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U.N. ASSEMBLY ADOPTS COVENANT ON CULTURAL FREEDOM; RUSSIA CRITICIZED

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Dec. 18. (JTA) -- The United Nations General Assembly adopted here this weekend, by unanimous vote, two covenants on human rights, one dealing with economic, social and cultural freedoms, the other with rights in the civil and political fields. The covenants will become international treaties when they are ratified or acceded to by a sufficient number of governments.

At the same session, the Assembly adopted, by a vote of 66 in favor, with two against and 38 abstentions, an "optional protocol" which will obligate those governments that adhere to this instrument to permit individuals to complain against human rights violations by their own governments, and could make it possible for one state to complain against human rights violations by another state.

The adoption of the covenants came 12 years after drafts on those subjects were first opened to debate here, in 1954, and 18 years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was passed by the Assembly in 1948 as "a standard of achievement."

While the Soviet Union joined the United States, Israel and the other members of the United Nations in voting for the covenants, the USSR was severely criticized by Israel and the Dominican Republic for its suppression of cultural and religious rights now given full legal recognition through the newly-adopted covenants. Neither Israel nor the Dominican Republic, however, named the USSR specifically.

Ambassador Michael S. Comay, Israel's permanent representative here, referred only to a country he did not name where, he charged, "deprivations" are suffered by the Jewish people, while other minorities are free from such cultural and religious discriminations. The Dominican envoy, Ambassador Ornes Coiscou, spoke of "Jews who live among the snows of the steppes."

Comay Refers to Neo-Nazism and to Discriminations in Russia

In his address explaining his favorable votes on both covenants, Mr. Comay reminded the Assembly that the instruments will be binding "only to the extent that sovereign states subscribe to them." He noted that "the precepts in the present covenants are still a long way from being commitments." With the adoption of the covenants, he said, "we enter a new and more difficult phase," the phase of implementation.

Referring to the "bitter and tragic experience of Jewish history in the Diaspora which kept alive for us the basic teachings of Judaism," the Israeli envoy said: "It is little wonder that we Jews remain intensely aware of fresh manifestations of anti-Semitism, and refuse to take lightly any revived neo-Nazi tendencies, where they occur." He was understood to be referring in this context to the resurgence of neo-Nazism in West Germany. Then Mr. Comay told the Assembly:

"At the same time, we remain sensitive to the form of discrimination which denies to a minority the free exercise of its own distinctive faith and culture. This, I regret to say, is not just an academic concern at the present time. We are deeply disturbed at the fact that a large section of the Jewish people suffers such cultural deprivation, and does not enjoy even the same degree of religious autonomy that is still extended to other faiths."

Mr. Comay stressed particularly one clause in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which reads: "In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their culture, to profess and practice their own religion, to or to use their own language."

"It is our earnest hope," said the Israeli diplomat, "that this minimal provision will come to be observed in all lands." He added in concluding his address: "While there is no room for complacency, the adoption of these two covenants represents an important step forward along the road of human progress, and should afford us all satisfaction and a renewal of faith and hope."

The Dominican Ambassador told the Assembly: "It is necessary to raise our voice again to ask, even to demand that the Jews who live among the snows of the steppes be allowed to read the Torah, to admire the great leader of a people, Moses, to attend their synagogues, to nourish their spirit with traditional ceremonies without which no Jew would feel his life worth living."

JOHNSON'S ENVOY OPENS TALKS WITH ESHKOL ON NUCLEAR DESALINATION PLANT

JERUSALEM, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Ellsworth Bunker, President Johnson's special envoy to Israel for further discussion on the projected, joint Israeli-USA plans for desalination of seawater, met today with Prime Minister Levi Eshkol. They opened the talks for the co-operation of the two governments in the construction of a plant in Israel that will use nuclear power for the production of electricity and the transforming of seawater into sweet water.

Ambassador Bunker, who arrived here last night, was accompanied by three experts from the United States. He met also with Foreign Minister Abba Eban, Minister of Agriculture Faim Givati, and Minister of Finance Pinhas Sapir. This afternoon, after those conferences, he toured the Negev and Lachish areas.

Israel is demanding that the United States finance the joint project under "very favorable" terms, through grants or credits so that the extraction of sweet water from saline content would result in a product cheap enough for use in this country. After his talks here, Mr. Bunker will report back to Washington.

ISRAEL'S VIEW ON ADMISSION OF NON-JORDANIAN TROOPS TO JORDAN PENDING

TEL AVIV, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Minister of Labor Yigael Allon, former general of the Israeli Army, warned in an address last night that introduction of non-Jordanian troops into Jordan "would mean war," declaring Israel would "not permit such a change along its borders."

Emphasizing that in voicing this warning he was expressing his personal views, Mr. Allon added that Israel desires peace with the Arab states "either through the signing of peace pacts or, immediately, through non-aggression agreements. Mr. Allon spoke at Kibbutz Brenner, at a convention of Kibbutz Farnuchad, an organization of Israeli kibbutzim.

A spokesman for the Cabinet declared today that the Allon statement is not an expression of the Government's stand on this issue. At the same time the spokesman stressed that it should not be inferred that the Allon view is an affirmative or a negative reflection of the Government's official stand. The spokesman said the Cabinet will make its official stand clear "in good time."

U.N. ADOPTS 1967 BUDGET FOR FORCES STATIONED ON EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI BORDER

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Dec. 18. (JTA) -- After receiving a warning from Secretary-General U Thant that further reduction of the 3,400-man strength of the United Nations Emergency Force could lead to aggravation of the "disturbing signs" of trouble on the Egyptian-Israeli borders for which UNEF acts as a buffer, the General Assembly adopted this weekend the UNEF budget for 1967, as well as a supplementary budget for UNEF's 1966 expenditures.

In his report, Mr. Thant also voiced "concern" over the existence of 12,000 members of the Palestine Liberation Organization, a force pledged to make war against Israel. He stated that these 12,000 military men are behind the UNEF lines in the Gaza Strip. UNEF stands on guard against the eruption of Israeli-Egyptian warfare along the Egyptian side of the Gaza Strip border, as well as at Sharm el-Sheikh, a Sinai outpost overlooking Israel's Gulf of Akaba outlet to the Red Sea.

Arab spokesmen in the Assembly protested against Mr. Thant's reference to the PLO, insisting that such mention was beyond UNEF's competence. The Soviet Union, voting against the adoption of the UNEF budgets, reiterated its opposition to UNEF, voiced here many times since that force was established in 1956, insisting that only the Security Council, and not the assembly, was empowered to establish a U.N. peace-keeping force.

The budgets were voted in two separate resolutions. One set the 1967 budget at \$14,000,000. The other raised the 1966 allocation from the \$15,000,000 voted for this year last December to a total of \$16,146,000.

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY REITERATES U.S. COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL'S SECURITY

NEW YORK, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Vice-President Humphrey reiterated here tonight the U.S. commitment to the preservation of Israel's integrity. "Unfortunately," he stated, "there is great potential for conflict in the Middle East. But our policy is unmistakably clear. We will energetically oppose aggression there which could threaten the peace. As part of that objective, the United States is committed to the integrity of Israel as an independent state."

The Vice-President spoke at a special convocation, at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, where he was awarded the first honorary degree by Bar-Ilan University of Ramat Gan, Israel. The degree was conferred upon him by Rabbi Joseph Lookstein, the newly appointed chancellor of the university, who cited Mr. Humphrey for his "consistent and continuing efforts in the cause of higher education both here and abroad."

DR. GOLDMANN ASSURED BY GERMAN CHANCELLOR ON COMBATING NEO-NAZISM

BONN, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Chancellor Kiesinger assured Dr. Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress, during a conference here this weekend, that his government will do everything possible to combat the influence and growth of the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party and all other "enemies of democracy in Germany."

This will be done, the Chancellor said, by stabilization of the West German economic situation. A statement issued by the Government declared that the Jewish leader had called the Chancellor's attention to "the unrest and concern caused in Jewish and non-Jewish circles over a possible revival of nationalist currents in Germany."

Reporting on his meetings with governmental leaders during the weekend, Dr. Goldmann said he had also been assured by Franz Joseph Strauss, Minister of Finance, that none of the indemnification and restitution payments due in 1967 to victims of Nazism -- most of them Jewish -- will be curtailed, despite the difficult financial situation facing the Government.

"If this promise is implemented," said Dr. Goldmann, "the full sum of 1,900,000,000 marks (\$475,000,000) for indemnifications payments, and 300,000,000 marks (\$75,000,000) for restitution cases will be available and paid in the next year."

During his two-day visit, Dr. Goldmann met with a number of other German leaders, including Eugen Gerstenmaier, president of the Bundestag, lower house of Parliament; Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister Willy Brandt, and former Chancellors Konrad Adenauer and Ludwig Erhard. Dr. Goldmann said he will return here at the end of next month to continue to discuss indemnification issues with Mr. Strauss.

6,000 NAZI SECURITY OFFICIALS REPORTED UNDER INVESTIGATION IN GERMANY

LONDON, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Six thousand Nazis of "senior" rank who had held responsible positions in the Nazi security office, are currently being investigated by squads of West German detectives, the Evening Standard reported here yesterday. The newspaper stated they are being probed for possible involvement in war crimes.

Seventeen public prosecutors in West Germany met recently to consider evidence against 8,000 suspected war criminals still unprosecuted. The 6,000 former security agents were reportedly on that list of suspects.

Z.O.A. PRESIDENT REPORTS ON OUTLOOK OF NEO-NAZI AIMS IN GERMANY

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- The prediction that anti-Semitism will not be the main basis for the growing neo-Nazi movement in West Germany, but that virulent hostility would emerge against Israel and against continued indemnification payments to victims of Nazism was voiced here today by Jacques Torczyner, president of the Zionist Organization of America who returned yesterday from Europe.

Addressing the National Executive Committee of the Zionist Organization of America, Mr. Torczyner at the same time reported that some of the foremost leaders of German ultra-nationalism are today staunch supporters of the State of Israel. He voiced alarm over the growing unemployment in West Germany and said it might provide new followers for neo-Nazism. He advised Jews residing now in Germany "to give thought to planning to emigrate from Germany."

Establishment of an American academic high school at Kfar Silver in memory of Mollie Goodman, late wife of Abraham Goodman, was announced at the meeting.

U.S. GOVERNMENT URGED TO SEEK SOVIET COOPERATION ON ARAB-ISRAEL ISSUE

NEW YORK, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- The American Government was urged to seek the cooperation of the Soviet Union to promote Middle East disarmament and an Arab-Israel peace in a policy statement adopted here today at a regional conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee at the Hotel Roosevelt. The Committee called for a "stronger and more dynamic U.S. policy in order to reverse the present drift towards war and to achieve direct Arab-Israel negotiations for a peace settlement."

The Committee's statement welcomed recent reaffirmation of U.S. commitments to strengthen Israel defenses, to preserve Israel's sovereignty and to oppose aggression in the Near East. At the same time, the Committee warned against continuing Arab preparations for war against Israel, the intensification of guerrilla terrorism and the costly and dangerous escalation of the arms race.

\$1,400,000 RAISED AT FIRST DINNER OF PALESTINE APPEAL IN LONDON

LONDON, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- More than 500,000 pounds (\$1,400,000) was raised here last night at the first Joint Palestine Appeal dinner of the 1966-67 campaign which was held in honor of Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Steff. Mr. Steff reported that 2,600,000 pounds (\$7,280,000) was raised by the JFA in 1966.

ISRAELI TO TESTIFY ON YOUTH WHO SET FIRE TO JEWISH CENTER IN YONKERS

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y., Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Zvi Almog, of Tel Aviv, will be brought here at Westchester County's expense to act as the principal witness against a Yonkers youth accused of having set fire a year ago to the Yonkers Jewish Community Center, causing the death of 12 persons, according to District Attorney Leonard Rubinfeld.

The youth, Thomas A. Ruppert, 17, is in jail, charged with arson and with 24 counts of first degree murder as a result of the tragic incident. Ruppert was at the time a youth corps worker at the Jewish Center. Mr. Almog, then studying for his doctorate in New York, was the Center's executive director and, with Yonkers police, had questioned Ruppert when the youth was arrested a month after the fire. Since then, Mr. Almog had returned to his home in Tel Aviv.

A county judge has ruled since, that the confession by Ruppert, obtained by police authorities, could not be used when the youth comes to trial, on the grounds that the police had not warned Ruppert of his constitutional rights when he was under interrogation. However, Mr. Rubinfeld insists that Mr. Almog, not being a member of the police force, could act as witness to those confessions, in which Ruppert had allegedly stated he started the fires "for a thrill."

Ruppert is scheduled to be given a hearing January 9. Mr. Rubinfeld said that the County has arranged to pay for Mr. Almog's transportation from and back to Israel, plus his hotel expenses, so that he could appear against Ruppert. The youth's voluntary defense counsel, Mrs. Eleanor J. Fiel, has objected to Mr. Almog's expected testimony, charging that he had acted as a party to "the plot" by police to obtain the Ruppert confession.

HADASSAH HOSPITAL OFFICIALS CONFER WITH ORTHODOX LEADERS ON AUTOPSIES

JERUSALEM, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Hadassah Hospital officials here met today with a delegation of Orthodox groups protesting an autopsy carried out on the body of an elderly American woman who died during a visit to relatives in Israel. It was reported that her wishes about an autopsy could not be ascertained before her death.

The hospital authorities told the Orthodox delegation that autopsies are usually not performed in the hospital where there is a written request opposing that procedure either from the patient or the patient's next of kin. The authorities said also that when there was a clear medical reason for performing a post mortem, it was carried out "in any case." Orthodox groups both inside and outside Israel have protested Israeli policies on autopsies.

BRITISH COMMITTEE FOR NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS HONORS AGNON IN LONDON

LONDON, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Shmuel Yosef Agnon, the Israeli author who was awarded the 1966 Nobel Prize in literature, was guest of honor at a testimonial dinner given by the British Committee for Nobel Prize winners. Mr. Agnon is currently visiting England after attending the presentation ceremonies in Stockholm where he received the award he shared with Nelly Sachs, prominent poet.

In an address lauding the Israeli author, Miss Jennie Lee, Minister for the Arts, described Mr. Agnon as "a very great writer and one of the great men of our generation." Sir Isfor Evans, chairman of the Anglo-Israel Association, and principal of St. Mary's College, said that Mr. Agnon represented in his writings the past of the Jewish people as well as its mood in this century thus linking the past and the present.

Soviet Editor Visits Agnon; Invites Him to Write for Magazine

LONDON, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Aaron Vergelis, editor of Sovietish Heimland, the Yiddish language monthly published in Moscow, called on the Israeli Nobel Prize-winning author Shmuel Yosef Agnon today at the latter's hotel suite where he is staying during his current visit to England. During his meeting here today, Mr. Vergelis asked Mr. Agnon to contribute a short story to Sovietish Heimland. The Israeli author agreed to do so.

Agnon Honored in Sao Paulo University at Special Session

SAO PAULO, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- A special session honoring the Israeli Nobel Prize-winning author Shmuel Yosef Agnon was held under the sponsorship of the Hebrew Chair of Sao Paulo University's department of Oriental studies. Addresses were delivered by Ben-Zion Tomer, the cultural attache at the Israel Embassy, and by Jacob Guinsburg of the Perspectiva Publishing House.

JUDGE FULD HEADS BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

NEW YORK, Dec. 18. (JTA) -- Judge Stanley H. Fuld, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of New York, has been elected chairman of the board of directors of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, it was announced last night by Dr. Louis Finkelstein, chancellor of the seminary. Judge Fuld is active in B'nai B'rith and in other Jewish communal organizations.