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MOSCOW RENEWS ATTACK ON ISRAEL; PRAVDA REITERATES OLD CHARGES

JERUSALEM, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Israeli officials were puzzled today by the appearance in Pravda, official organ of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, of a renewed attack against Israel. This is the third time within a month that Israel is being attacked in Pravda.

The renewed attack comes after a high ranking Soviet official, whose name was not disclosed here had told Israeli diplomats in New York that he knows that Israel is not interested in undermining the present regime in Syria but only in maintaining peace on the borders.

The article in the Moscow newspaper charged Israel with "provocations" against the Arab states and declares that these "provocations" are part of an "imperialist scheme" to topple the Syrian regime which is being supported by the Soviet Union. It claims that Israel's chief of staff, Gen. Yitzhak Rabin, had stated that the Syrian Government must be overthrown. The article also said that the "difficulties" surrounding the closing of the Iraqi Petroleum Company's pipelines by Syria were due to the same imperialist "conspiracy."

KING OF JORDAN SAYS HE WANTS ARAB SABOTAGE RAIDS INTO ISRAEL STOPPED

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- King Hussein of Jordan, in an exclusive interview published here today by the U.S. News and World Report, said that the Arab sabotage raids into Israel are contrary to agreements at Arab summit conferences and "almost of a help to the Israelis in attaining their objectives, by providing them with a pretext which they can use to further their own ends."

He said Arab strategy demanded crossings into Israel be stopped at this time "because this might give Israel a pretext to wage a war at a time when the build-up of defensive capabilities of the bordering Arab states have not been completed." He made clear that he opposed the so-called Palestine Liberation Army. He termed it a subversive influence, following "an extreme-Left ideology," and armed by the Communist bloc, mainly China.

At the same time, the king said that Israel is expansionist-minded and he called for removal of United Nations forces from Sinai and Gaza to force Israel to divert her military strength from the Jordanian frontier.

Commenting on a question involving alleged Israeli expansionist tendencies, Hussein said: "I believe more than ever that, in regard to Western Jordan, it certainly has got some ambitions -- if not to take over and control territory, at least to get into a bargaining position by hitting us before we are ready to defend ourselves." Withdrawal of UNEF, he said, "would make less serious the threat of Israeli attack, because the Israelis would have to divert their forces and reckon with the Egyptians."

While denouncing the Soviet Union for plotting to seize power in the Arab world, King Hussein nevertheless maintained that arms shipments from Russia to some Arab states were not really upsetting the Arab-Israeli military balance. He said that "nothing has been done with the arms to meet the real threat the Israelis pose."

ISRAELI MANUFACTURERS REDUCE WORKING HOURS TO COPE WITH UNEMPLOYMENT

TEL AVIV, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- A number of Israeli manufacturers announced today that they have taken steps to reduce the increase in unemployment and intend to run their factories on a five-day-a-week basis. The working week here has been six days. The cut to five days was intended to obviate the need for the dismissal of some workers.

At the same time, the Israeli Manufacturers Association appealed to Prime Minister Levi Eshkol today that he convene a round-table conference of employers, organized workers and Government officials to bring about mutual agreement on implementation of a country-wide freeze on wages in 1967.

A 4 percent cost-of-living wage increase is to be put into effect next month. Leaders of Histadrut, the Israeli federation of labor, at a meeting yesterday attended by Mr. Eshkol, proposed that the increase be raised to 5 percent. The Premier, on the other hand, asked Histadrut to agree to cut the projected 4 percent increase to 2 percent.

Israel Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir announced today that, due to the higher costs of imported fodder, the price of milk would have to be raised in Israel. He said that the higher cost of milk had been delayed due to pressure by leaders of Histadrut. He promised, however, that prices on dairy products would be increased.

ISRAEL AMONG FIRST TO SIGN UNITED NATIONS COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

UNITED NATIONS, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- The Government of Israel was among the first to sign the two covenants on human rights adopted unanimously Friday by the General Assembly. One document covers civil and political rights and the other social, economic and cultural rights.

Ambassador Michael E. Comay, Israel's permanent representative here, signed the covenant at a formal ceremony today, in the presence of Secretary-General U Thant. Ambassador Comay stated: "These covenants are a historic step forward, but the real test lies ahead in the process of ratification by states and their acceptance of binding commitments. The Jewish people has a special and tragic interest in the freedom and dignity of all human beings and groups."

The General Assembly, meeting in a plenary session today on its final day of the year, decided to postpone until next year consideration of proposals for the creation of a new post to be known as High Commissioner for Human Rights. The delay had been proposed by the Assembly's Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee, which reported today that it had not had the time at this year's meetings to give full consideration to the proposal.

In another decision, adopted by a vote of 108 in favor, with none against and two abstentions, the Assembly approved plans for devoting the year 1968 to a program celebrating the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Under the measure, 1968 is to be known here as International Human Rights Year.

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL DECIDES TO STUDY JEWISH POSITION IN RUSSIA

PARIS, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Creation of a six-member committee to study the position of the Jews in the Soviet Union was voted here today by the Bureau of the Socialist International, the central ruling body.

The Bureau concluded its mid-year series of meetings, under the chairmanship of Guy Mollet, former Prime Minister of France, who is general secretary of the French Socialist Party, and Bruno Pitterman, of Austria, chairman of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, by discussing three items of Jewish interest -- the situation in the Middle East, Soviet Jewry and the new political situation in West Germany arising from the recent electoral victories of the ultra-right-wing National Democratic Party in Hesse and Bavaria.

The special committee to probe the Russian Jewish problem is to consist of representatives of the British Labor Party, the French Socialists, the Belgian Socialists, and the labor parties of Holland, Sweden and Norway. The committee was instructed to invite all parties that are members of the Socialist International to submit evidence regarding the situation of Soviet Jewry, and to report back to the International's council meeting to be held next June.

Dr. S. Levenberg, of London, delivered before the session a lengthy report on the internal situation in Israel and the Middle East. A report containing what was called "confidential information" was delivered on the situation in West Germany and on the election successes of the NDP there. The report contained also a discussion of the policies of the Social Democratic Party in West Germany, which is now a member of that country's "grand coalition" along with the Christian Democratic Union.

UNIVERSITY IN ENGLAND URGED TO CANCEL LECTURE OF GERMAN EXTREMIST

LONDON, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Sir Barnett Janner, chairman of the foreign affairs committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, called on Southampton University today to cancel a lecture scheduled to be delivered on Southampton's campus by Adolf von Thadden, deputy leader of the West German neo-Nazi National Democratic Party.

Mr. von Thadden announced in Germany yesterday that he has been invited to lecture at Southampton by sociology students. He said he would appear there on January 27, and that the arrangements are being handled by a German student at Southampton.

Declaring that he "deplores" the invitation, Sir Barnett warned the university authorities: "If this report is true, it is highly deprecated. Von Thadden's visit might well be used by extremist elements in Britain for their own purposes."

Dr. Kenneth Mather, vice-chancellor of the university, and Prof. John Smith, chairman of the sociology department, said they knew nothing about the invitation to Mr. von Thadden. "The invitation," said Dr. Mather, "was certainly not issued on behalf of the university, and is quite unofficial."

Mr. von Thadden said in his announcement that the subject of his Southampton lecture would be: "The National Democratic Party -- in the Press and in Reality." Nearly the entire British press has expressed concern over the resurgence of neo-Nazism in West Germany. Mr. von Thadden said that he would foot his own expenses for the journey to the university.

(In Paris, a Committee for Vigilance, comprised of many large, French organizations ready to act against the revival of Nazism in Germany and Europe, was formed here today.)

POPE PAUL VI RECEIVES B'NAI B'RITH PRESIDENT; DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS

ROME, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Pope Paul VI today received two B'nai B'rith leaders in a private audience for a 20-minute discussion of efforts by the United Nations and the Catholic Church to promote human rights and religious liberty. The delegation included B'nai B'rith president William A. Wexler and Saul Jofes, secretary-general of the organization's International Council. The B'nai B'rith leaders will fly to Spain tomorrow for a meeting with Generalissimo Francisco Franco, in Madrid.

SEPHARDIC JEWS THREATENED WITH LOSS OF IDENTITY, LEADER WARNS

NEW YORK, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Sephardic Jews are threatened with loss of their spiritual identity, it was stated here tonight by Dr. Solomon Gaon, the chief rabbi of Sephardic Jewish communities in the British Commonwealth. He was the principal speaker at a conference of leaders of the Sephardic communities in the United States, held at Yeshiva University.

This, he said, is true even in countries where Sephardic Jews make up the majority of Jews, such as Israel, Spain and France. He attributed the development to lack of leadership in Sephardic Jewish communities and waning commitment among the younger generation. In Israel, he contended, Sephardic Jews "cannot make their influence felt because, although they live within Sephardic communities, they are unable to make active expressions of the Sephardic past in present days."

In France, he said, "if something is not done very soon, we may find that Sephardim will be lost irretrievably and thereby we shall be deprived of the influence of an important part of world Jewry, rich in its past and traditions." Even in Spain, Dr. Gaon added, Sephardic Jewry faces a gloomy future despite that country's liberalization of laws to give religious minorities freedom of expression and worship, because the community has "no qualified rabbis."

To take advantage of the opportunities inherent in the liberalization of Spanish laws, he said, "there must develop a spiritual influence which will help the children become committed to the community and the older people to look beyond the fight for every-day bread." Sephardic Jews trace their ancestry back to Spain and Portugal. Their ritual and dialect differ slightly from those of Central and Eastern European Jews, known as Ashkenazim. Many of the earliest Jewish immigrants to America were Sephardic Jews, descendants of those expelled from Spain during the Inquisition in the 15th Century.

Since World War II, Dr. Gaon pointed out, Sephardic Jews have been on the move again. Many have settled in Israel, while others have founded new communities in Italy, England, Canada and North and South America. It is estimated that there are approximately 16,000,000 Jews in the world, with about 2,000,000 of them having Sephardic backgrounds.

CZECHOSLOVAKIAN GOVERNMENT ISSUES POSTAGE STAMPS ON JEWISH THEMES

LONDON, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- The Czechoslovakian post office department at Prague has issued a new series of postage stamps which includes several stamps on Jewish themes, it was learned here today. One of the stamps shows the ancient Mahara! Synagogue in the Czechoslovakian capital. The Mahara! was the great rabbi, Jacob Low of Prague, known among other things as the sage who had created the "Golem." He lived from 1513 to 1609.

Other stamps in the series depict a drawing illustrating the martyrdom of the Jewish victims in the Nazi camp at Theresienstadt; a portrait of David Gans, a Jewish physicist; and a photograph showing the historical Jewish community of Nickelsburg, destroyed by the Nazis.

Another report from Prague stated that a two-volume history of the Jews of Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia will be published early next year by the Prague Jewish community. The work is being prepared by scholars at the request of the Jewish community, with the active cooperation of the Jewish Museum, which contains valuable archives on the subject. The announcement said there would be a Czech and a German edition, but no mention was made of either Hebrew or Yiddish editions.

POLES GET ISRAELI AWARDS FOR HELPING JEWS UNDER NAZI OCCUPATION

LONDON, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- A group of former Polish resistance fighters, who risked their own lives during the Nazi occupation to help Jews, has been honored by the Yad Vashem, the Israeli center for the documentation of the Nazi holocaust, it was reported here from Warsaw. An Israeli Embassy official in the Polish capital said that more than 70 percent of the 170 awards made by Yad Vashem were given to Poles.

SYNAGOGUE MARRIAGES IN ENGLAND REPORTED DROPPING, SURVEY ESTABLISHES

LONDON, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Synagogue marriages in England, Scotland and Wales have dropped from 2,876 a year in the period 1941-1950 to 1,816 annually for the period 1961-1965, representing a decline of 37 percent over the 20-year period, it was reported today at the monthly meeting of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The figures are the results of a survey of synagogue marriages undertaken by the statistical and demographic research unit.

VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY PREACHES FIRST SERMON IN NEW SYNAGOGUE

NEW YORK, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Vice-President Humphrey joined Jewish, Protestant and Catholic clergymen and laymen yesterday in participation in the dedication of the new International Synagogue, at Kennedy International Airport here. Preaching the first sermon in the Jewish house of worship, Mr. Humphrey noted that the plaza fronting the synagogue provides access to the holy places of three great faiths, showing that "all men are brothers and that they are equal in the sight of God."

The synagogue is one of three chapels erected at the big airport to serve not only the 16,000 travelers who pass through the facility each year but also the 34,000 persons who work at the airport. A Protestant chapel was opened there two years ago, and a Roman Catholic chapel was dedicated a month ago. The tri-faith complex is maintained jointly by the New York Board of Rabbis, the Protestant Council of the City of New York and the Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn.

SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY REPORTS ON VISIT TO ISRAEL; VOICES PROPOSALS

BOSTON, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, Massachusetts Democrat, who visited the Middle East recently, proposed here last night that the U.S.A. guarantee the territorial integrity of both Israel and Jordan as one step toward the reduction of tensions in the Middle East region. He said he had found, in the area, "a greater hardening of lines and less understanding than I had anticipated." He voiced his proposal at a breakfast of the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston.

Among the concrete steps he advocated for pacification of the Mid-East area were: A new and serious effort by the major powers to reach agreement on an embargo of arms being sent to the region; the patrolling of Israel's borders by a joint Israeli-Arab force or by a strengthened United Nations force; new efforts by individuals and neutral countries to bring the Arab states and Israel to direct peace negotiations; expansion of U.S. welfare programs in the area; and formation of an international Middle East Development Bank to aid the economies of the states in the region.

JEWISH BODY IN LONDON EXPLAINS REFUSAL TO MEET WITH SOVIET EDITOR

LONDON, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Sir Barnett Janner, chairman of the foreign affairs committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, explained at a Board meeting here yesterday why he had opposed a meeting between the Board and Aaron Vergelis, editor of Moscow's Yiddish monthly magazine, Sovietish Heimland.

Sir Barnett pointed out that, while the Board, as the elected body representing British Jewry, would be happy to meet with a similarly elected representative of Soviet Jewry, Mr. Vergelis does not have such status. He noted that, since 1945, the Soviet Union has not permitted any Jewish delegation from Russia or any Russian rabbi to go abroad to visit Jewish communities.

Referring to Mr. Vergelis as "an apologist for Soviet treatment of their Jewish community," Sir Barnett said that Moscow grants the privilege of contact with foreign Jewry only to those who defend "the most venomous attacks against Judaism," and rejects requests for "amelioration of the plight of Soviet Jewry."

HASSIDIM IN ISRAEL SING AND DANCE IN RAIN; INAUGURATE NEW QUARTER

TEL AVIV, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- Hundreds of Hassidim of the Calever Rebbe, Rabbi Mendel Taub, braved wind and rain last night to sing and dance in a procession inaugurating the new Hassidic quarters in Rishon Le-Zion near here, built by the followers of the Rebbe. The new quarter include a synagogue built at a cost of 1,000,000 pounds (\$33,000), a Yeshiva and some eighty apartments.

The procession, led by children carrying torches, and followed by Torah scrolls under a canopy, made its way to the new quarters to the accompaniment of the brass band of the fire brigade. Rabbi Taub, who is the sixth generation descendent of the rabbinic dynasty founded 180 years ago in the Hungarian town of Cale, spent the Second World War in a concentration camp. After the war he emigrated to Cleveland before settling in Israel.

CENTENARY OF BIRTH OF FORMER CHIEF RABBI OF JOHANNESBURG OBSERVED

JOHANNESBURG, Dec. 19. (JTA) -- The centenary of the birth of Judah Leo Landau, early supporter of Theodor Herzl and for 40 years Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregation of Johannesburg, was observed at a crowded meeting here. Among the notables present was Judge Felix Landau of Jerusalem, son of the late Chief Rabbi, who made a special trip here for the occasion.

Isaac Maisels, honorary president of the South African Zionist Federation, recalled that Rabbi Landau, who was born in Galicia in 1866 and educated in Vienna, had been one of the first to support Dr. Herzl, and that he had a leading role in South African Zionism from the start of his chief rabbinate here. Prof. Solomon Rapaport, professor of Hebrew at Witwatersrand University, described Rabbi Landau's work as first holder of the Chair of Hebrew at the University.