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ESHKOL AND GERMAN CHANCELLOR MAY MEET; RECOGNITION TALKS CONTINUE

JERUSALEM, March 9. (JTA) -- Prime Minister Levi Eshkol may meet with West German Chancellor Ludwig Erhard next month, it was reported here today. The report came against the background of a total blackout on the content of the talks now underway between Dr. Kurt Birrenbach, Chancellor Erhard's personal emissary, who arrived in Israel Sunday night. He was understood to have brought the offer of the West German Government to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

Dr. Birrenbach, a leader in the West German Parliament, conferred with Premier Eshkol, Foreign Minister Golda Meir, Deputy Defense Minister Shimon Peres, and Dr. Felix Shinnar, head of the Israel Purchasing Mission at Cologne. He reportedly indicated that West Germany was prepared to establish immediately diplomatic relations at the Embassy level. He was expected to remain in Israel for several days for further talks.

Israel was understood not to be in any rush to decide. A major point of the talks reportedly was the issue of West Germany's suspension last month of the final shipment to Israel of a multi-million dollar arms agreement. While the Chancellor has reiterated his willingness to "compensate" for the suspended arms, Israel is insisting that the original agreement be fulfilled. It was assumed that Dr. Birrenbach took this Israeli stand into consideration before coming to Israel. Whether he brought an alternative proposal was not revealed.

The length of the talks, which were continued today, indicated that the full ramifications of Israeli-West German relations, including West Germany's current troubles in the Middle East, were discussed.

Ben-Gurion Welcomes West Germany's Recognition Offer

Former Premier David Ben-Gurion today said Chancellor Erhard's proposal for full diplomatic recognition of Israel was an "important step." The former Premier said that it was regrettable that it had been taken "so late" but it was to be welcomed all the same. The report of a possible Erhard-Eshkol meeting cited Premier Eshkol's plans to meet with British Prime Minister Harold Wilson next month in London. The report said that the meeting between the Israeli and West German leaders might take place during the Eshkol visit to the continent.

Israeli newspapers continued their comment today on the new Israel-West German developments. Davar, the leading labor daily and pro-government organ, said that the fact that the Bonn initiative on diplomatic ties came as a reaction to Egyptian President Nasser's "blackmail" did not diminish its importance. The daily added that the decision which the Israel Government must make "is by no means easy."

British Prime Minister Supports Bonn's Recognition of Israel

BONN, March 9. (JTA) -- British Prime Minister Harold Wilson told the press here today that he supported fully Chancellor Ludwig Erhard's actions in offering diplomatic recognition to Israel and cutting off economic aid to Egypt.

State Secretary Gunther von Hase, the West German Government spokesman, refused at a press conference to comment on reports that Chancellor Erhard would meet with Israel Premier Levi Eshkol. He stressed the "positive echoes" evoked in the world by the Chancellor's action and added he preferred at the present time not to give a general appraisal of the Arab reaction. He revealed that the West German Cabinet met today to hear a report from Chancellor Erhard on current political developments and the situation in the Middle East.

Arab Representatives Meet in Cairo on Plans Against Germany

LONDON, March 9. (JTA) -- Top-ranking foreign affairs officials from every one of the 13 members of the Arab League met in Cairo today for a conference, summoned by Egyptian President Nasser, after the Egyptian leader had denounced West Germany as "a tool in the hands of the imperialists" and, at the same time, called upon all Arabs to unite to fight Israel.

GERMAN PARLIAMENT STARTS DEBATE TODAY ON STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

BONN, March 9; (JTA) -- With the Bundestag, lower house of the West German Parliament, scheduled to start tomorrow debate on the question whether or not to extend the statute of limitations on the prosecution of Nazi war criminals, more leading Germans joined today the ranks of those in this country who ask for the prolongation of the statute which expires on May 8. They included prominent jurists, clergymen and Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier, the Bundestag president.

At a meeting of the dominant Christian Democratic Party at Hanover, today Dr. Gerstenmaier announced he favored the proposal made by former Chancellor Konrad Adenauer to extend the statute to the fall of 1969, instead of letting it go into effect next May 8. The May 8, 1965 date had been fixed on the principle that the statute should go into effect 20 years after Nazi Germany was defeated.

Dr. Adenauer proposed that the cut-off date be fixed at 20 years after the Federal Republic was founded, in the fall of 1949. Dr. Gerstenmaier today said he favored that proposal instead of one suggested by some members of Parliament who want the statute extended by 30 years from the 1945 date, thus setting the cut-off date as May, 1975.

At the same session, Hans Willhelmi, chairman of the Bundestag's Justice Committee, also declared himself as favoring extension of the statute. "In capital offences, application of justice is more important than the letter of the law," he said.

76 Leading Judges and Professors Appeal for Prolongation

Yesterday, 76 leading state judges and professors of law issued a statement appealing to the Bundestag to extend the statute. "There is no reason in law to oppose prolongation of the statute in murder cases, the jurists stressed. "There is no clear-cut promise to murderers anywhere that, after the statute period, they shall be able to escape trial and punishment. The law-givers can lengthen this statute. Nazi murders of their victims, mainly Jews, make this prolongation necessary so that justice should be done. Any other step would deeply affect justice."

At an observance in West Berlin yesterday, marking the opening of Judeo-Christian Brotherhood Week, the famous Rev. Heinrich Gruber, who had been incarcerated in a concentration camp by the Nazis for helping Jews, protested against those who would let the statute of limitations go into effect May 8. If that is done he said, "nobody will believe in brotherhood if he is able to meet on the German streets the mass murderers walking around freely."

"If we don't shy away from the community of those whose hands are blood-stained, without their having even expressed repentance," he said, "there is no possibility that the victims would believe that a true change has occurred here." He upbraided the prewar Germans who allowed 4,000,000 Nazis to influence 40,000,000 other Germans who were "lacking in moral fiber and were even downright cowards."

Meetings Throughout Italy Urge Germany Not to End Trials of Nazis

ROME, March 9; (JTA) -- Meetings were held here today in a number of towns in Italy at which protests were registered against the possibility that West Germany might allow the statute of limitations against prosecution of Nazi war criminals to take effective May 8.

The theme of the meetings was that the demands for punishment of such criminals was based not on a desire for vengeance but for justice, the basis and condition of peace and progress. It was recalled also that international conventions on crimes against humanity exclude limitations and that the West German constitution explicitly incorporates these conventions.

Swiss Deputies and Clergymen Protest Ending Prosecution of Nazis

ZURICH, March 9; (JTA) -- Leading members of the Swiss Parliament and prominent clergymen and educators here joined a mass meeting here today to protest against plans in West Germany to let the statute of limitations on the prosecution of Nazi war criminals go into effect next May 8.

Held under the auspices of the Judeo-Christian Working Community, the meeting adopted a resolution urgently requesting the Bonn Government to extend the statute "lest Nazi criminals walk freely again, holding their heads high and even boasting of their crimes."

40 Groups in Belgium Form Committee Against Statute of Limitations

BRUSSELS, March 9; (JTA) -- The establishment of a Belgian Committee Against the Statute of Limitations for Nazi War Criminals by some 40 Belgian organizations was announced here today by Jean Brack, president of the new group, who said that the Committee had no political motives other than to fight against the prospect of statutes of limitations allowing Nazi war criminals to escape punishment. The committee has sent a letter to the West German Ambassador in Brussels, protesting against the prospect of the Bonn Government allowing the May 8 cutoff date to take effect.

TRIAL OF 22 GUARDS OF AUSCHWITZ CAMP ADJOURNED; TESTIMONY COMPLETED

BONN, March 9. (JTA) -- The trial in Frankfurt of 22 former guards of the Auschwitz camp was adjourned here today until the end of March or the beginning of April, after witnesses completed testimony. The trial, largest involving Nazi war criminals in recent years, started in December, 1963. Prosecution and defense will make their final statements when the trial resumes.

In another trial, members of a war crimes court in Dusseldorf left yesterday for the United States to take testimony from two bed-ridden survivors of the Treblinka death camp. The 12-member court is trying 11 former SS officers on charges of murders in the camp in occupied Poland. The witnesses are Charles Unger of Seattle, Wash., and Charles Burk, of Atlanta.

The prosecutor in a third trial, that of 14 women charged with killing thousands of persons in the Nazi euthanasia program, today demanded sentences of from one to four years for eight of the defendants in the Munich hearing. He asked release of the six other defendants for lack of evidence.

Some 4,000,000 victims, mostly Jews, were killed in the Auschwitz camp, largest of the Nazi death factories. An estimated 300,000 victims were murdered at Treblinka.

SWEDISH BANKERS PROPOSE PLAN FOR UNCLAIMED PROPERTY OF NAZI VICTIMS

STOCKHOLM, March 9. (JTA) -- A group of Swedish banks proposed today to the Swedish Government the formation of a Humanitarian Foundation of unclaimed property deposited in Swedish banks and believed to belong to victims of the Nazi period.

The assets amount to about 3,100,000 Swedish kroner (\$620,000). The bank officials said that, since the owners and heirs had not sought the money since 1945, it was reasonable to assume that they had perished. The plan is to use the income from the fund to help former victims of Nazism now living in Sweden. The bankers suggested that about 20 percent of the total assets should be set aside to pay the owners, if any of them should turn up later.

GERMANY URGED TO PAY CLAIMS OF 150,000 MORE VICTIMS OF NAZISM

LONDON, March 9. (JTA) -- Full payment by West Germany to about 150,000 victims of Nazism who do not qualify for such compensation under Bonn's present law was demanded here by Israel M. Sieff, chairman of the European executive of the World Jewish Congress.

In a letter to the Times, Mr. Sieff pointed out that these 150,000 victims of Nazism are refugees from Eastern Europe who could not reach free lands where they could apply for compensation prior to the cut-off date prescribed by the present German law. That date was fixed as October 1, 1953.

"These refugees," stated Mr. Sieff, "have been offered miserably inadequate donations under the amending bill now before the Bundestag (lower house of Germany's parliament). Surely, they too are entitled to full amends for their suffering. The German Government should regard this as an indispensable obligation remedying the wrongs of the past."

AHDUT CONVENTION VOTES LIMITED ALIGNMENT WITH ISRAEL'S MAPAI

TEL AVIV, March 9. (JTA) -- The convention of the leftist Ahdut Avoda approved today a proposal for a limited alignment with Israel's dominant Mapai Party. The vote was 73 to 23. Itzhak Tabenkin, the leader of Ahdut opposed alignment, just as former Premier David Ben-Gurion had in the Mapai party.

The alignment will be limited to a joint slate for the forthcoming national elections. Ben-Gurion and his Mapai followers opposed it because Ahdut made it a condition for agreement that Mapai abandon its commitment to electoral reform to reduce the number of political parties in Israel.

SYRIANS ATTACK ISRAEL FOR THIRD DAY; TWO ARABS KILLED IN NEGEV

TEL AVIV, March 9. (JTA) -- For the third successive day, today, Syrian soldiers north of Lake Tiberias fired at Israeli farmers, and the Israelis shot back, silencing the Syrian gun posts. After a clash lasting an hour and a half, U. N. military observers arranged a cease-fire.

The Syrians fired against the Israelis three times yesterday, and twice Sunday -- all the attacks being in the same area and all terminated only after U. N. intervention. Meanwhile, in the Negev, yesterday, an Israeli patrol killed two Arab infiltrators trying to reach Jordan from Egypt's Sinai desert. Both dead men had carried rifles of Czech make.

After each attack on the Syrian border, the Israeli farmers returned to their work in the fields, while the Israel Government filed complaints with the Syrian-Israel Mixed Armistice Commission.

ANTI-SEMITES IN URUGUAY THREATEN JEWS FOR KILLING OF NAZI CRIMINAL

MONTEVIDEO, March 9. (JTA) -- The killing of a Nazi war criminal, Herbert Cukurs, who was involved in the killing of Jews in Riga, Latvia, sparked a wave of anti-Semitic incidents in Montevideo today.

Swastika daubings were smeared on walls and anonymous telephone callers warned police and rabbis that synagogues would be bombed. Police examined the threatened synagogues and said they found no explosives. They also denied a report that a synagogue in central Montevideo was bombed Sunday night in reprisal for the murder of Cukurs.

Police found Cukurs' bullet-riddled body in a trunk in a beach house. They found the body by following instructions from a group calling itself "Those Who Shall Never Forget." The group announced the murder in West Germany and gave instructions on finding the body. They indicated, in their message, that Cukurs, a former Nazi leader in Latvia, was killed last February 23, when he came to Montevideo from Brazil.

Police called the murder an act of "Jewish vengeance" which might have been planned originally as a kidnapping. They said Cukurs, who apparently fought ferociously, was killed in the struggle. His record included charges before the Nuremberg War Crimes trials of mass murder of Jews.

(In Hamburg, Walter Bong-Schmidt, the public prosecutor, said that Cukurs had been second in command in the Nazi occupation of Latvia and that the West German Government had been "considering" an attempt to extradite him for trial on war crimes charges. He reportedly had taken part in the murder of 30,000 Latvian Jews.)

In Buenos Aires, Police Inspector Juan Ochoa, the federal police official responsible for keeping track of Nazis in Argentina, asserted that there were currently 3,000 German former Nazis living in Argentina.

JEWISH GROUPS PROTEST TO JOHNSON ON ANTI-NEGRO ACTION IN ALABAMA

NEW YORK, March 9. (JTA) -- The National Community Relations Advisory Council, coordinating agency for national and local Jewish organizations throughout the country, and seven of the NCRAC's national affiliates protested today to President Johnson against the "outrageous and unwarranted actions of the Alabama State Police" which suppressed Negro marchers at Selma, Ala., demanding the right to register as voters.

The seven agencies that joined the NCRAC in the telegram to the President were the American Jewish Congress, Jewish Labor Committee, Jewish War Veterans, National Council of Jewish Women, Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform), Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America and the United Synagogue of America (Conservative).

The B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League demanded, in a telegram from its national chairman, Dore Schary, that the Government invoke "federal power to insure the protection of Negro American citizens in Alabama." The wire was sent to President Johnson and Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach.

Meanwhile, the Rabbinical Assembly (Conservative) announced that four of its member rabbis had left for Selma to participate in the march scheduled to be held there today.

MOSCOW PUBLISHES RESEARCH PAPERS ON JEWISH AND HEBREW LITERATURE

MOSCOW, March 9. (JTA) -- The Nauka Publishing House here today issued a 360-page book, entitled "Semitic Languages," comprising the proceedings at the Semitic Languages Conference held in Moscow last October 26-28, according to an announcement by Novosti. The latter is a Government news agency specializing in disseminating reports to the foreign press. These reports do not usually appear in the Soviet press.

The announcement said that among the papers included in the volume are: an examination of the Dead Sea scrolls by I. Amusin; a report on "publication and research of monuments of Jewish and Arabic literature," by K. Starkova; "Eastern School Yiddish Grammarians from the 10th to the 12th Centuries," by M. Zislin; "Yiddish as Substratum of Modern Hebrew," by M. Zand; "Development of the Lexicography of the Hebrew Language," by A. Rubinstein; and "Urgent Tasks for Soviet Semitics," by I. Vinnikov.

REMAINS OF 2,500-YEAR-OLD TEMPLE FOUND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NEGEV

JERUSALEM, March 9. (JTA) -- The remains of a temple dating back to the sixth century before the opening of the Christian era have been found in archeological diggings near Arad, in the middle of the Negev Desert, not far from the Dead Sea, it was announced today. The excavations there have been under way for several years. Also discovered by this archeological expedition were messages in Hebrew, most of them dealing with orders for the distribution of goods stored in a warehouse near an ancient citadel on the site, which constituted a frontier outpost.