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ESHKOL EXPLAINS RESIGNATION TO KNESSET; WILL HEAD CARETAKER GOVERNMENT

JERUSALEM, Dec. 15: (JTA) -- Premier Levi Eshkol cited to a packed Parliament today his reasons for resigning as Premier and said he would head a caretaker Government until a new one was formed: "We will continue to safeguard the state's vital interests, consolidating its security which were the government's responsibility," he pledged;

Mr. Eshkol cited to the Parliament the contents of his letter of resignation, which he handed to President Shazar last night. The Premier said he did not believe the material submitted by former Premier David Ben-Gurion justified Mr. Ben-Gurion's demand for a new inquiry into the Pinhas Lavon Affair;

Mr. Eshkol reiterated his belief that reopening the inquiry into the circumstances of the 1954 security mishap when Mr. Lavon was Defense Minister would serve no purpose and could seriously injure Israel's standing internally and externally;

The Premier recalled that when he was entrusted in 1961 with negotiating a new coalition under Mr. Ben-Gurion's Premiership, he had no hint of Mr. Ben-Gurion's intention to revive the inquiry. He said this was also true when, following Mr. Ben-Gurion's resignation in 1963, he formed a government which was announced as one of continuity founded on the same principles and conditions as that of 1961;

Reviewing developments since October 22, when Mr. Ben-Gurion submitted to Justice Minister Dov Joseph his memorandum asking for a new inquiry into the ten-year-old controversy, Mr. Eshkol stressed that both Mr. Joseph and Attorney General Moshe Ben-Zeev expressed opposition to an inquiry, as urged by Mr. Ben-Gurion, into the findings of the 1950 Ministerial Committee which absolved Mr. Lavon of responsibility for the orders which led to the 1954 security disaster;

"Because the issue had become an object of debate among the parties and because he believed it was an issue on which the government should be free to decide, I cannot continue to bear responsibility," he stressed in his letter of resignation made public in the Knesset;

Knesset Debates Eshkol's Resignation; Ben-Gurion Criticized

Originally, five opposition parties had requested a Parliamentary debate on the Government's handling of the Lavon affair; Following the Cabinet's resignation, the motions were withdrawn, and the opposition parties turned today instead to Knesset debate on Mr. Eshkol's statement;

Herut opened this debate; The right-wing party sharply criticized the Attorney General, charging him with "overstepping his prerogatives" in giving an opinion favoring a new probe into the Lavon issue; Menahem Beigin, Herut leader, called for dissolution of the present Parliament, so that new general elections could be held;

Most speakers attacked the Ben-Gurion position on the Lavon issue; Even Moshe Dayan, who resigned as Minister of Agriculture recently, said that he was willing to accept the Justice Minister's endorsement of a new Lavon inquiry but, at the same time, felt that Mr. Eshkol had a right to oppose that opinion without the necessity of resigning;

Both Mapam and Achdut Avodah also criticized Mr. Ben-Gurion; Achdut Avodah held that "the country must free itself from threats which would plunge it into harmful, unnecessary probings;" That party expressed the hope that Mr. Eshkol's resignation did not signify "a retreat" on the issue, and that Mr. Eshkol would soon form a new Cabinet "along the previous lines which have been beneficial to the country;"

Former Minister of Justice Pinhas Rosen, on behalf of the Liberal Party, also criticized the Attorney General, accusing him of "unfairness," Mr. Rosen had headed the Ministerial Committee which, in 1960, cleared Mr. Lavon. Now, he said, he saw no reason for reopening a Lavon probe.

Other speakers expressed regret over the turn of affairs, saying that the Government crisis is "bewildering" and declaring that the entire development has stirred Jewish communities abroad and "harms Israel's cause;"

ISRAEL SUPPLYING ONE-THIRD OF WORLD'S DEMAND FOR POLISHED DIAMONDS

LONDON, Dec. 15: (JTA) -- Israel is supplying one-third of the total world demand for polished diamonds, Lord Drumbalyn, Minister of State at the Board of Trade in the prior Conservative Government, told the annual luncheon of the Anglo-Israel Chamber of Commerce today.

Reporting on a visit to Israel he made while still in office, Lord Drumbalyn said that Israel was rapidly turning into a modern industrial state with an annual industrial rate of growth of 15 percent, "a figure to excite British envy." He said Israel was buying from Britain annually 21,700,000 pounds (\$60,760,000) worth of rough diamonds and reselling to Britain polished diamonds for some 3,000,000 pounds (\$8,400,000) annually.

In addition, he said, Britain sold to Israel in 1963 products worth 23,000,000 pounds (\$64,000,000). That total had already been exceeded this year. He noted that Israeli sales to Britain had fallen slightly between 1961 and 1963 to 17,600,000 pounds (\$49,280,000) and added that British exporters had been given an opportunity, with the forthcoming end of West German reparations payments in products to Israel, to increasing their sales to Israel. He warned that the competition was severe.

Discussing the Arab boycott of Israel, he said it had been the policy of the British Government--"and I have no reason to suppose the present Government takes a different view--" that it was not the business of the Government to advise individual firms on how to react to the boycott. He said that it was for the blacklisted firms "to decide what to do about it."

JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN ITALY EXPRESS CONCERN OVER BONN DECISION

ROME, Dec. 15: (JTA) -- The "deep concern" of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities over the possibility that many Nazi criminals might go free because of the West German Government decision against extending the deadline for prosecution of such crimes was expressed today to the Bonn envoy in Rome.

A memorandum containing a resolution to that effect was submitted to Ambassador Blumenthorne by Judge Sergio Piperno in a visit to the envoy. The resolution declared that "the whole world remembers with unmitigated horror the mass extermination of millions of Jews and of politically persecuted persons as well as those belonging to allegedly inferior races and of the physically and mentally handicapped. All this has wounded the human conscience irreparably."

The resolution also asserted that the Union of Italian Jewish Communities was "absolutely convinced that the exceptional character of Nazi crimes and the impossibility of identifying their perpetrators in time and to collect proofs against them because many of these deeds were performed during the war in militarily occupied territories" made imperative the extension of the statute of limitations in West Germany.

Judge Piperno also conveyed to the envoy the concern of Italian Jewry over the unsettled issue of West German scientists working on advanced weapons systems in Egypt. He also told the envoy that Italian Jewry fully supported Jewish demands that West German indemnification be extended fully to victims of Nazi persecution who were unable to leave Iron Curtain countries before the 1953 deadline set in West German indemnification laws for acceptance of claims.

CHIEF RABBI OF FRANCE CONFERS WITH FRENCH PREMIER ON COMPENSATION

PARIS, Dec. 15: (JTA) -- Chief Rabbi Joseph Kaplan of France conferred today with Premier Georges Pompidou on what was believed to be an unsuccessful effort to obtain compensation for the Jewish community for community buildings and synagogues abandoned in Algeria.

The property, since taken over by Premier Ben Bella's regime, is estimated to be worth several million dollars. It includes community centers, schools and hospitals as well as synagogues. The Premier contended that if compensation was paid to Jews, similar compensation would be sought and have to be provided for other religious communities, such as the Catholics and the various Protestant churches.

SYNAGOGUE IN PARIS SUBURB SMEARED WITH SWASTIKAS; ARABS SUSPECTED

PARIS, Dec. 15: (JTA) -- A synagogue in the Paris suburb, Neuilly, was found smeared today with swastikas and a statement "Long Live Nasser, The Enemy of the Jews."

Police were asked to investigate but it was indicated there was little chance of apprehending the culprits who are generally believed to be Arab students living in Paris.

GERMAN JUDGES HORRIFIED BY EVIDENCE SEEN DURING VISIT IN AUSCHWITZ

LONDON, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- Judges and other officials of the West German court in Frankfurt trying 20 former personnel of the Auschwitz murder camp reacted with sheer horror to a visit to the camp site, in Poland, made in connection with testimony given at the Frankfurt trial, it was reported here today from Warsaw.

The officials were accompanied by Dr. Franz Lucas, a former Auschwitz camp physician, and the only one of the defendants who agreed to join in the visit; Lucas is charged with having selected victims for immediate gassing on arriving. They saw the "Black Wall" in the camp where many thousands of Jews were shot. They stood there in silent tribute before visiting Block Ten, where medical experiments were carried out on women victims, and Block Eleven, the "disciplinary" block.

Judge Walter Hotz said he had never seen such dreadful things in such concentrated form. The court officials are returning to West Germany at the end of the week. At a press conference, court officials said they took measurements at the railway ramp, examined the distance between the tracks and sought to establish whether it would have been possible for witnesses watching from the barracks to recognize the camp personnel who selected prisoners.

The court also examined the ovens and the pond into which the Nazis dumped ashes from the crematoria. Not far under the surface of the pond, the court officials were able to see piles of human bones.

Visiting one of the ovens, the jurists came to a large hole in the ground. Some members went down into the hole and raked the earth with their fingers, extracting remains of bones and tufts of hair. One of the visitors found the remains of some words in Hebrew still visible--the Hebrew prayer for the dead "El Mole Rachamim," (God Full of Mercy.)

QUEEN JULIANA REFUSES TO REDUCE SENTENCES OF FOUR DUTCH NAZIS

BOHN, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- The Dutch Justice Ministry has rebuffed efforts by a group of Dutch citizens to reduce the life terms of four former Nazis who held key positions in the wartime occupation of the Netherlands; the West German Government has been informed. Queen Juliana has concurred with the decision.

The four, held in Breda prison, are Willi Larges, 61, wartime chief of the German security police and a high-ranking SS officer, Ferdinand Aus Der Fuenten, 64, an SS officer who was chief of the Amsterdam Branch of the program for the murder of Jews, Joseph Kotaella, 55, commandant of the Amersfoort concentration camp, and Franz Fischer, 61;

Larges directed the central "Office for Jewish Emigration" in Amsterdam and was convicted of sending 70,000 victims to concentration camps. Aus Der Fuenten organized deportations. Kotaella personally killed many Amersfoort camp inmates. Fischer helped to kill 12,000 Jews.

The decision to keep the men jailed for life was the second such decision. An effort to win parole for the four Nazis failed several years ago. In line with standing policy, the West German Government did not make any representations on behalf of the effort to get parole for the four Nazis.

SOVIET CENTRAL STATISTICAL BUREAU REVEALS DATA ON JEWS IN U.S.S.R.

LONDON, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- Official Soviet figures on the distribution of various nationalities in the Soviet Union, made available here today, indicated that the proportion of Jews to the general population ranged from a high of 20.4 percent in Czernowitz to a low of 4.7 percent in Moscow.

The data, based on information from the Soviet Central Statistical Bureau, also cited naming by Jews in various cities and regions of their mother tongue. Those naming Yiddish as such ranged from a high of 75 percent of all Jews in Kovno to a low of 37 percent of Jews in Tashkent.

The figures also showed that Jews were 19.9 percent of the population of Kishinev and of Kiev, 14.8 percent in Odessa, 11 percent in Homel, 9.5 percent in Chitomir, 6.9 percent in Vilna, 5.6 percent in Leningrad and five percent in Riga. The Jews naming Yiddish as their mother tongue also included 70 percent of the Vilna Jews, 48 percent of the Riga Jews and 43 percent of the Kishinev Jews.

McGILL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS CONDEMN ANTI-JEWISH RESTRICTIONS IN RUSSIA

MONTREAL, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- Several hundred students at a rally held at D'nai B'Yrit Hillel on McGill University campus passed a resolution condemning the Soviet Government for denying equal cultural and religious rights to Soviet Jews.

CANADIAN SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS STRESSES LINKS WITH ISRAEL

TORONTO, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- The Dominion of Canada has been "proud" to play a significant role in aiding Israel at the United Nations, and still continues maintaining its interest in Israel, having "broadened and multiplied" its Israel links, Paul Martin, Canada's State Secretary for External Affairs, told a Negev dinner held here in honor of Morris B. Kaufman.

Mr. Martin's taped address detailed the Canadian links with Israel during the last decade, and discussed Canada's "considerable commitment" to the United Nations peace-keeping operations in the Arab-Israel region. He noted that, among the troops of the United Nations Emergency Force, 1,000, or about one-fifth, are Canadians. UNEF stands on guard against anti-Israeli incursions in the Gaza Strip and at Sharm el-Sheikh, overlooking the Gulf of Akaba. He pointed out that, of about 100 officers serving the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, 17 are Canadians.

"We are happy to continue our participation in these peace-keeping assignments," he said, "in the knowledge that the emergency force and the truce supervisory organization carry on an essential part in maintaining stability and preventing conflict in the Middle East." He added that he was certain that both Israel and the Arab states in the area "fully appreciate" Canada's role.

"During the last decade," he said, "Canadian links with Israel have broadened and multiplied, and many Canadians have had an opportunity of witnessing at first hand the great and inspiring Israel experiment in building a proud and self-conscious national community which is now playing a notable role in world affairs."

N. Y. BUSINESSMAN ESTABLISHES \$100,000 FUND FOR HEBREW UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- A \$100,000 trust fund for the Hebrew University of Jerusalem has been established by Joseph M. Shapiro, a New York businessman, it was announced today by the American Friends of the Hebrew University.

Mr. Shapiro's gift was made in conjunction with the recently established Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz Fund for Leadership Training at the Hebrew University. The Fund is designed "to meet Israel's need for the expansion of higher education" as well as to provide "a permanent cultural bridge between Israel and the American Jewish community." A principle purpose of the Fund is to encourage greater numbers of American students to study at the Hebrew University.

'DAY OF HEBREW' EXHIBIT OPENS IN NEW YORK; WILL TOUR COUNTRY

NEW YORK, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- A 50 panel travel exhibit "A Day of Hebrew," sponsored by the Tarbut Foundation for the Advancement of Hebrew Culture in America opened today at the auditorium of the Jewish Agency building here. The exhibit will travel through universities, public libraries, synagogue and community centers from coast to coast; it will be on display at the Jewish Agency until the middle of January.

In opening the exhibit before a distinguished audience of educators, writers and community leaders, Dr. Emanuel Neumann, president of the Tarbut Foundation, and member of the Jewish Agency executive, gave a short review of the Foundation's work in the first two years of its existence, encompassing among other projects the growing activation of a "Living Hebrew" program in summer camps operated by community organizations, the publication of a Modern Hebrew Classics Series, and a large-scale national effort for creating climate for Hebrew in America.

The Tarbut Foundation is operating with funds endowed primarily by Abraham and Jack Goodman, prominent industrialists and leaders in New York's Jewish community. Other sponsors of major Tarbut projects include Ralph Wechsler of Newark, and Philip Lown of Boston.

ISRAEL'S AMBASSADOR PRESENTS CREDENTIALS TO PRESIDENT OF PANAMA

PANAMA CITY, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- Israel's first resident Ambassador to Panama, Levi Allon, presented his credentials today to President Marco A. Robles in an impressive ceremony at the Presidential Palace attended by senior Government officials, leaders of the Jewish community and members of the Israel Embassy staff.

Last night, Ambassador Allon attended a reception given in his honor by the Panama Jewish community. Among the guests at the reception were Vice President Max Delvalle, the first Jew ever to occupy that high position, and Deputy Moises Cohen and Woodrow de Castro, president of the Joint Jewish Advisory Board of Panama.

NEW YORK PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECT NAMED FOR LATE RABBI STEPHEN WISE

NEW YORK, Dec. 15. (JTA) -- Stephen Wise Towers, a low-income public housing project named for the late Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, outstanding American Jewish leader and eminent Zionist, was dedicated here today in the presence of Mayor Robert F. Wagner and other civic leaders. Built with State aid by the New York City Housing Authority at a cost of \$8,500,000, the development consists of two apartment buildings comprising 399 apartments accommodating 1,250 persons.