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SYRIAN TANKS DESTROYED IN NEW BATTLE BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Syrian tank gunners started shelling a tractor cultivating a hitherto undisputed field in the Tel Katzir area near Lake Tiberias today after a relatively quiet morning. It was the sixth attack by Syrians in the area since January 1. No Israeli casualties were reported in the latest shooting.

Israeli tanks returned the fire and destroyed two Syrian tanks and damaged another, an Israeli spokesman reported. The return fire silenced the tanks, he said. In another sector Syrians fired a number of automatic bursts in covering Syrian penetrations into Israeli territory in the area.

The tank battle began within two minutes after the Syrian firing began at the tractor. Israeli tanks were moved into position and opened fire. One Syrian tank immediately caught fire. Other Syrian tanks joined the fray and the Israeli tank gunners trained fire on them. Heavy black smoke erupted from the tank positions and later it was reported that another Syrian tank had been destroyed. Crews of two other tanks were seen running from their tanks after hits were scored on them.

Children of villages in the Tel Katzir area remained in shelters during the attack. The second incident involved small arms and automatic fire in the Ashmora area in the Huleh region. No casualties were reported from that area. Firing subsided and both sides agreed to a United Nations request for a cease-fire.

(In Washington, State Department officials said today that the United States was observing developments on the Israeli-Syrian frontier in connection with the shooting episodes of recent days.)

ACTIONS COMMITTEE HEARS DRAMATIC REPORT ON IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- A nagging fear exists in the hearts of Israelis that Jews are not prepared to come to the Jewish State of their own free will and this fear is at the bottom of the crisis now sweeping the State of Israel, Aryeh L. Pincus, chairman of the Jewish Agency executive, asserted here tonight.

Speaking at a session of the World Zionist Actions Committee, now meeting here, warned that unless the Zionist movement saw to it that an ever-increasing stream of immigrants came from countries of prosperity, there was the danger of an "abyss" opening between the Jews of Israel and those of the rest of the world.

He presented to the delegates a dramatic picture of the achievements of the Jewish Agency and Israel, including the absorption of 1,300,000 immigrants and the establishment of nearly 1,000 settlements.

He stressed that though immigration had decreased, there were still thousands of newcomers arriving each year and that even during the crisis of economic retrenchment, they were being absorbed and given new homes. He sketched the economies and streamlining operations carried out by the Jewish Agency in the past year despite the need to give individual attention to immigrants now arriving. He said another 100 settlements would soon be removed from the Agency's care and handed over to the Agriculture Ministry.

Pincus Foresees Increased Immigration from the Soviet Union

Mr. Pincus also said that 250,000 recent newcomers still needed help in education and that social absorption, which he defined as the immigrant's feeling he was welcome, was one of the main tasks. This he explained means a need for clubrooms and community centers. He also reported he had reason to believe that there might be an increase in the number of immigrants from the Soviet Union.

He said that in spite of criticism of Israeli Jews, there was an increasing awareness of the role of Zionism among Israel's youth, high school students, army officers and educators. All of them are looking for a bridge with the Jewish people as a whole, he declared. He stressed the role of the Youth Aliyah movement and the importance of the ties established with Jewish youth organizations and the Center for the Diaspora set up with the Israel Government.

He said the Agency had decided not to take on any new debts and noted that repayment of existing debts was a heavy burden which meant some activities had been curbed. "The people and the State today need a strong Zionist movement more than ever before," he stated.

PLENARY SESSION OF JEWISH AGENCY ADOPTS PINCUS' REDUCTION PLAN

JERUSALEM, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- The Jewish Agency plenary session decided last night to adopt the plan put forward by Aryeh L. Pincus, chairman of the Agency's executive, providing for a reduction in the number of departments. After the vote, however, Ezer, Mapam and S. Z. Shragai of the National Religious Party, expressed continued opposition to the plan.

Although the NRP as a whole favors the plan, Mr. Shragai is expected to resign his post as head of the Agency's immigration department which he held for more than 20 years. Mr. Shragai abstained in the vote and Zvi Lurie of Mapam also did not participate in the vote and asked for instructions from his party. In a statement after the vote, Mr. Pincus said: "I am sure this merger will increase the efficiency, effect economies and improve the tools at the disposal of the executive."

ISRAEL TO EXEMPT IMMIGRANTS FROM LUXURY TAX ON BUILDING HOMES

JERUSALEM, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- The Cabinet today approved a bill providing for the exemption of prospective immigrants building homes in Israel from the payment of luxury tax on dwellings exceeding 125 square meters in area.

Also exempt from the luxury tax under the terms of the bill will be immigrants who build dwellings within three years after their arrival in the country. The final draft of the bill is now being drawn up by the Interior Ministry and will then be introduced into the Knesset, Israel's Parliament. The bill has the dual purpose of encouraging immigration from affluent countries and of relieving the slack in the building trade. The luxury tax ranges from 54 pounds (\$18) to 210 pounds (\$70) a square meter.

At a press conference following the Cabinet meeting, the Cabinet secretary declined to answer a question as to whether the exemption will be available only to those officially registered as immigrants or will also be available to those bona fide immigrants who prefer to retain their status as temporary residents.

GEN. DAYAN PROPOSES ISRAEL-JORDAN COOPERATION ON PROMOTION OF TOURISM

JERUSALEM, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Plans for Israel-Jordan cooperation on the exploitation of Jordan River water and in the promotion of tourism to both countries were proposed here today by Moshe Dayan, a member of Ben-Gurion's Israel Workers faction of the Knesset, Israel's Parliament, and a former Chief of Staff and Minister of Agriculture.

Addressing a public meeting here, Mr. Dayan said that a peace agreement with Jordan could include provision for access by that country to a Mediterranean seaport in Israel. Two weeks ago Mr. Dayan said that a long-term solution to Middle East problems might be a confederation comprising Israel and Jordan which would leave Israel with freedom of decision in questions of immigration, defense and foreign affairs but solving all other problems in common.

MAPAM DECIDES TO REMAIN IN COALITION GOVERNMENT FOR ANOTHER YEAR

TEL AVIV, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- The leftwing Mapam faction of the Coalition decided last night to remain in the Government for another year as a trial period in spite of strong objection by party leaders to the Coalition's handling of labor relations, wage policy and unemployment problems.

After two days of deliberations, the Mapam Council voted to stay in the Eshkol Government with a majority of that body's members contending that it was easier to fight from within the Coalition than from the opposition benches of the Knesset, Israel's Parliament.

STATE DEPARTMENT URGED TO CLARIFY U.S. POLICY ON ARAB TERRORISM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Pointing out that they support Administration policies in Viet Nam, the Jewish War Veterans of the U.C.A. yesterday asked Secretary of State Dean Rusk to clarify the U.C. position on pro-Communist Arab extremist elements seeking to turn Israel "into another Viet Nam."

The request for an up-to-date clarification of American policy on Arab terrorism was made in a letter by JWV national commander Malcolm A. Tarlov. He said the Arabs were emulating the Viet Cong in new tactics now emerging. He indicated that vigilance is essential in the Near East at a time when Americans are fighting similar aggression in Viet Nam.

"Since the momentum of Arab terrorist provocations, against both Israel and the established government of Jordan, appears to be increasing, we feel it is timely for the United States Government to make clear its position," he stated. Citing a danger of escalation, Commander Tarlov said: "We feel that Arab fanatics may miscalculate the American attitude because of the recent United States supported United Nations expression that pertained only to the Israeli response to such provocations."

POPE SENDS SPECIAL EMISSARY FROM ROME TO GREET HEXTER AND WILLEN

NEW YORK, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- A special emissary of Pope Paul VI sent directly from Rome with a message from the Pontiff was a highlight of a dinner at the Waldorf Astoria honoring Dr. Maurice Hexter and Joseph Willen on their retirement as executive vice-presidents of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York. Principal speakers at the dinner, attended by more than 1,000 leading New Yorkers, included Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller and Mayor John V. Lindsay.

The Pope's Emissary, Father Felix A. Morlion, O.P., president of the Pro Deo Free International University for Social Studies of Rome, read the message which was described as "a recognition in the spirit of the renewed brotherhood expressed in Vatican Council II." The Pope's message, comments by Father Morlion, and talks by Governor Rockefeller, Mayor Lindsay and others emphasized that Federation, while sectarian sponsored, today comprises 130 member hospitals, social service and recreational agencies providing the broadest range of health and welfare services to over 1,250,000 New Yorkers annually without regard to race, economic status or religion.

Joseph M. Proskauer, former Justice of the Supreme Court, Appellate Division, of the State of New York and sixth president of Federation, delivered the major tribute to Mr. Willen and Dr. Hexter. He stressed that "few community leaders have done so much to help provide so many vitally needed services to so many millions of New Yorkers over the past half century." He presented books of tributes to the guests of honor. Mr. Willen has been associated with Federation since 1919; Dr. Hexter since 1937. Both became executive vice-presidents in 1941. The successor is Dr. David G. Salten. Mr. Willen and Dr. Hexter are to become executive consultants to Federation.

Another highlight of the event was a film presentation which included tributes to Dr. Hexter and Mr. Willen. Participants in the film, who included prominent Jewish and non-Jewish leaders, stressed the leadership of the two Federation executive vice-presidents in organizing volunteer community leaders who succeeded in raising an estimated \$1.5 billion for Federation agencies over the past 50 years. Samuel J. Silberman, current Federation president, served as toastmaster of the evening.

In his message, Pope Paul lauded the "precious work" accomplished by Dr. Hexter and Mr. Willen. In presenting this message, Rev. Father Morlion said: "Why should the head of the Catholic church himself decide to send a message to two Jewish leaders? The reason is that after the Ecumenical Council, particular occasions have been sought to affirm the great principles that are common to Jewish and Christian traditions.

"One of those principles and perhaps the most important is the Mitzvah," the Pope's Special Emissary continued. "In this era which we can call the spiritual revolution of understanding and esteem, we do not want to honor a leader just because of the tenets he professes or the words he speaks. We now see that the best criterion to judge the value of a human life is to consider the deeds accomplished by man for his fellow man. The Mitzvah tradition, so profound and powerful in the Jewish people, never ceases to stress that the Torah cannot fulfill the requirements of religion without the Mitzvah which embodies in deeds God's commandments."

Father Morlion stressed that Willen and Hexter are praised "because they have devoted their lives to the practical and active love of man inspired and strengthened by faith and not for one day, or one year, but during almost 50 years of continuous dedication."

MAYOR OF JERUSALEM ARRIVES IN U.S.; STRESSES NEED TO DEFEND CITY

NEW YORK, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Teddy Kollek, Mayor of Jerusalem, who also achieved worldwide note as the man who conceived and built the famous Israel Museum, said at a press conference at the offices of the United Jewish Appeal here today that defense -- something no other mayor in the world has to contend with -- is Jerusalem's first problem in view of its border location.

He called the integration of its large immigrant population the second gravest problem. The city's population, now 195,000, has tripled since 1948, one-half the present population being people who have come there since the state was established, plus the children born to them there. Jerusalem, Mr. Kollek said, has an extraordinarily high birth rate -- 30 per thousand as against Tel Aviv's 8 per thousand. It also has the largest percentage of academically trained people and, paradoxically, the largest percentage of illiterates.

Mr. Kollek, who will meet with Mayor Lindsay tomorrow in City Hall, will embark on a speaking tour for the UJA of nearly a dozen large American cities. Discussing the problems of governing the capital of Israel, Mr. Kollek declared that urban renewal is more complicated in Jerusalem than in New York or any other American city because buildings of great antiquity must be preserved while the need for modern housing is constantly on the increase in his city. It is twice as expensive to preserve the facade and atmosphere of a historic building or neighborhood as it would be to raze the whole thing, but he feels that it would be a criminal act to destroy such antiquity.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY GETS \$2,000,000 FROM BERNARD BARUCH ESTATE

NEW YORK, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Columbia University announced yesterday that it had been given more than \$2,000,000 from the estate of the late Bernard M. Baruch. The funds have been accumulating since the financier's death in June, 1965.

The grant will be used to expand the facilities of the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation of the University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. University officials said that \$560,000 of the gift will be used for endowment of the Simon Baruch Professorship of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, named for Mr. Baruch's father, which was created in 1961.

One-third of the \$2,089,984 bequest will be applied to the \$200,000,000 goal announced by the university in its capital funds campaign.

400 JEWISH IMMIGRANTS FROM TANGIERS OPEN SYNAGOGUE IN TORONTO

TORONTO, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Toronto's 400-member congregation of Sephardic Jews from Tangiers, Morocco, opened their first synagogue here with a service conducted in four languages -- Spanish, English, French and Hebrew. The congregation, Petah Tikva Anshei Castilla, purchased the synagogue building from Congregation Shomrei Shabbos, founded in 1889 by Austro-Galician Jews.

The members of the Tangiers congregation are mainly descendants of Spanish Jews who fled to North Africa at the time of the Spanish Inquisition. Their emigration from Morocco began when that country achieved independence in 1956.

JEWS IN PARAGUAY HOLD FUNERAL TODAY FOR 11 TORAHS DAMAGED IN FIRE

ASUNCION, Paraguay, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Burial services, as required by Jewish Religious Law, will be held here tomorrow for 11 Torah Scrolls damaged in a fire at the Asuncion synagogue which is regarded by synagogue officials as stemming from arson. The fire occurred on December 31.

The Representative Council of the Jews of Paraguay has acknowledged the help by official institutions, private persons and the fire brigade in putting out the blaze. The Council noted, however, that "unfortunately there were also those who attempted with gross and shocking expressions to ridicule us." No details were given of those expressions. The Council urged all Jews to close their shops tomorrow afternoon as a sign of mourning.

CONNECTICUT JEWISH WEEKLY CHANGES OWNERSHIP AFTER 38 YEARS

HARTFORD, Conn., Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Mrs. Lee B. Neusner, publisher of the 38-year-old Connecticut Jewish Ledger, has sold the English-Jewish weekly to Berthold Gaster, its managing editor, and Mrs. Shirley W. Bunis, its advertising manager.

Rabbi Abraham J. Feldman, who founded the weekly with Samuel Neusner, agreed to continue as editor under the new ownership. Mrs. Neusner succeeded Mr. Neusner as publisher after Mr. Neusner's death in 1960. Mr. Gaster and Mrs. Bunis, who have been associated with the weekly for almost ten years, will continue in their posts as editor and advertising manager in addition to their duties as publishers.

Rabbi Feldman said that the weekly would continue in the future as in the past "to serve the Jewish cause, striving always to improve our service and to enhance the contribution which our paper can make to Jewish life."

TWO AUSTRALIAN JEWS HONORED BY QUEEN OF ENGLAND; ONE IS A WOMAN

SYDNEY, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Two Jews received awards in the Queen's Honors List. They were Bernard Freeman, a member of the Great Synagogue, and Mrs. Ruby Rich Shalit. Mr. Freeman was made a Knight Bachelor for many services to the public welfare. He was awarded a listing as a Commander of the British Empire in 1956. Mrs. Shalit was made a Member of the British Empire.

Sir Bernard is a founder and was managing director of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in Australia and New Zealand for 41 years. He retired last week. Mrs. Shalit, an honorary life member of the Women's International Zionist Organization, was honored for community welfare activities, particularly as a leader in the movement for the advancement of women.

DESSIE KUSHELL COHEN, OFFICIAL OF AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, DEAD

NEW YORK, Jan. 9. (JTA) -- Dessie Kushell Cohen, director of administration of the American Jewish Committee, died yesterday at Mount Sinai Hospital after a brief illness. She was 64 years of age. Funeral services will be held Wednesday.

Mrs. Cohen served with the organization from 1945 until the time of her death. From 1929 to 1945, she was director of administration for the Jewish Board of Guardians. Before that she served with the National Council of Jewish Women.