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PRESIDENT JOHNSON ASKS CONGRESS FOR BASIC CHANGES IN IMMIGRATION LAW

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13. (JTA) -- President Johnson sent to Congress today a message asking for priority, "long overdue" action to amend the United States immigration laws. He submitted with it a bill to reform the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the national origins quota system and correct other defects.

The President condemned the national origins quota system as "incompatible with our basic American tradition" which, he said, was "to ask not where a person came from but what are his personal qualities." He told Congress that "violation of this tradition by the national origins quota system does incalculable harm. The procedures imply that men and women from some countries are, just because of where they come from, more desirable citizens than others."

"We have no right to disparage the ancestors of millions of our fellow Americans in this way," the President declared. "Relations with a number of countries, and hence the success of our foreign policy, is badly impeded by this proposition."

President Johnson also pointed out that the quota system has other "grave" defects. "Too often it arbitrarily denies to us immigrants who have outstanding and sorely needed talents and skills," he said. "I do not believe that this is either good government or good sense. Thousands of our citizens are needlessly separated from their parents or other close relatives."

To replace the quota system, the President said, the new bill "relies on a technique of preferential admissions based upon the advantage to our nation of the skills of the immigrant, and the existence of a close family relationship between the immigrant and people who are already citizens or permanent residents of the United States. Within this system of preferences and within the numerical and other limitations prescribed by law, the issuance of visas to prospective immigrants would be based on the order of their application."

Favors Preferences for Close Relatives of Citizens and Residents

The President said first preference would be given to those whose skills or attainments would be "especially advantageous" here. Other preferences would favor close relatives or citizens and permanent residents "and thus serve to promote the uniting of families - long a goal of American immigration policy." Parents of American citizens, he said, could obtain admission without waiting for a quota number.

As in previous immigration reform measures submitted to Congress, the new bill would provide a five-year transition period. It would establish the general rule that no country could be allocated more than ten percent of the quota numbers available in any one year. To prevent hardship, however, to any friendly country by sudden curtailment of its emigration, the bill would authorize the President, after consultation with a new immigration board to be set up under the bill, to utilize up to 30 percent of the quota numbers available in any one year to restore cuts made by the new system in existing quotas.

Similar authority, President Johnson declared, would permit the President to reserve up to ten percent of the numbers available in any year "to meet the needs of refugees fleeing from catastrophe or oppression."

Wants Transfer of Unused Quota Visas from One Country to Another

Other provisions of the bill would permit the transfer of unused quota numbers from one country to another; would give non-quota status to parents of citizens and fourth preference to parents of resident aliens; would not require a skilled, first preference prospective immigrant to find an employer before coming to the United States; and would eliminate technical provisions that the President said hampered effective use of the existing fair-share refugee law.

Mr. Johnson stressed in his message that the total number of immigrants would not be substantially changed. He said the new bill authorized quota immigration would be increased "by less than 7,000" from the present level of 158,361 per year.

President Johnson assured Congress that "this bill would not alter in any way the many limitations in existing law which prevent an influx of undesirables and safeguard

our people against excessive or unregulated immigration. Nothing in the legislation relieves any immigrant of the necessity of satisfying all of the security requirements we now have, or the requirements designed to exclude persons likely to become public charges. No immigrants admitted under this bill could contribute to unemployment in the United States."

President Johnson concluded his message with an appeal to Congress for favorable action. "I urge the Congress," he said, "to return the United States to an immigration policy which both serves the national interest and continues our traditional ideals. No move could more effectively reaffirm our traditional belief that a man is to be judged-- and judged exclusively--on his worth as a human being."

JEWISH GROUPS STUDY JOHNSON'S PLAN FOR PAROCHIAL SHARING IN SCHOOL AID

NEW YORK, Jan. 13. (JTA) -- Major Jewish organizations which are opposed to Federal aid to religious schools today studied the expanded aid-to-education program proposed yesterday to Congress by President Johnson. Among other things, the President's program provides for some form of aid to parochial and private schools, and endorses "shared time" practices in schools to which Jewish groups and others interested in the principle of church-state separation, are opposed.

The attitude of the Jewish organizations affiliated with the National Community Relations Advisory Council--which includes the American Jewish Congress, the Jewish Labor Committee, the Jewish War Veterans and central bodies of Jewish religious groups and other organizations--will not be made known before February 7, when the NCRAC executive committee will meet on the subject, it was indicated here today. These organizations have previously gone on record as opposing Federal aid to parochial schools as well as the "shared time" practices.

The National Education Association, long a foremost opponent of public assistance to private and parochial schools, came out today in support of the Johnson education program. Robert E. McKay, chairman of the NEA's legislative committee, said that "we do not interpret this as being aid to parochial and private schools." James L. McCaskill, executive secretary of the NEA, acknowledged, however, that the Johnson proposals for Federal aid to parochial and private schools for purchase of textbooks and educational materials were "troublesome."

Supporters of the Johnson program said tonight that most of the proposals for textbooks and library purchases could represent direct aid to these schools. If Congress accepts these proposals, it is expected to write in strict guarantees that the textbooks to be paid for out of Federal funds be the same as those used in the public schools, not religiously oriented texts.

The Church-State Committee of the American Civil Liberties Union has concluded that "shared time" programs permitting parochial and private school pupils to use certain public school facilities on a part-time basis "do not inherently result in constitutional or civil liberties violations involving the principles of the First Amendment's guarantee of mutual independence between religion and government." The committee report was published in the January issue of "Civil Liberties," the organization's monthly publication. The publication also carried a strongly dissenting statement by Byron S. Miller, of Chicago, who challenged the committee's conclusions on constitutionality.

Senator Wayne Morse, Democrat of Oregon, announced that he would open hearings on the legislation next week before his Education subcommittee. He pledged his full support of the President's program. Senator Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York, termed the President's bill "the most comprehensive and far-reaching education program ever sent to Congress." He is the ranking member of the Senate Labor and Welfare Committee that will handle the legislation.

ISRAEL FACES SERIOUS THREATS TO ITS SECURITY, CHIEF OF STAFF WARNS

TEL AVIV, Jan. 13. (JTA) -- General Yitzhak Rabin, Israel Chief of Staff, declared today that Israel would face serious threats to its security this year from Arab countries, but that he believed such threats need not be taken at "their full face value."

He told a graduating class of infantry and paratroop cadets that future security developments would depend "largely on what counter-measures were taken by Israel." He cited the clashes on the Syrian-Israel border in recent months and called the Syrian attacks serious, adding that there was a danger the outbreaks would spread to a greater extent than in the past.

Speaking shortly before the 13 Arab Premiers, meeting in Cairo, issued in a communique opposing aid to Israel by other countries, Gen. Rabin predicted that Israel could not count on the ability of Lebanon to withstand Arab pressures for a united anti-Israel Arab front. His prediction proved to be accurate. Lebanon, which had balked at plans to use its territory for the joint Arab effort to lower the level of the Jordan River, and thus deny use of its waters to Israel for its huge Negev irrigation program, signed the communique yesterday.

U. S. URGES EFFECTIVE ACTION TO COMBAT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST RELIGION

GENEVA, Jan. 13. (JTA) -- The American draft of the text of an international convention guaranteeing religious freedom (the details of which were reported in our Bulletin yesterday) was presented to the United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities by Morris B. Abram, the U. S. member of the Subcommittee, which is now in session here. Mr. Abram is also president of the American Jewish Committee.

Under the terms of the draft, countries participating in the convention are expected not only to guarantee full religious freedom to their citizens, but also to combat discriminations related to religious belief. The convention also proposes that member states set up "competent tribunals" of courts which will provide "effective protection and remedies" for those who suffer "acts of discrimination on the ground of religion or belief."

In presenting his text, Mr. Abram, without mentioning the Soviet Union by name, said: "There is no possible justification for a State policy which denies or simply makes unavailable religious books, dietary requirements or the right to organize religious bodies and communicate with those of like belief, domestically and abroad. In short, this convention is intended to strike at every single repression of the right to believe or to have no belief, openly, in all the forms that conscience demands--so long as the right to freedom of others and just demands of morality, public order and general welfare in democratic society are respected. Such religious freedom does not weaken the fabric of a State. On the contrary, it strengthens the State in the social order."

Israel Sharply Attacks Soviet Union for Denying Rights to Jews

At today's session of the Subcommittee, Israel sharply attacked the Soviet Union for denying to the Jews of the USSR the same constitutional rights of religious belief and practice permitted by the Kremlin to other religious, national or ethnic groups in the Soviet Union. The attack was voiced by Dr. David Marmor, the Israel Government's official observer. In accordance with the Subcommittee's rules, Dr. Marmor did not name the USSR specifically but spoke only of an unnamed "great nation."

Speaking of "the deplorable situation affecting the religious and cultural life of a large Jewish community in a great nation," Dr. Marmor assured the Subcommittee that, in raising this issue, "my Government has no motive other than genuine concern with the treatment of a community of our brethren." He then said: "The people of Israel have been profoundly disturbed with the very limited opportunities for Judaistic religious observance and Jewish cultural creativity and expression afforded to other religious, national or ethnic communities in that country."

"Our concern with this denial of opportunities, and of rights guaranteed by the constitution of their country in the spheres of religious and cultural life, he continued, "has been shared by many, including liberal and progressive public opinion in various countries." He cited facts about the situation of the Jewish population in the USSR, noting that the data came from "official sources." He enumerated these details:

1. "Only 100 synagogues remain, out of a total of 450 in 1956; there are no schools of any kind to prepare rabbis, except for four students in Moscow leading a precarious existence, after 10 other students had been prevented from attending classes because they were refused permits to reside in the capital.
2. "The existing Jewish congregations cannot associate with each other, nor create a central organization to cater for their religious needs. Nor are contacts with Jewish colonialists abroad permitted.
3. "Jewish believers are also deprived of facilities to produce the ritual objects necessary for the practice of their faith. In 1962, there was a ban on matzoth. They could not be baked publicly, while very few Jews have facilities for baking them at home. Prayer books and other books of religious content cannot be published."

FREEDOM OF RELIGION FOR JEWS AND PROTESTANTS IN SPAIN PREDICTED

NEW YORK, Jan. 13. (JTA) -- The New York Times predicted today that a statute of religious liberty might be enacted this year in Spain, giving more religious freedom to Spanish Protestants and Jews. The prediction was based on a comment by Generalissimo Franco, in a state of the union message, in which he said he favored "the exercise of freedom of conscience." The Times said this could only mean that he now favored passage of the bill, which has been stalled in the Spanish Cortes since last September.

Noting that the text of the measure has not been published, the Times said that it was nevertheless believed that some of the restrictions of worship by Protestants and Jews would be lifted. It added that Spaniards do not worry about Jews because they do not proselytize and are few in number. The paper estimated that there are no more than 5,000 practicing Jews in Spain, most of them in Barcelona, some in Madrid and a few in Valencia and Seville.

OVER \$100,000,000 SECURED BY N. Y. FEDERATION IN BUILDING FUND DRIVE

NEW YORK, Jan. 13. (JTA) -- More than \$100,000,000 has been secured for the "City of Life" Building Fund Campaign of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, it was announced tonight at a dinner at the Hotel Plaza--attended by over 500 community leaders--honoring Salim L. Lewis upon his retirement after four years as chairman of the drive. The campaign was the largest ever undertaken by a voluntary philanthropy for health and welfare facilities.

Mr. Lewis said that the campaign, whose goal has been increased from an original \$104,365,000 to \$180,000,000, "has just passed the half-way mark, and will continue for at least the next three years, and possibly longer, so that no worthwhile project will go unachieved." The "City of Life," he continued, will provide for about 300 building projects and services for the existing 116 medical, welfare, and recreational facilities affiliated with the Jewish Federation.

Joseph Mailman will succeed Mr. Lewis as Building Fund chairman, it was announced. In 1961, Mr. Mailman served as chairman of Federation's annual maintenance appeal. Samuel D. Leidesdorf, a former Federation president, praised Mr. Lewis for his "truly inspired leadership." A silver bowl and a bronze plaque were presented to Mr. Lewis. The plaque commemorates the gift of the Lewis family to the Building Fund, which will be used to establish a summer camp for children and youth in Poyntelle, Pa., to be known as the Hattie and Max Lewis Camp Grounds.

President Johnson, in a message sent to Irving Mitchel Felt, Federation president, said: "I am pleased to send greetings to all those associated with the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York on the occasion of your dinner meeting in tribute to Salim L. Lewis, whose talent and dedication have contributed so much to the progress of the Federation's farsighted program, and to the betterment of the community.

"The problems of our society can be solved and the opportunities for social progress realized only through vigorous and imaginative voluntary effort coupled with enlightened government action at all levels. I congratulate the Federation for its magnificent work in the months and years ahead," President Johnson stated.

Largest Single Gift was \$4,000,000; Many Gifts from Foundations

Summarizing results to date, and outlining future plans, Mr. Lewis cited these highlights: The \$100,000,000 secured since the campaign began in June 1961 has been obtained primarily through the efforts of Federation agency leaders and Federation committees. Gifts have come from individuals, foundations, corporations and unions; from Federal and State grants under both the Mitchell-Lama and Hill-Burton Acts; sales of property, self-liquidating loans and bequests.

The largest single gift amounted to \$4,000,000, and altogether there have been 15 gifts of \$1,000,000 and more, it was announced. Almost 250 individual gifts of \$50,000 and over have been received to date. They are by categories, as follows: \$50,000-\$100,000, 79; \$100,000-\$500,000, 145; \$500,000-\$1,000,000, 19; \$1,000,000-\$2,500,000, nine; and \$2,500,000 and over, six. In addition, there have been "several thousand" gifts in amounts under \$50,000.

Mr. Lewis reported further that, of the \$100,000,000 secured, gifts from foundations now exceed \$17,300,000; and gifts from public corporations exceed \$2,000,000. "Building Fund givers were required to equal their previous year's contribution, in order not to affect adversely the annual maintenance campaign on behalf of Federation's 116 agencies. This year's maintenance goal is \$22,500,000," he said.

ROME JEWISH COMMUNITY TO ESTABLISH HOSPITAL AND HOME FOR THE AGED

ROME, Jan. 13. (JTA) -- Plans of the Rome Jewish hospital board to convert a partially completed structure into a modern hospital and home for the aged were approved here today. The home for the aged will have 110 beds and a department for the chronically sick.

The hospital's estimated cost is \$800,000 and the annual operating is \$160,000, according to Prof. Fausto Pitigliano, president of the Rome Jewish Community, who called the hospital project an important milestone in the 2,000-year history of Rome Jewry. He thanked all contributors, especially the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and the Joint Distribution Committee.

DR. NUSSBAUM REPORTS IN NEW YORK ON OUTCOME OF THE ZIONIST CONGRESS

NEW YORK, Jan. 13. (JTA) -- "The World Zionist Congress which just concluded its 11-day sessions in Jerusalem, ushered in a new era in the history of the World Zionist movement and established a firm and stable framework for a revamped Zionist structure which is to encompass all sections of World Jewry for the attainment of the principal goal of the spiritual and cultural survival of the Jewish people," Dr. Max Nussbaum, chairman of the American Zionist Council, reported at a press conference here today. "The internal differences which are, in the final analysis, inherent in the very democratic character of the Zionist movement, and which could not be entirely resolved because of the limitations of time, will eventually be resolved," he stated.