEERING STUDENTS AT CHICAGO U.

CHICAGO, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- George Lincoln Rockwell, head of the American Nazi party, addressed a group of 275 students of the University of Chicago here last night at a campus meeting heavily guarded by police. The students were admitted by invitation only. Two persons were arrested for disorderly conduct at the meeting and a non-student member of the Jewish War Veterans was asked to leave when it was found that he had entered with false credentials.

Rockwell, who was laughed at and jeered through a good part of his address, told the group that he was an admirer of Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Black Muslim sect.

Clashes Follow London Mosley Meeting; 4 Arrested, Policeman Hurt

LONDON, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- Street clashes broke out last night at the close of a meeting addressed by fascist leader Oswald Mosley, in the town hall of Kensington, a London suburb. After Mosley left the hall, some of his followers unfurled banners and began shouting at members of the anti-fascist Yellow Star movement, which sponsored a protest rally across the street from the town hall. Individual members of both groups left the meeting places and tangled in street fighting.

Scores of police, some with dogs, broke up the main clashes but scuffles continued in shop doorways before the fighting finally was halted. Four men were arrested. A policeman was hurt when he moved into action against five Mosley followers attacking a Yellow Star member.

NEW YORK WOMAN WINS CASE ON BIAS IN COOPERATIVE APARTMENT

NEW YORK, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- A complaint by a New York woman, charging that the management of a Manhattan cooperative apartment had discriminated against her because she was Jewish, has been settled to her satisfaction, it was announced here today by the New York City Commission on Human Rights.

Mrs. Elinor Finkelstein told the Commission that the agent for the apartment house "appeared disinterested" because, she said, "my name was obviously Jewish." She noted that a friend of hers, acting as a "checker," applied later for an apartment in the same building and was given "a very cordial reception."

'HERZLIAH' LAUNCHES EXPANSION DRIVE WITH GOAL OF \$250,000

NEW YORK, Feb. 26. (JTA) -- A moving appeal by Avraham Harman, Israeli Ambassador to the United States, to support the cause of Hebrew in this country and to embark upon a large-scale effort for Jewish cultural intensification, highlighted the opening of a major expansion drive on behalf of the "Herzliah Hebrew Teachers Institute." Ambassador Harman addressed a select group of community leaders in the Jewish Agency building here. Dr. Emanuel Neumann, president of the Tarbut Foundation for the Advancement of Hebrew Culture, presided.

"Herzliah," one of the oldest Hebrew establishments in America, is a national institution that, in the more than 40 years of its existence, has graduated about 2,000 teachers who have substantially contributed to the advancement of Jewish education throughout the United States and in Israel.

The current expansion drive, aiming eventually at an upgrading of "Herzliah" to the status of a degree-granting college, seeks \$250,000. Mendel Haber, treasurer of "Herzliah," announced that \$40,000 has already been pledged in advance of the campaign, which will culminate in a dinner April 30. Dr. Abraham Sachar, president of Brandeis University, will be the principal speaker on that occasion. Dr. Harry Wechsler, prominent New York physician and devotee of Hebrew cultural endeavors, will be the guest of honor.

Dr. Max Nussbaum, president of the Zionist Organization of America, announced at the gathering that the ZOA has chosen "Herzliah" as a special national project.