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### SOVIET GOVT. REPORTED AGREEING TO SELL ITS LAND HOLDINGS IN ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, Jan. 23. (JTA) -- The Soviet Government has agreed to sell its land holdings in Israel to the Israel Government, it was reported here today in Maariv, leading evening newspaper. The report said that the Soviet Government asked for \$4,500,000 for the properties and that Israel suggested \$3,000,000 with two-thirds of the payment to be made in citrus fruits.

The Russian move was believed to stem from the Soviet need for foreign currency to finance wheat purchases throughout the world. Moscow's agreement in principle to the transaction was conveyed by Soviet Ambassador Mikhail Bodrov to Premier Levi Eshkol at their meeting yesterday which was devoted mainly to an explanation of Israel's stand on the disputed Jordan River irrigation project, Maariv reported.

Soviet property in Israel includes the Russian compound in Jerusalem, located in the center of the city, and some holdings in Tel Aviv and Haifa. Most of the land is registered in the name of the Russian Orthodox Church. It was hoped here that the transaction would pave the way for resumption of Israeli citrus exports to Russia which Moscow suspended following the 1956 Sinai campaign.

### PRESIDENT JOHNSON, BRITISH PREMIER MAY DISCUSS JORDAN WATER ISSUE

LONDON, Jan. 23. (JTA) -- Prime Minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home indicated today in the House of Commons that the Jordan River water project may be on the agenda of his forthcoming meeting with President Johnson.

The issue was raised in Commons by Arthur Henderson, a Labor MP, who cited the decision of the Arab summit conference in Cairo to block Israel's planned use of the Jordan River waters for its irrigation project. Mr. Henderson stressed the joint responsibility for the area of Britain and the United States under the Tripartite Declaration of 1951 which guarantees the existing Arab-Israeli borders.

The British deputy then asked whether the Prime Minister would discuss with President Johnson the plan proposed to the Arabs and Israel by the late Eric Johnston, U.S. Special Ambassador, as a possible basis of settlement of the Jordan River dispute. The Prime Minister replied that his talks with President Johnson would cover many problems of common concern but that they would be confidential. He added he did not want to refer to the agenda publicly in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Henderson also asked whether the Prime Minister would consult with President Johnson with the idea of persuading the Arab states to accept the Johnston plan and the Prime Minister replied he would consider Mr. Henderson's suggestions.

Sir Barnett Janner said that the area of the water tap was within the territory of Israel and that it was not the concern of any other country, that the Jordan Government had proceeded on its phase of the Johnston plan without consulting anyone and that the "courageous" attempts by Israel to arrest the desert was something which should be encouraged and not hampered by anyone.

He also urged that the Government make it clear that Britain "will not put up with the kind of blackmail being sent over by the Arab states." In reply, the Prime Minister suggested it would be best for the House to leave the matter for the time being.

### Israel Welcomes U.S. Warning on Possible Action Against Aggression

JERUSALEM, Jan. 23. (JTA) -- Israeli quarters welcomed today the statement by United States Deputy Undersecretary of State Alexis Johnson who this week told a conference of the pro-Arab Citizens Committee on American Policy in the Middle East that the United States would not "stand idly by" if aggression were committed against any Middle Eastern nation.

The statement was believed here to be particularly significant in view of the recent Arab threats against Israel's water irrigation project. It is also the first U.S. policy statement on the Middle East since President Lyndon B. Johnson assumed office.

One point in the speech which stressed U.S. impartiality in the Arab-Israeli dispute, aroused some puzzlement here. That was the assertion by Mr. Johnson that the United States might soon be forced to take steps to the liking of neither Israel nor the Arabs. It is assumed that Israel would seek clarification of this point.

## ISRAEL APPEALS TO MOSCOW FOR EQUAL RELIGIOUS RIGHTS FOR JEWS

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Jan. 23. (JTA) -- Israel today appealed here to the Soviet Union to reverse its current practices in regard to discriminations against Soviet Jewry, and extend to the Soviet Jews full freedom for the practice of their religion. The appeal was voiced by Dr. Joel Barroani, Israel's observer in the Human Rights Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities which is now meeting here.

Dr. Barroani took the floor to discuss the major draft Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance introduced by Sir Arcot Krishnaswami of India, a member of the 14-man group. A similar draft on the same subject which was introduced yesterday by the United States representative Morris B. Abram, had been withdrawn by Mr. Abram in the interest of saving the subcommittee's time. Mr. Abram accepted the Krishnaswami draft instead of his own.

Prior to Dr. Barroani's intervention, an impassioned plea for adoption of a document banning all religious discriminations was voiced by Jean Marcel Bouquin of France who said that such an instrument was necessary since the world is aware of "pogroms, the horrible deeds of the Nazi regime, and even of the Dreyfus case in my own country."

V.N. Titov, the alternate representative of the Soviet Union, also delivered a long address on the issue, insisting that atheism, which he called a doctrine adopted by "tens of millions of the most progressive people in the world," must be protected against oppression by religious elements.

"It is obvious," Dr. Barroani told the subcommittee, that consideration of a UN document banning religious bias "is of utmost importance for the Jewish people and the State of Israel. Religious intolerance has shed too long its somber and threatening shadows on Jewish life. Throughout the ages, it has claimed countless Jewish victims, and caused untold suffering and indignities."

### Endorses Provisions of Draft Declaration Before U.N. Body

Dr. Barroani went into details of the Krishnaswami draft, endorsing many of its provisions. He stopped particularly on clauses in the draft which declare: "Every person and every group has the right to worship, either alone or together with others, in public or in private, and to maintain houses of worship in accordance with the prescription of their belief."

He emphasized the need for legal protection for religious practitioners to maintain their own "congregational institutions, ritual objects, language of worship and sacred books." He noted that the draft declaration would permit religious believers the right to make pilgrimage to "sites held in veneration, whether inside the country or outside his own country."

Dr. Barroani noted further that the Krishnaswami proposal would grant to every person "the right to observe the dietary practices prescribed by his religion or belief" and "where the state controls the means of production and distribution, it shall make such objects and materials "necessary for the observance of prescribed ritual or practices, including dietary practices" available to religious practitioners.

He emphasized also that religious groups must have the right to learn and teach their religious beliefs and traditions, and to associate for religious purposes inside the country or with international bodies. Stressing that his aim was to be "constructive," Dr. Barroani appealed to all members of the subcommittee to join the effort to draft a United Nations document forbidding religious bias "in the spirit of international good will."

He did not name the Soviet Union once in his address but he underscored the fact that the Jewish people suffer severe discriminations in a certain country that is extremely progressive "especially in scientific and technological development."

## BONN CABINET MEMBER ACCUSED OF BEING A NAZI JUDGE; IS SUSPENDED

BONN, Jan. 23. (JTA) -- Chancellor Ludwig Erhard ordered an investigation yesterday into East German and Polish allegations that Hans Krueger, his newly named Minister for Refugees, had been a Nazi judge in occupied Poland and that he had been a Nazi party member for 12 years. After a lengthy conference with the Chancellor, the 61-year-old Krueger suspended himself from office pending the outcome of the investigation. He was the only member of the West German Cabinet personally chosen by Erhard when the latter took office last October.

The charges against him were first raised in December by East German authorities and for several weeks Krueger categorically denied them. Then he began admitting the accuracy of individual charges as Soviet sources started publishing documentary evidence.

The post from which he suspended himself had been filled previously by another German under a Nazi cloud--Dr. Theodor Oberlander, who resigned under pressure in 1960 because of his Nazi past.

## RENEWED TALKS ON LINKING ISRAEL TO EUROMART TO START IN MARCH

STRASSBOURG, Jan. 23. (JTA) -- A key official of the European Economic Community promised today that a third round of talks with Israel on a trade agreement with the six-nation Euromart would begin in March. The promise was made by Jean Rey, Minister of the EEC Commission in charge of its Foreign Relations, in a report to the regular meeting of the European Parliament, an advisory body to the EEC.

M. Rey spoke after members of the Parliament voted unanimously to ask the Council of Ministers, the key policy-making body of the EEC, to give the EEC Commission a new mandate to make possible an initial agreement with Israel. In the first two rounds of talks, the EEC negotiators offered Israel minor concessions of three relatively trivial exports which the Israeli negotiators rejected, asking for new talks. At that time, the Israelis offered several technical proposals as a basis for such talks.

A. Blaise, Deputy President of the European Parliament, told the deputies that those proposals were a "good basis" for renewed talks. He said the lengthy negotiations had been "very disappointing" and that there was a "moral obligation" of Europe toward Israel "if it exists as the political will of the member states."

### General Commercial Agreement with Israel Is Recommended

He called for a commercial agreement with Israel "which will be only a first step, as with Turkey, towards a larger agreement." Another deputy, Ludwig Metzger, a German Socialist, said Israel had not been treated well by the EEC. He added that "we are happy that we reached an association with Turkey and Greece," which received an associate membership "and we do not understand why negotiations with Israel did not have any results." He asserted that "Europe cannot stay indifferent to Israel."

The West German deputy said that the European Parliament had not given up the idea of an associate status for Israel "but in the meantime a general agreement is needed. The EEC can help Israel with a small effort on its part if the political will exists."

M. Rey opened his report with a description of his recent visit to Israel where he said, government officials had indicated their disappointment over the laggard talks. He said he left with a renewed feeling of the urgent need to find a solution. He added, however, that there were difficulties, some arising from the fact that all of the member states had interests in the Mediterranean area.

He said he was not certain that the matter could be presented to the Council of Ministers on February 3, as had been announced recently but it will definitely be discussed on February 25. "Later we shall be able, in March, to invite once more our Israeli friends to the third round of negotiations and to reach an agreement which will not be a complete solution of all the problems "but would be a first step for later enlargement," he stated.

## PRESIDENT OF BRITISH INSURANCE FIRM YIELDING TO ARABS RESIGNS

LONDON, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- Sir Robert Bignold disclosed today that he had resigned as president and chairman of the Norwich Union Insurance Company and denied that his retirement at the age of 71 had anything to do with the forced resignation of a Jewish baron, Lord Mancroft, from the firm's London Advisory Board.

The resignation of Lord Mancroft under Arab boycott pressure last December sparked worldwide protests and a formal rebuke to Arab diplomatic representatives in London by the British Government. Lord Mancroft was subsequently offered reinstatement but declined.

Sir Robert said the controversy was as "dead as the dodo" and, in response to a question as to whether he had been forced to resign as a result of pressure from any "Jewish lobby," he repeated that his retirement had nothing to do with the Mancroft case. He added that he had no reason to think that Jewish-placed insurance had been taken from the company or that it would be taken away.

### Arabs Warn French Firms on Participation in Tel Aviv Fair

PARIS, Jan. 23. (JTA) -- A number of French commercial firms which plan to participate in the forthcoming Tel Aviv Fair were reported today to have received warning letters from their agents in Lebanon of blacklisting if they did so.

One Jewish-owned firm sent the letter it received to the French Foreign Office and to the Franco-Israel Alliance whose president, Raymond Schmittelin, wrote to Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville and Maurice Schuman, President of Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, on the question.

## VISIT OF POPE PAUL VI TO ISRAEL BRINGS ELEVATION FOR VICAR

ROME, Jan. 23. (JTA) -- The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Gori, Latin Patriarch and Vicar for Israel, has been elevated to the rank of bishop. It was announced by the Vatican today. The elevation of Father Gori was said by Vatican circles to be due to the satisfaction of Pope Paul VI with the vicar's contribution to the success of the Pontiff's recent visit to Israel. Lay circles, here, however, said today that the elevation may also be considered as a special mark of attention to Israel from Pope Paul.

## DR. NUSSBAUM ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF THE AMERICAN ZIONIST COUNCIL

NEW YORK, Jan. 23, (JTA) -- Dr. Max Nussbaum, president of the Zionist Organization of America, was unanimously elected chairman of the American Zionist Council, coordinating body of all nine Zionist organizations in this country. He succeeds Rabbi Irving Miller who occupied the post for the past ten years and who was elected honorary chairman.

Nathaniel S. Rothenberg, former president of Bnai Zion, American Fraternal Zionist Organization, was unanimously elected chairman of the administrative committee of the Council. The election took place at a meeting of the executive committee of the Council, the highest governing body of the organization, attended by representatives of all nine constituent Zionist organizations.

The following Zionist organizations are the constituent bodies of the American Zionist Council: American Jewish League for Israel, B'nai Zion, Hadassah, Religious Zionists of America, Labor Zionist Movement, Progressive Zionist League-Hashomer Hatzair, United Labor Zionist Party, United Zionists-Revisionists of America, and Zionist Organization of America.

## A. C. L. U. PROTESTS AGAINST PRAYER ON U.S. WARSHIP; SAYS JEWS AFFECTED

NEW YORK, Jan. 23, (JTA) -- The American Civil Liberties Union disclosed today it had protested to the Navy Department against a requirement by the commanding officer of the U.S.S. Midway that all ship personnel stand at attention while Catholic or Protestant chaplains say an evening prayer and that grace be said at all meals.

The ACLU said such an order was "an infraction of the religious freedom of the individual" and said that it was likely there were persons of Jewish or other faith, or even non-believers, among the warship's personnel who would be required "to be part of a religious service contrary to their belief."

The ACLU said this amounted to "a form of establishment of religion which the constitution forbids." It asked for corrections not only on the "Midway" but in the Navy generally.

## JOHANNESBURG HONORS FORMER JEWISH MAYOR FOR HIS SERVICE TO CITY

JOHANNESBURG, Jan. 23, (JTA) -- The service which former Johannesburg Jewish Mayor Jack Mincer had rendered this city was lauded by the present Mayor, Councilor J. F. Oberholzer, here today, when, in the presence of a distinguished audience of civic dignitaries, he opened a big new municipal parking garage and formally named it the "Jack Mincer Parking Garage," in honor of Mr. Mincer.

Mr. Mincer, said the Mayor, had rendered Johannesburg outstanding services by initiating the traffic development scheme which included Johannesburg's new highways and flyovers, and of which the new municipal parking garages were part. Mr. Mincer and his wife were Mayor and Mayoress of Johannesburg in 1949-1950.

Mr. Mincer, expressing thanks for the honor conferred upon him, said the traffic plan he had battled to put through the Council in those years was proving its value now, and he felt the time had come for Johannesburg to take the next step and go in for underground tube transport, like London and Paris. He announced that in appreciation of the kindness which Johannesburg had always shown him and his wife, the Mincer family had decided to donate a fountain to the city, to form the center piece of the small park to be built above the underground parking garage.

## BANK LEUMI IN NEW YORK APPOINTS THREE NEW VICE-PRESIDENTS

NEW YORK, Jan. 23, (JTA) -- The New York branch of Bank Leumi le-Israel, Israel's oldest and largest bank, announced today the appointment of Avraham Bar-El, Albert J. Piccirillo and Alfred G. Ruehle as vice-presidents.

Mr. Bar-El, who joined the Bank in 1963, was formerly Israel Consul of Economic Affairs in Toronto and director for Canada of the Israel Government Investment Authority. Mr. Piccirillo is the son of the late New York City Commissioner Joseph Piccirillo. Mr. Ruehle is a trustee of the Kings Highway Savings Bank and former vice-president of Bankers Trust Company.

## CHINESE CAPTAIN OF ISRAELI FISHING BOAT ASKS FOR ISRAELI CITIZENSHIP

TEL AVIV, Jan. 23, (JTA) -- A Chinese captain of an Israeli fishing boat, Captain Chen of Formosa, said today he had decided to make his home in Israel and that he had asked for Israeli citizenship.

The 35-year-old fisherman has already acquired a fair knowledge of Hebrew from working with the Israeli crew on the Dagit which fishes for tuna in the Atlantic. The Somerfin company, owners of the boat, said they would support his citizenship application and had undertaken to provide him with a home in Haifa.