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Knesset Votes on Bills for Unification of Jerusalem and Protection of Holy Places

JERUSALEM, June 27, (JTA) -- Israel's Parliament approved a first reading today of three bills presented by the Government to authorize it to realize unification of New and Old Jerusalem under conditions which it hoped would avoid diplomatic difficulties. All but one of the deputies present voted for the first reading.

The measures provided for protection for the holy places, for formulation of laws in "newly-freed" territories and permitting the Government to name new municipal areas and new municipal councilors. Three readings are required for enactment into law. The measures would place all holy sites under the protection of the Israeli Government. The laws were presented by Justice Minister Yaacov Shapiro, Religious Affairs Minister Zerach Warhaftig and Deputy Interior Minister Israel Ben-Meir.

The "basic law" on protection of the holy sites would cover shrines sacred to Christianity, Judaism and Islam and would impose prison terms of up to seven years for desecration of the sites or for preventing worshipers from attending services at the sites. The municipality bill would authorize the Interior Minister to include, by administrative decision, an area into an existing municipality or to combine existing municipalities.

Under the measure, the Interior Minister also would be authorized to name municipal councilors from residents of the new municipal territories. While Jerusalem is not mentioned by name in the three measures, it was clear that the law was specifically designed to make possible the capital's legal reunification.

The Premier and Dr. Warhaftig received tonight representatives of the three major religions and gave them assurances of religious freedom. It was believed that the Government was examining the possibility of creating a religious council, formed from representatives of the three religions, to supervise the holy sites and religious freedom for all.

Meanwhile, Israel began today to switch supervision of Jewish holy sites in Old Jerusalem from military to civilian auspices with an announcement that the Religious Affairs Ministry had assumed direction of the Wailing Wall and the Cave of Simon. It was assumed that the Ministry would soon take responsibility for the other Jewish holy places in the Old City.

The Ministry will soon name a team of supervisors to work out arrangements for visits to the sites and also take responsibility for their maintenance. Until now, supervision has been under direction of the Chief Chaplaincy of the Israel armed forces.

Representatives of Jerusalem burial societies submitted a report on the status of the graves on Mount of Olives. The report said that several thousand burial stones had been removed by the Jordanians, presumably for building purposes. Some graves had been destroyed by the Amman regime when it built highways across the traditional Jewish cemetery area. However, graves in the "Rabbis' Section" -- where some of the most famous rabbis are buried -- were reported intact, including the grave of the late Chief Rabbi Kook.

Eshkol Says Chances for Arab-Israel Peace are Better Today Than Ever

JERUSALEM, June 27, (JTA) -- Premier Levi Eshkol told an impromptu conference with foreign journalists today that as long as Israel's neighbors continued to make plans for Israel's destruction, "we are not going to evacuate any of the territories under our control necessary for our security."

He added that if the Arab rulers would agree to negotiate with Israel, "all problems could be solved" and he reiterated an earlier statement that "chances for peace are better today than at any time in the past 20 years." The Premier emphasized his belief that Jews and Arabs could live in peace and expressed the hope that this would soon be a reality.

Two Israeli prisoners of war captured by Iraq were returned by Jordan today to Israel in exchange for 428 Jordanian prisoners held by Israel. The Israelis were pilots shot down over Iraq and transferred to Jordan last week.

Thant Reports on His Withdrawal of U.N. Forces; Admits Act is Being Questioned

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., June 27. (JTA) -- Secretary-General U Thant conceded to the General Assembly here today that more than a month after he ordered the United Nations Emergency Force to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and Sharm el Sheikh, his action was still being widely questioned.

"Despite the explanations already given in the several reports on the subject which have been submitted to the General Assembly and to the Security Council," he stated, "misunderstandings and what, I fear, are misrepresentations, persist in official as well as unofficial circles publicly and behind the scenes."

That statement was part of his introduction to a lengthy report submitted by Mr. Thant to the Assembly's emergency special session. He noted that a week ago he had promised a full report on the issue. That promise was made in his sharp answer to some brief remarks about the UNEF withdrawal made by Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban. Asserting that his report was only factual and was not an effort "to explain why there has been so much and such persistent and grossly mistaken judgment about the withdrawal of UNEF," Mr. Thant stated:

"When, however, this tactic involves imputing responsibility for the unleashing of major hostilities, it is, and must be, a cause for sober concern. The objective of this report is to establish an authentic, factual record of actions and their causes. The report is intended to be neither a polemic nor an apology. Its sole purpose is to present a factually accurate picture of what happened and why. It will serve well the interests of the United Nations, as well as of historical integrity, if this presentation of facts can help to dissipate some of the distortions of the record which, in some places, apparently have emanated from panic, emotion and political bias."

Reveals Israel Wanted a Voice on Nasser's Request to Have U.N.E.F. Withdrawn

Mr. Thant reported that Israel's permanent representative, Ambassador Rafael, had conferred with him twice during the days just preceding the withdrawal order and before his departure for a conference with Egypt's President Nasser in Cairo.

In one of these conferences, Mr. Thant reported, Ambassador Rafael "gave his Government's views on the situation, emphasizing that the UNEF withdrawal should not be achieved by a unilateral United Arab Republic request alone and asserting Israel's right to a voice in the matter." Making no mention of his answer to that request by Mr. Rafael, Mr. Thant added only that, at the same conference, "the question of stationing UNEF on the Israel side of the line was raised by the Secretary-General and this was declared by the permanent representative of Israel to be entirely unacceptable to his Government."

Prior to his departure for Cairo, Mr. Thant reported, he again received Mr. Rafael, who gave him a statement from the Israel Government concerning the withdrawal of UNEF "strongly urging the Secretary-General to avoid condoning any changes in the status quo pending the fullest and broadest international consultation." Mr. Thant then noted that, while enroute to Cairo, during a stop in Paris, he had learned that "President Nasser had announced his intention to reinstitute the blockade against Israel in the Strait of Tiran."

In other portions of the report, Mr. Thant noted that as far back as the Assembly's emergency special session in 1957, Mrs. Golda Meir, then Israel's Foreign Minister, expressed publicly her Government's concern over freedom of passage through the Strait of Tiran in case Egypt should demand UNEF's withdrawal from Sharm el Sheikh. Mr. Thant asserted that the effectiveness of UNEF at Sharm el Sheikh "had already vanished" before Egypt's request for UNEF's withdrawal was received here. He denied, however, that the decision to withdraw UNEF had "precipitated other consequences such as the reinstitution of the blockade against Israel in the Strait of Tiran."

Says He Was Not Asked to Seek Decision of Security Council on the Issue

Mr. Thant also dealt with the consultations he held with members of the UNEF advisory committee on withdrawal of the Force. He declared that not one of the members of the advisory committee had requested that the withdrawal issue should be taken either to the Security Council or the Assembly. The advisory committee consisted of representatives of the seven countries contributing military personnel to UNEF -- Brazil, Canada, India, Yugoslavia, Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

"As a practical matter," and because the situation demanded urgent action, the Secretary-General maintained, neither the Council nor the Assembly could have acted promptly and decisively on the withdrawal. Mr. Thant stated several times in his report that an important issue regarding UNEF's status throughout the 10 years of its existence was the fact that Israel had persistently refused UNEF troops on its side of the Armistice line.

Dutch Parliament Votes for Israel's Association with European Market Lands

THE HAGUE, June 27. (JTA) -- The Second Chamber (lower house) of the Netherlands Parliament approved by an overwhelming majority a resolution calling for Israel's association with the six-nation European Economic Community. The only factions voting against the proposal were the Communists, the Farmers Party and the extreme Socialist group.

Spanish Parliament Approves Law Permitting Open Worship by Jews, Protestants

MADRID, June 27, (JTA) — For the first time in modern Spanish history, Spanish Jews, Protestants and Moslems were legally free today to worship publicly, mark their places of worship and announce religious services.

The right to open worship for non-Catholic religious groups was approved overwhelmingly by the Cortes, the Spanish Parliament, in passing the Law of the Exercise of the Civil Right to Religious Freedom. Approval ended the religious discrimination which has been in effect since Ferdinand and Isabella proclaimed Catholicism as Spain's only religion 475 years ago.

Nine deputies voted against the measure despite assurances from Minister of Justice Antonio Maria de Oriol to the Cortes in presenting the bill that it did not affect the Catholic Church or "presuppose the destruction of Catholic unity" in Spain. The remainder of the 150 to 200 deputies believed present voted for it. Affirmative votes are not usually recorded in plenary Cortes sessions. The beneficiaries are 35,000 Protestants, 6,000 Jews and a few Moslems.

Protestant and Jewish leaders remained concerned about two elements of the new law. One involves "limitations" on freedom of non-Catholic religion and the other is the omission from an earlier draft of a clause permitting non-Catholic charitable educational and other associations.

Anti-Defamation League Charges CORE Representative with Anti-Semitism

NEW YORK, June 27, (JTA) — The New York City Commission on Human Rights has been asked by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to investigate "blatant and vicious anti-Semitic outbursts and racist behavior" involving the Congress of Racial Equality in four school controversies in Negro sections of the city. The commission said it was "evaluating" the complaints.

One of the statements filed by the ADL with the commission asserted that a Brooklyn CORE representative said at a meeting last month with school officials: "We have got to get these Jews out of Bedford-Stuyvesant. It's the Jews who are to blame." Bedford-Stuyvesant is a slum area in Brooklyn. The ADL also charged that when white teachers tried to enter Public School 40 in Queens during a recent demonstration, one of the demonstrators shouted "Why don't you white Jews go back to Great Neck," a well-to-do suburb of New York City.

Brooklyn CORE chapter officials have repeatedly denied the chapter was motivated by anti-Jewish and anti-white feeling. Robert Carson, community relations director of Brooklyn CORE, said the chapter would welcome an official inquiry into the issue. Mr. Carson asserted that if the commission investigated both the ADL and CORE complaints "we are sure that the commission will conclude that those principals and certain teachers have conspired to miseducate the black and Puerto Rican children and are hurling charges of anti-Semitism to hide this fact."

Dr. Neumann Appeals for 100,000 Young American Jews to Work in Israel

NEW YORK, June 27, (JTA) — Lauding American Jews for "demonstrating even more than their usual generosity in coming to the aid of fellow Jews in embattled Israel," Dr. Emanuel Neumann, member of the Jewish Agency executive and leader of the American Zionist movement, appealed last night to young Americans to contribute their knowledge and their trained skills to Israel.

"To match the heroism of the Israelis," he said, "let 100,000 young Americans throw in their lot with them during the next three or four years. By doing so they will also serve America at that vital point on the frontier of freedom." Dr. Neumann spoke at a mass rally of the Zionist Organization of America held at Hotel Commodore here. Other speakers included Gideon Hausner and Dr. Elimelech Rimalt — both members of the Israel Parliament and the Israeli delegation to the United Nations — and Jacques Torczyner, president of the Zionist Organizations of America.

Rumania's Stand on Israel at U.N. Lauded at American League for Israel Meeting

NEW YORK, June 27, (JTA) — Ambassador Mordecai Kidron, member of the Israeli delegation to the United Nations, told an emergency meeting of the American Jewish League for Israel here that "a positive note in the Middle East crisis" had been introduced at the current emergency session of the General Assembly by Rumania.

He said that the position of the Rumanian delegation in support of direct peace talks between the Arab states and Israel, the only such stand by any Soviet bloc country, "is the only realistic and practical method of achieving any kind of stable peace in the Mideast area."

Rabbi Isidore Breslau of Washington, D.C. was elected president of the League, succeeding Samuel Daroff, who died recently. Other new officers elected were Samuel Rothstein and Louis Boyar, vice-presidents; and Samuel Rothberg, chairman of the board. Eleazar Lipsky, who is chairman of the board of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, was elected chairman of the League's executive committee.

Dr. Judah L. Shapiro reported on current Zionist reorganization efforts and said that the World Zionist Organization's reorganization committee had reaffirmed the position that there could be only one united Zionist movement. The matter will be considered at a meeting of the WZO in Jerusalem on July 17.

Catholic and Communist Trade Union Movements to Send Missions to Israel

TEL AVIV, June 27. (JTA) — Leaders of the free trade unions and of the international Catholic trade union movement will visit Israel in July on goodwill missions and a delegation representing the Communist-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions will send a fact-finding mission here, Aharon Becker, Secretary-General of the Histadrut, the Israel federation of labor, reported today.

Mr. Becker, who returned from Geneva from the annual conference of the International Labor Organization, said the Communist trade-union mission would be the first it had even sent to Israel. Mr. Becker said that the Swiss Federation of Trade Unions had joined the campaign to raise funds for Israel in Switzerland.

American ORT Delegation Leaves for Israel; Will Assess Damages to ORT Schools

NEW YORK, June 27. (JTA) — A delegation of the American ORT Federation left today for Israel to assess damages to ORT schools and other ORT installations during the recent fighting, and to discuss with Israel ORT officials enlarged responsibilities to be assumed by the program in the light of the changed situation.

Dr. William Haber, president of the American ORT Federation, and chairman of the Central Board of the World ORT organization, is heading the delegation. He is being accompanied by George J. Mintzer of New York, Harry Platt of Detroit, Joseph Spivack of Cleveland, and Paul Bernick, executive director. The delegation plans to report to the international ORT executive committee in Geneva on July 2 and 3. It will also meet with ORT leaders from North Africa and France to evaluate the impact of Jewish refugee movements in these areas.

The ORT program in Israel comprises the largest network of vocational and technical education schools in the country. It maintains 63 training centers in Israel, with an annual enrollment of more than 27,000 persons.

Leonard Bernstein to Conduct Concert at Liberated Mount Scopus in Jerusalem

NEW YORK, June 27. (JTA) — The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra will give a concert next month on Mount Scopus for the first time since the area was liberated in the war and Leonard Bernstein will conduct with Isaac Stern as soloist.

Jennie Tourel, the soprano, also will perform in the concert with Israeli soprano Netania Davrath. Mount Scopus was an Israeli enclave in Jordan-held Old Jerusalem from 1948, when Jordan seized the area, until June 8, when Israeli troops knocked Jordan out of the third Arab-Israeli war.

Famous Painters Contribute Their Works to French Fund for Solidarity With Israel

PARIS, June 27. (JTA) — The French Fund for Solidarity With Israel realized \$150,000 today through the sale of paintings donated by some of the world's leading artists. Among the works sold today were paintings by Chagall, Miro, Kokochka, Andre Masson, Poliakoff, Vieira da Silva and Zadkine.

About 300 artists and sculptors have contributed works to the Artists Section of the Fund, initiated and directed by Baron Alix de Rothschild. Another sale will be held later this week.

Elizabeth Taylor Cancels Visit to Moscow Because of Soviet Anti-Israel Stand

NEW YORK, June 27. (JTA) — A spokesman for Elizabeth Taylor and her husband Richard Burton confirmed yesterday reports that they had cancelled plans to attend the July Moscow Film Festival because of opposition to the Soviet diplomatic offensive against Israel. Tony Curtis, another film star, also dropped plans to attend the July 9-20 festival for the same reason.

Miss Taylor is a convert to Judaism and Mr. Curtis is Jewish. Several years ago Miss Taylor's films were barred from Arab countries because of her work for the sale of Israel bonds.

(The Algerian Government blacklisted yesterday several American films and film performers for supporting Israel. Among those blacklisted were Frank Sinatra, Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Juliette Greco, Sophia Loren, Yves Montand and Paul Newman. Blacklisted films included "The Ten Commandments," "Ben Hur," "Lawrence of Arabia," and "Cleopatra.")

Max Melamet Named Executive Director of North American Branch of W.J.C.

NEW YORK, June 27. (JTA) — Max Melamet, executive director of the American Section of the World Jewish Congress, has been appointed executive director of the North American branch of the WJC executive and director of the WJC New York office. This was announced here today by Samuel Bronfman, vice-president of the World Jewish Congress and chairman of the North American branch of its executive.

Manfred Saalheimer, Canadian Jewish Congress Executive, Dies in Montreal

MONTREAL, June 27. (JTA) — Funeral services were held here for Manfred Saalheimer, an attorney and an executive of the Canadian Jewish Congress, who died at the age of 60. Born in Wuerzburg, Germany, Mr. Saalheimer emigrated to Canada in 1940 and joined the staff of the Congress two years later. He was in charge of restitution services and war orphan projects and also served in community relations.