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SIRENS THROUGHOUT ISRAEL ANNOUNCE START OF INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS

TEL AVIV, May 5. (JTA) -- Sirens sounded throughout Israel tonight to mark the opening of the celebration of the nation's 17th anniversary. In accordance with established custom, the observance of the anniversary began immediately after completion of Israel's observance of Memorial Day today for those who died in Israel's War of Independence.

As Israelis swung into celebration of the anniversary, Tel Aviv became an organized "city of joy" with entertainment centers, dance squares and song groups, all colorfully decorated. Haifa had its traditional dancing parades on its mainstreets. The number of private celebrations increased again this year. Local celebrations were marred by the death of Transport Minister Israel Bar-Yehuda, who was buried at Yagur Kibbutz near Haifa.

President Zalman Shazar and Prime Minister Levi Eshkol today issued formal Independence Day proclamations in which the following three points were emphasized: 1. Peace with the Arabs and in the entire world; 2. Remembrance of the victims of the Nazi Holocaust; 3. Hope that the Jews in the Soviet Union might be enabled to emigrate to Israel.

The two Israeli statesmen hailed the achievements recorded in the country's first 17 years, and looked forward to still greater progress in the years ahead. President Shazar took particular note of the call for Arab-Israeli rapprochement voiced recently by President Habib Bourguiba, of Tunisia. Without mentioning Mr. Bourguiba, President Shazar, after hailing the fact that Israel has broken "through the walls of imposed isolation," through diplomatic and commercial contacts with many nations, stated:

"Yet the blind hatred and dire threats of our neighbors have not weakened, and world public opinion still does not fully understand the dangers implicit in them. But even this blank wall has now been slightly breached, testifying to growing awareness in the Arab world that the differences between us should not be arbitrated by the sword but by direct negotiations based on mutual respect between state and state."

President Shazar Extends Peace Offer to Arab Nations

"We have always believed and we still believe," the Israel President continued, "that the State of Israel and the Arab states can, should and will reach great heights in their development if only they cultivate their particular abilities and aid each other in applying the magnificent achievements of modern science and technology to the problems of the region, for its greater happiness and that of the world at large. Our hand is extended, as it has always been, in a gesture of peace and cooperation."

In the meantime, however, the President stressed, "let us now faithfully to watch over and defend the fortress of our freedom in unity and mutual tolerance and dedicated peoplehood."

Premier Eshkol also emphasized Israel's faith in its deterrent force in his Independence Day message. He linked the State's defensive power with its determination to protect its frontiers. As Israel reaches the end of its second decade, he stated, "it will be our duty, first and foremost, to ensure the security of the State, the well-being of its inhabitants, the integrity of its frontiers and waters, the protection of its standing among the nations."

"By virtue of the self-defensive strength of the State, its economic and spiritual resources, with the aid of the mighty partnership with the people of Israel everywhere, and with friendly countries in all parts of the world, we shall guarantee the continuing realization of the vision of the ingathering of the exiles, the homecoming of brethren and the development of the land," the Premier stated.

After calling upon Jews all over the world to "identify themselves in actuality" with Israel through immigration, the use of the Hebrew language and other cultural and social ties, Mr. Eshkol declared: "Chief among our thoughts of this day of Independence will be the great Jewish community in the Soviet Union. Its severance from the body of Jewry and from the current of its national creativity rends the hearts of every one of us. We shall ask and hope that the Soviet Union will make it possible for the masses of the House of Israel within its bounds to join in the upbuilding of the future of the Jewish people."

in its Homeland and to live full Jewish lives in nearest touch with all the other congregations of Israel.

"Our covenant with the entire Jewish people is today, as it always has been, the very basis and foundation of our reconstruction," Mr. Eskol concluded. "Let us pray that the coming years shall be years of strengthening of that covenant, years of its supreme and complete expression--mass Aliya to Israel."

U.S. Jews Join in Celebration of Israel's 17th Anniversary

NEW YORK, May 5. (JTA) -- American Jews joined today with the Jews of Israel and the rest of the free world in preparations to celebrate Israel's 17th birthday tomorrow.

Gov. Nelson Rockefeller of New York and Mayor Robert F. Wagner of New York City issued proclamations in tribute of the observance. The Governor presented his proclamation to a delegation of the American Zionist Council. Mayor Wagner issued a proclamation to a similar Zionist delegation.

Mayor Wagner also issued a proclamation designating May 5 as "Israel Bond Day" calling on the people of the city to join him "in demonstrating our profound admiration and friendship for the State of Israel, a country whose economic achievements as a dynamic democracy have earned for it and its people a unique place in the world family of free nations."

A number of formal and informal celebrations, under the auspices of all Zionist organizations, as well as under the sponsorship of the Israel Government Mission to the United Nations and Israel's Consulate-General, will be held in New York City tomorrow.

The Pioneer Women's organization announced that special family holiday ceremonies will be held tomorrow. The custom of making Israel's anniversary a family holiday was initiated by the Pioneer Women in 1963. Special anniversary materials have been prepared for use by Pioneer Women members, branches and other Jewish educational and cultural organizations throughout the United States and Canada.

Later in the day, Mayor Wagner was host at the official Mayor's residence to 200 leaders of the Israel Bond organization as part of the observance of Israel's anniversary. Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz, vice-president of the Israel Bond Organization, called on all Jews to observe the anniversary by aiding the current campaign for sale of Israel bonds.

FRENCH PARLIAMENT GETS REPORT ON 'EXCELLENT' RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

PARIS, May 5. (JTA) -- Relations between France and Israel were described today as "excellent and cordial" in a report submitted to the French National Assembly by three members of a French Parliamentary mission which visited Israel in 1964 at the invitation of Israel's Parliament.

The 100-page report described Israel's political, economic and social situation with special attention to Israel's relations with France. The report said that "though Franco-Israeli close military cooperation and 'brotherhood in arms' which reigned during the Sinai campaign" of 1956 "now has been concluded, relations between the two countries remain cordial and excellent." One of the three signatories was Gaullist Deputy Robert Vendroux, President de Gaulle's brother-in-law.

Charles Helou, President of Lebanon, arrived in Paris today for three days of talks with President Charles de Gaulle which will include the controversy over Arab plans to divert the headwaters of the Jordan River to deny its waters to Israel for irrigation purposes. Lebanon is one of the riparian countries in which the diversion project is underway.

The arrival of the Lebanese President was preceded by press reports in Beirut and Paris that he might ask President de Gaulle's mediation on the issue. The Tunisian weekly, Jeune Afrique, asserted that President de Gaulle had already prepared a mediation plan which would provide for French financial participation in a remodeling of the plan proposed by the late Eric Johnston, as President Eisenhower's special envoy, for Israel-Arab sharing of the Jordan River waters. The plan was accepted by both sides at the technical level but rejected by the Arabs at the political level.

French sources disclaimed any knowledge of these proposals but it appeared certain that Gen. de Gaulle would appeal to President Helou for moderation in the Jordan River quarrel. French officials admit openly that an armed clash between Israel and the Arabs would be a serious setback for French foreign policy which seeks good relations with both sides.

BOURGUIBA LAUDED IN U.S. SENATE FOR ADVOCATING ARAB-ISRAEL PEACE

WASHINGTON, May 5. (JTA) -- Sen. Frank Church, Idaho Democrat, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, today took the Senate floor to commend President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia for advocating Arab-Israel peace.

Sen. Church said President Bourguiba "deserves high commendation for statesmanship for making his recent statement about Arab-Israel relations." The Senator noted that Mr. Bourguiba urged "his fellow Arabs to quit stockpiling arms for war against Israel."

CATHOLIC SCHOLAR SAYS POPE PAUL FAVORS VATICAN DECLARATION ON JEWS

BUENOS AIRES, May 5. (JTA) -- Pope Paul VI is "personally" in favor of the Ecumenical Council's declaration on relations with the Jews, exonerating the Jewish people of deicide, it was declared today by the Rev. Giovanni Caprile, professor of Holy Scripture in Rome. He was given a reception here today by the Latin American section of the World Jewish Congress.

He took sharp issue with Bishop Luigi Maria Carli, of Segni, Italy, who had indicted the Jews anew of deicide in a recent magazine article. Rev. Caprile, who is director of the International Center for the Study and Documentation of Jewish-Christian Affairs, at Milan, also expressed the opinion that Pope Paul VI did not mean to counter the Ecumenical Council's declaration on Jewish relations, when he delivered his recent Passion Sunday homily.

OFFICIAL CATHOLIC ORGAN IN SAN FRANCISCO EXONERATES JEWS OF DEICIDE

SAN FRANCISCO, May 5. (JTA) -- A strongly worded editorial declaring that "the Jews as a people are in no way responsible for the killing of Christ" is published in the current issue of The Monitor, official publication of the San Francisco Roman Catholic Archdiocese. It stresses the fact that the session of the Ecumenical Council, last year, overwhelmingly voted that "Jews, neither at the time of Christ, nor subsequently, were in any sense collectively culpable of the death of Christ."

The editorial reads:

"The Catholic position about Jews should be perfectly clear. The Jews as a people are, of course, in no way responsible for the killing of Christ.

"At a point in history some Jewish people had a part in the crucifixion of Christ. But they had that part as members of the human race. It might just as well have been Romans, Syrians, Chinese, Englishmen or Americans if they had existed at the time.

"The schema which was overwhelmingly voted at the third session of the council explicitly stated that Jews, neither at the time of Christ nor subsequently, were in any sense collectively culpable of the death of Christ. It does not even enter the mind of the Holy Father or any person grounded in clear, traditionally established Catholic teaching that anything offensive to the Jews as a people should be taken from the historical facts of Holy Week.

"There were some Jewish people at the time of the crucifixion who were wrong. There were some Roman people wrong at the same time. In other points of history, some German people have been very wrong, as during World War II. Some Catholic people have been very wrong as during the excesses of the Inquisition. Some American people have been very wrong as during questionable episodes in the Spanish-American War. No specific nationality or race has a monopoly on evil. Or a monopoly on virtue.

"It should go without saying that the Jewish people are people. They are our brothers. As human persons they are absolutely no different from any one of us. They have feelings like everyone else, make mistakes like everyone else, do heroic good like everyone else, are hungry like everyone else, get tired like everyone else, are good like everyone else. Shakespeare says it better.

"It should be recalled that many Jews probably most--certainly most of the Diaspora Jews--at the time of Christ did not even know of Him. The historical fact is Christ is God and some Jews took part in putting Him to death. Other people in Jerusalem at the time, apart from Jews, also took part. You and I possibly would have taken part if we were in Jerusalem at the time.

"We do something of the same thing every time we deliberately hurt another human being, since every other human being is made in the image and likeness of God. We do the same thing every time we backbite, discriminate against or otherwise hurt another human being, since every human soul has a spark of God."

JEWS CONGRESS GETS \$100,000 FROM FORD FOUNDATION TO AID NEGROES

NEW YORK, May 5. (JTA) -- The American Jewish Congress announced today it had received a check for \$100,000 from the Ford Foundation as first payment of a \$300,000 grant to support the work of the Interracial Council for Business opportunity. The Council was established jointly last year by the American Jewish Congress and the Urban League of Greater New York.

The Council offers guidance and counseling for Negroes seeking help to open their own businesses or to strengthen existing small businesses. The organization said that more than 250 persons had been helped by the Council since it was formed. The Ford Foundation grant is for a three-year period.

FREE TEXTBOOKS TO RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS OPPOSED BY JEWISH CONGRESS

ALBANY, N. Y., May 5. (JTA) -- The American Jewish Congress called on Democratic and Republican leaders here today to defeat a bill that would furnish free textbooks for private and parochial schools in New York state.

ANTI-JEWISH MANIFESTATIONS IN RECIFE CONDEMNED IN BRAZILIAN PARLIAMENT

RIO DE JANEIRO, May 5. (JTA) -- Sharp condemnation of anti-Semitic manifestations that have recently increased in Recife, capital of Brazil's northeastern State of Pernambuco, was voiced in the National Assembly today by Rep. Andrade Lima Filho, a member of the Parliament's opposition party.

Complaining that the police authorities of Recife "have done little to stem the anti-Semitic actions," Mr. Lima Filho told the Assembly that, each day, there are scrawlings on homes at Recife, denouncing Jews and spreading charges that the Jews "are the enemies of Brazil and of Christianity."

The oldest Jewish community in Brazil exists in Recife, where about 500 Jewish families live now. Founded more than 300 years ago by refugees from the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions, the Jewish community in Recife was the origin of those Jewish immigrants who fled northward to what was then New Amsterdam--now New York.

ANTI-SEMITIC LEAFLETS APPEAR IN CINCINNATI; JEWS TAKE ACTION

CINCINNATI, May 5. (JTA) -- The Jewish Community Relations Committee reported today that several residents in the Roselawn section of Cincinnati, near the Jewish Center, found on their porches copies of an anti-Semitic leaflet containing the ancient canard of Jewish ritual murder for Passover.

The leaflets bore the Cincinnati address of the National States Rights Party, a blatantly anti-Semitic and anti-Negro group with headquarters in Alabama. Law enforcement officials were informed about the distribution.

James J. Behr, chairman of the Committee on Anti-Democratic Forces, urged all recipients to send the leaflets to the Jewish Community Relations Committee and asked them not to write letters to the press or do anything else about the leaflets to give the anti-Semitic group the publicity which was believed to be the goal of the distribution.

AMERICAN NAZI PARTY LEADER CONVICTED; GETS SUSPENDED JAIL SENTENCE

LOS ANGELES, May 5. (JTA) -- Ralph Forbes, the American Nazi party member who established a local party headquarters in adjoining Glendale, was convicted by a jury of violating the Glendale city building code by converting a residence to an assembly area. The jury of five men and seven women found two other Nazi defendants, Allen Vincent and Robert Giles, not guilty.

Forbes also was convicted on charges of conducting meetings without a permit. Municipal Judge Lee Stanton imposed a 60-day suspended jail sentence on Forbes. A group of Glendale citizens seeking to oust the Nazi party headquarters from Glendale were being aided by the Jewish War Veterans.

JUDGE LEVINTHAL RE-ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF HEBREW U. BOARD OF GOVERNORS

NEW YORK, May 5. (JTA) -- Judge Louis E. Levinthal of Philadelphia has been re-elected chairman of the board of governors of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Samuel Rothberg of Peoria has been named a Deputy Governor of the Board for a period of three years. Lionel R. Bauman and Joseph M. Mazer of New York were re-elected Deputy Governors for a similar term.

The Board of Governors is the international governing body of the Hebrew University and has representation from 14 countries. The 47 Americans on the Board are leading members of the American Friends of the Hebrew University, an organization devoted to advancing the educational progress and development of the university.

ISRAEL BAR-YEHUDA, ISRAEL MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, DEAD; WAS 69

JERUSALEM, May 5. (JTA) -- Israel Bar-Yehuda, Minister of Transport and Communications and a member of the Knesset, Israel's Parliament, since it was first established in 1949, died here last night after a brief illness. He was 69. He was a founder of the Achdut Avoda leftist party.

Born in Russia to Baruch and Bluma Idelson, Mr. Bar-Yehuda settled in Palestine in 1926 and became a leader of the Histadrut, the Israel labor federation, and in the Haganah, the pre-state Jewish defense force.

He was a leader of the Achdut Avoda party at its establishment in 1944, going over to the Mapam party in 1948 and subsequently, returning to Achdut Avoda. He served as Minister of Interior from 1955 to 1959 and was named Minister of Transport and Communications in 1962.

HARRIS SHAFNER, PRESIDENT OF JEWISH TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, DEAD

NEW YORK, May 5. (JTA) -- Harris Shafner, president of the Jewish Teachers Association, in New York, died in a hospital yesterday shortly after he was stricken with a heart attack. He was 60. The educator, who served as assistant principal of a Brooklyn public school, recently received the Morim award of the Jewish Teachers Association, which represents 18,000 Jewish teachers in New York City public schools. Born in Connecticut, Mr. Shafner was a graduate of Yale University.