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SOVIET DIPLOMAT ADDRESSES U. S. RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY; ANSWERS QUESTIONS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- For the first time a high Soviet diplomatic official addressed today a conference of American rabbis, answering questions on the status of the Jews in the Soviet Union.

The official was Victor P. Karpov, First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Washington. He spoke on disarmament and world peace before 200 Reform rabbis attending a two-day conference on this subject organized by the Central Conference of American Rabbis which was conducted by the Religious Action Center of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. The conference was held in the State Department building.

Answering questions, at the end of his prepared talk, on the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union, Mr. Karpov quoted the customary statistics to assert that while Jews composed only one per cent of the Russian population, the participation of Jews in Soviet life was proportionately greater in some fields and less in others. He said that 15 per cent of Soviet doctors were Jews and that eight per cent of lawyers were Jews. He added that "the question of religious practice is only a small part of Jewish participation."

He also asserted that Jews could "worship freely" in synagogues and that "there are tens of thousands of books printed in Yiddish." However, he claimed that many Soviet citizens of Jewish origin "are not Jews," an implication that they did not practice Judaism.

When questioned about permission to the First Secretary of the American Embassy in Moscow to talk with rabbis in the Soviet Union, the Soviet diplomat stated that American Embassy personnel were "free to visit USSR rabbis" but, he added, this was "their business--not mine."

Another question from the rabbis concerned Soviet arms aid to Arab countries against the background of the stated concern of the Soviet Union on arms control. He replied that the USSR was no more guilty of this than was the United States. He also said that when the Soviets suggested some time ago the prohibition of arms exports, there was no favorable response from any western country. The exchange of questions and answers took place before the entire audience but lasted only 15 minutes.

CALL FOR WASHINGTON PARLEY ON SOVIET JEWS EVOKES HIGH INTEREST

NEW YORK, Feb. 5. (JTA) - The decision by 24 major national American Jewish organizations to call a two-day extraordinary conference in Washington for the purpose of expressing the growing concern of American Jewry of the treatment of the Jews in the Soviet Union has evoked great interest in the Jewish communities throughout the country, according to reports reaching here today.

The conference--to be held in Washington on April 5 and 6--is expected to draw Jewish organizational and communal leadership from communities in all parts of the United States. Eighteen of the 24 organizations sponsoring the Washington parley are affiliated with the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations which is also one of the sponsors. The range of the organization calling the conference is indicative of the extent to which concern about Soviet anti-Jewish discrimination is shared by all segments of American Jewry.

The 24 co-sponsoring organizations are: American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, American Israel Public Affairs Committee, American Trade Union Council for Histadrut, American Zionist Council, B'nai B'rith, Central Conference of American Rabbis, Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Hadassah, Jewish Agency for Israel--American Section, Jewish Labor Committee, Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America, Labor Zionist Movement.

Also, Mizrahi-Hapoel Hamizrachi, National Community Relations Advisory Council, National Council of Jewish Women, National Council of Young Israel, Rabbinical Assembly, Rabbinical Council of America, Synagogue Council of America, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, United Synagogue of America, and the Zionist Organization of America.

ISRAEL REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE U.S. PASSPORTS STAMPED 'JERUSALEM-PALESTINE'

JERUSALEM, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- The Government of Israel notified the United States yesterday that in the future it would not accept visa applications from American Consular personnel in Jerusalem whose passports were stamped "Jerusalem, Palestine."

The practice arises from the refusal of the United States and other major powers to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Regular United States passports renewed at the Jerusalem Consulate also bear the term.

Tourists do not require visas and the restriction would presumably apply only to officials assigned to the American Consulate General in Jerusalem. A consulate official said that the phrase was used on some 200 to 300 passports issued annually to American citizens in Israeli Jerusalem and Jordan Jerusalem and on service passports to officials assigned to the Consulate.

The deadlock stems from a declaration in the 1948 United Nations partition recommendation, calling for the internationalization of both old and new Jerusalem. The proposal became a dead letter after the Israeli War of Liberation during which Jordan seized and held the Old City.

ISRAELI OPERA CONDUCTOR SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS FOR AIDING NAZIS

TEL AVIV, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- Hirsh Barenblatt, a conductor of the Israel National Opera, was found guilty today by the Tel Aviv district court of charges of collaborating with the Nazis and with handing over Jews to the Nazis for extermination as chief of the Jewish police in the Bendin Ghetto in Nazi-occupied Poland. He was sentenced to five years imprisonment.

He had been acquitted last July of a charge that he was a member of an organization "hostile to Jews." The musician, who came to Israel in 1958, was arrested after a survivor of the ghetto, recognized him.

The court found that during the "selection" period in 1942 in the ghetto, one of Barenblatt's duties was to guard those chosen by the Nazis for death and to see to it that they did not escape or join the group chosen to remain alive. The court found further that by ordering such a guard Barenblatt actually participated in assisting the handing over of Jews to the Nazis for slaughter.

The court noted, in its judgment, that Barenblatt himself had testified during the lengthy trial that he could have resigned from that post had he wanted to and that by not resigning, he had done knowingly what he did and thus could not escape conviction. The musician had contended at his arrest that he had been tried on the charges in Europe and acquitted.

ITALY OPPOSED TO TRADE CONCESSIONS TO ISRAEL ON ORANGES, BROMINE

BRUSSELS, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- While all representatives attending the meeting here of the Council of Ministers--key policy-making body of the European Economic Community--favored early conclusion on a trade agreement with Israel in principle, Italy indicated today it was opposed to concessions on oranges and bromine, two of Israel's major exports to the six nations of the European Common Market.

The Council instructed the Committee of Permanent Representatives to consider favorably a number of suggestions made by the EEC Commission to increase the scope of offers which could be suggested to Israel for the next round of negotiations. In the first two rounds, Israel was offered only minor concessions of trivial export items and rejected them. The Council of Ministers is scheduled to meet again on February 25.

Golda Meir Starts Talks in Rome on Euromart Trade Pact

ROME, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- Mrs. Golda Meir, Israel's Foreign Minister, began talks with Italian officials today in her quest for support for a trade pact with the six nations of the European Common Market.

She met first with Emilio Colombo, Italian Treasurer and former Minister for External Trade who handles certain phases of Italy's Euromart participation. Later Mrs. Meir called on Premier Aldo Moro. During her cordial talks with the Italian leaders, Mrs. Meir described industrial and agricultural development in Israel.

FREEZING COLD CAUSES CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE TO CROPS IN ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- Freezing cold, snow and high winds buffeted Israel today for the second day, causing considerable damage to crops particularly citrus groves.

Naharia in the north was cut off by the raging Gaaton River and other roads in the Galilee were submerged by high waters. Jerusalem had snow and temperatures just above zero.

Coast guard vessels and planes went into action seeking a 17-year-old Greek sailor who was swept into the sea off Haifa during the gale windstorm.

HADASSAH CONFERENCE URGES MEMBERS TO BACK CIVIL RIGHTS LEGISLATION

NEW YORK, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- The 318,000 members of Hadassah were urged today by leaders of the organization to make their views known "as individual Americans" on the pending civil rights legislation now before Congress by communicating with their Congressional representatives.

The appeal was contained in a statement approved by 200 delegates to Hadassah's annual midwinter conference meeting here. The statement declared that "the enactment of effective and realistic legislation by this session of Congress is a moral issue and is imperative for guaranteeing to all citizens their constitutional rights and for enhancing the image of America at home and abroad."

The delegates, representing 1,320 chapters and groups throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, also called on Congress to remove "the defects and inequalities" of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, popularly known as the McCarran-Walter Act. The delegates declared that the act "embodies policies and principles entirely out of harmony with the American tradition of offering a haven to the oppressed, and of equality and of justice."

The delegates also endorsed proposals made by President Johnson in his State of the Union message, including creating of a National Service Corps, providing school aid funds, and particularly his call for a policy of abolishing "not some but all racial discrimination."

Congressional support of revisions of Public Law 480, governing American surplus goods, under which Israel has received substantial gifts of such goods, and extension of this legislation for another five years, was also urged.

Hadassah's medical work in Israel was discussed by Mrs. Herman Shulman, chairman of the Hadassah Medical Organization Committee in the United States. She reported on Hadassah efforts to help African nations meet various problems of public health. She said 14 girls from Nyasaland have started a three-year nursing course at the Henrietta Szold-Hadassah School of Nursing in the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center in Jerusalem.

Mrs. D. Leonard Cohen, chairman of the organization's vocational education committee, said a two-year course for medical and scientific administrative secretaries, the first of its kind in Israel, had been started at Hadassah's Alice Seligsberg Vocational High School in Jerusalem. She also announced completion of an electronics school in Neirim, the Rural Vocational Center of Hadassah and Youth Aliyah. The school will accommodate 160 students in its four classrooms. It will open in a few weeks, she said.

CONFERENCE OF ORTHODOX RABBIS ASKS FOR RELAXATION OF SUNDAY LAWS

LAKEWOOD, N.J., Feb. 5. (JTA) - The conference of the Rabbinical Council of America, an Orthodox group, today voiced an appeal "to all governors and state legislators" to liberalize the rigors of Sunday laws and to take measures to this effect during the 1964 legislative session.

The appeal was made by Rabbi Paul Levovitz, chairman of the conference, at the closing session of the parley. He asked the governors and their legislatures to make it possible for "the Jewish Sabbath to be observed as a day of spiritual observance for Jews, in the same manner that Sunday is a day set aside for the rights of Christians to practice their faith."

"Sabbath observers," he declared, "are being subjected to ever greater pressures, hardships and abuses in their varied economic enterprises. It is eminently unjust and unfair to require Orthodox Jews to cease operating their commercial undertakings for two days, thereby lessening their opportunities in the economic field and unduly burdening their prospects for an adequate livelihood."

Rabbi Dr. Kalman Kahane, Deputy Minister of Education in the Israel Government, speaking at the conference, said: "The continued spiritual existence of the Jewish communities in America and elsewhere hinges upon the existence of Israel as the spiritual, cultural and religious center of world Jewry. It is, therefore, important that closer links be established between the exiled Jewish communities and that of Israel which will ensure a continuous flow of exchange of students and educators between the two centers."

LOS ANGELES ORTHODOX RABBIS REACH UNITY ON KASHRUTH ISSUE

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- The United Orthodox Rabbinate of Los Angeles said today that, after several months of negotiations, it had the full support of all ordained local Orthodox rabbis for its effort to eliminate confusion in local administration of the Jewish Dietary laws.

Rabbi Osher Zylberstein, president, said that two of the local Orthodox rabbis had been disqualified for kashruth supervision for "improper conduct" in the field. He added that the rabbis planned to conduct a major public information campaign on the rights and wrongs of kashruth.

Rabbi Juda Glasner, Kosher Food Law representative of the State of California, lauded the announcement as one of "the most significant forward steps in the history of Los Angeles Kashruth administration."

MICHIGAN SENATE ASKS FOR AMENDMENT PERMITTING PRAYERS IN SCHOOLS

LANSING, Mich., Feb. 5. (JTA) -- Over strong protests by some Protestant, Catholic and Jewish Senators, the Michigan Senate voted yesterday to ask Congress to initiate a Constitutional amendment which would permit offering of prayers in public schools. Under recent Supreme Court decisions, such practices have been ruled unconstitutional.

The measure, which was transmitted to the House for further action, would ask Congress to propose an amendment or call a convention to add an article to the U.S. Constitution to provide that "free exercise of religion shall include the right to offer prayers in public schools."

Sen. Milton Zaagman, a Protestant, said he was offering the concurrent resolution in reaction to the U.S. Supreme Court decisions. Sen. Charles Blondy of Detroit, who is Jewish, and William Ford of Taylor, a Catholic, were among the Senators assailing the proposed resolution.

U.S. AWARDS GRANT TO WEIZMANN INSTITUTE FOR FOUR-YEAR STUDY

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today the award of two research grants to Israel institutions for the conduct of studies of interest to American agriculture.

A grant of \$65,185 was awarded to the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot for a four-year study to determine what makes a plant male or female and what environmental conditions and chemical treatments can so change a plant or keep it from developing into male or female. Cucumber and melon plants will be used in this research aimed at obtaining information necessary for developing new hybrid crops.

A grant of \$19,000 was awarded to the Central Bureau of Statistics of the Israel Government to study and evaluate methods of compiling agricultural statistics in Israel. The United States needs adequate data on agricultural production, price, consumption and income in foreign countries to analyze their agricultural production trends and appraise the market potential for U.S. farm produce.

The Department of Agriculture, in awarding the grants, pointed out that the results of this research will enable the U.S. to estimate more accurately future agricultural production not only in Israel but also in other rapidly developing countries. Both grants will be paid in Israel currency, from funds accumulated from the sale of U.S. surplus farm products.

N.Y. STATE TO ERECT MEMORIAL FOR LEHMAN; GOVERNOR NAMES COMMITTEE

ALBANY, N.Y., Feb. 5. (JTA) -- Two college heads and a federal judge were named today by Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Republican legislative leaders to develop a state memorial for the late Herbert H. Lehman, former Governor and Senator.

Chancellor William P. Tolley of Syracuse University, the Rev. J.J. McGintey, president of Canisius College of Buffalo and Federal Judge Edward Weinfeld have been asked to recommend "a suitable enduring memorial for one of the greatest humanitarians of our times," Gov. Rockefeller said. "We in New York State can never forget Mr. Lehman's lifelong dedication to public service and humanity," he added.

MUNICIPALITIES IN HOLLAND TO RESTORE ABANDONED JEWISH CEMETERIES

AMSTERDAM, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- The municipalities of a number of Dutch towns including Limburg have begun a joint effort to clear up and restore abandoned Jewish cemeteries. In the area where Jewish communities existed before the Second World War but were wiped out by the Nazis. The cemeteries have been neglected during the past few years.

In each town, a special municipal commission has been appointed to restore and care for the cemeteries, which are regarded as historical monuments. The work is being done as a tribute to the Jewish martyrs who once lived in the areas.

DR. ALFRED WIENER, LEADING ARCHIVIST ON NAZI ERA, DIES IN LONDON; WAS 78

LONDON, Feb. 5. (JTA) -- Dr. Alfred Wiener, founder of the Wiener Library comprising the largest collection of materials on the Nazi era, and director since 1939 of the Jewish Central Information Office here, died here last night at the age of 78.

Born in Potsdam, Germany, Dr. Wiener founded his famed library in Amsterdam in 1934 when he fled from Germany after the advent of Hitler. He settled in England in 1939 and directed the library and information service until his retirement several years ago.

A world-famous institution, the Wiener Library contains the world's largest collection of newspaper clippings, documents, books and other materials relating to the Nazis and the Nazi era in Europe. The library also contains a large collection of documents relating to anti-Semitism in general.