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Israelis Arrest 24 Arab Terrorists for Cinema Bomb Plot; Nab Huge Arms Cache

JERUSALEM, Oct. 12. (JTA) — Police here announced today the arrest of 20 men and four women who comprised the Arab terrorist gang responsible for the placement of a bomb in the Zion Cinema here last Sunday as well as for many other recent acts of sabotage.

The police authorities said that they had seized a huge store of arms and ammunition in a sudden raid which took place some 20 hours after the bomb was found in the theater.

Shaul Rosolio, the Jerusalem district chief of police, in announcing the arrests, said the gang had been responsible for placing an explosive under the aerial of the United Nations transmitter in the Government House complex in Jerusalem, the blasting of the old Fast Hotel in Jerusalem, shooting at an Israeli vehicle near Tulkarm, and other acts of sabotage and attempted sabotage.

The weapons cache consisted of hundreds of pounds of explosives, two-inch mortars and a massive quantity of small arms and ammunition of a type used by the Syrian army. Chief Rosolio said that the captured saboteurs admitted they had been in Syria for brief training periods. Many of them infiltrated into Israel from Syria, aided by Palestinian commandos and, in some cases, their crossing into Israeli-occupied territory had been aided by Jordanian authorities, the police reported.

All Remanded for 15 Days; Round-up Resembled Movie Scenario

Chief Rosolio said that the police had been tipped off concerning the appearance of one of the women saboteurs, tracked her down, then located and arrested a second woman in the roundup of the gang. He said that the police had "full knowledge" of the gang's operating methods, organization and particulars of its activities, which he described in detail. The gang used several cars for their activities in various areas on the west bank, transporting members and material back and forth. Some of the cars carried Jordanian license plates and others Israeli plates. The gang vehicles included one truck. All have been seized by police.

All 24 have been remanded in custody for 15 days by the Jerusalem Magistrate. Their offenses can be tried by a military court, but it is expected that they will stand trial in an ordinary criminal court.

The round-up and capture of the gang was carried out for the most part by the police, with some assistance from the Army security services. It was stressed that everything was done in strictest legality. For example, the search of the gang's headquarters in a quarry shack was carried out only after a valid search warrant had been issued. The shack yielded leaflets linking the terrorists with so-called disobedience.

The capture of the terrorist gang involved a wild automobile chase and a roadblock in typical movie style. The terrorists' car yielded a small arsenal of guns, shells and high explosives.

The gang members themselves are said to range in age between 22 and 26 and have no known occupations. Two of them admitted that the group operated under the auspices of the Syrian terrorist organization, El Fatah. One of the two gang chiefs, known as "Dr. Noor," was identified as the man who planted the bomb in the Zion Cinema Sunday night.

State Dept. Denies Cairo Report of U.S.-USSR Plan to Mediate Mideast Crisis

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12. (JTA) — The State Department denied today reports emanating from a leading Cairo newspaper that the United States and the Soviet Union had agreed to a four-point plan for United Nations mediation in the Arab-Israeli dispute. A Department spokesman said there had been no change in the American position since President Johnson's statement on June 19 that "sooner or later, it is they (the Arabs and Israelis) who must make a settlement in the area."

The Cairo newspaper Al Ahran had reported that the two great powers had agreed that direct Arab-Israeli talks were impossible; that a solution must come from the United Nations and Secretary-General U Thant; that the Secretary-General should name a representative to consult with both sides —

but at U.N. headquarters, not in the Middle East; and that the Security Council should adopt a resolution to this effect without delay.

(The Al Ahram story was also denied at United Nations headquarters in New York where it was said that no agreement had been reached at the talks in Washington earlier this week between U.S. Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg and the Soviet envoy, Anatoly Dobrynin.)

Secretary of State Dean Rusk told a press conference today that the big powers were continuing consultations on the Middle East situation but stressed that, in the final analysis, peace rested with the people of the region. He said that the Israelis and Arabs should seek an urgent solution because "time is not working for a peaceful settlement." He expressed disappointment over the Soviet response to American proposals for limitation of arms deliveries to the Middle East.

Discussing prospects for a solution emerging at the United Nations, the Secretary of State said "progress is possible" there, and noted that there were "private consultations" going on continuously with the countries of the Middle East. He pointed out that major differences were more likely to prevail among the countries of the area than between the great powers. "I hope," he said, "that before too long, we find a formula for which we desperately hope."

Plan for Special Envoy to Middle East Reportedly Pushed at U.N.

(At the United Nations, delegates reported that the Brazilian delegation was circulating a draft resolution on the Middle East for possible submission to the General Assembly, calling for appointment of a representative of the Secretary-General to be charged with negotiating between Israel and the Arab states on withdrawal of Israeli forces behind the June 4 armistice lines, the end of the state of belligerence claimed by the Arab states, freedom of passage through the Strait of Tiran and the Suez Canal, and other matters in dispute. Assembly President Corneliu Manescu, the Rumanian Foreign Minister, was reported in consultation today with delegation heads on the possibility of postponing the full-dress debate on the Middle East which is scheduled to begin next Monday.)

Mr. Rusk was asked today about the heavy arms shipments by the Soviet Union to the Arab states immediately following the Six-Day War in June. Prime Minister Levi Eshkol of Israel had been quoted in an interview with The New York Times today as having charged that the Soviet Union had already replaced 80 percent of the planes, tanks and artillery that Egypt had lost during the Six-Day War, and that Syrian arms were virtually at their prewar level. Mr. Eshkol said that the inflow of Soviet arms "has again upset the balance of power in the Middle East" and had made Israel's position "more precarious."

The Secretary of State declined to make any assessment of the Soviet arms shipments, but did say that some "significant supplies" had been sent into the area after the war. American diplomatic and defense officials said today that Mr. Eshkol's estimates of the Soviet shipments to the Arabs appeared to be exaggerated. They asserted that Egypt had, at the most, received one-third of the tanks it had before the war and not more than two-thirds of the aircraft. The American experts also stressed that, regardless of the quantity of new equipment, Egypt needed much time to train a new army.

2 Israeli Border Policemen, Jew and Druze, Arrested for Murdering 2 Arabs

JERUSALEM, Oct. 12. (JTA) -- Two Israeli border policemen, one a Jew and the other a Druze, will be brought to trial shortly on charges of murdering two Arabs on a road near Ramallah after a near traffic accident. The incident has created a furore in Israel where it has been headlined in the press. The Cabinet was expected to publicly decry the act following a meeting between Prime Minister Eshkol and several Cabinet Ministers.

According to reports, the murder occurred on a service road near Ramallah when the two policemen were angered by a near collision between their jeep and a truck driven by the Arabs. The names of the accused are being withheld. Many local Arabs attended the funeral of the two victims yesterday. However, the event was not turned into an occasion for a general anti-Israel demonstration, as some expected it might.

Israel to Permit Flow of Produce to Jordan; 6 West Bank Mayors Pledge Cooperation

JERUSALEM, Oct. 12. (JTA) -- The Israel Finance Ministry said today that it intended to permit the continuation of unofficial trade between Israel and Jordan, despite acts of terror and civil disobedience by residents of the occupied west bank. Vegetables and other produce of the west bank move daily across the Jordan River to be marketed on the east bank. The main beneficiaries of this trade are the east bank residents.

Mayors of six west bank towns pledged here today that they would make every effort to reopen all their schools. Most of the schools in their towns have been boycotted by the Arab teachers, who refuse to work under the Israeli regime or with the curricula and new textbooks introduced by the Israeli authorities.

The mayors were from the towns of Nablus, Tulkarm, Jenin, Salfit, Tubas and Ibt. They met with Gen. Moshe Dayan, the Minister of Defense. After pledging cooperation in the educational field, they requested that the strict curfew in their area be lifted. Stringent and longer curfews were established in their towns recently, after Arab businessmen conducted a general strike, shutting their shops on orders broadcast by the Jordanian radio. The mayors asked Gen. Dayan to adjust their region's curfews to the same levels operative in the rest of the west bank area.

British Rabbis Urge Yom Kippur Prayers for Deliverance of Jews Oppressed in Arab Lands

LONDON, Oct. 12. (JTA) — British Jewry was asked by its two leading rabbinical authorities today to recite special prayers on Yom Kippur for the deliverance of Jews in Arab states from terror and oppression unleashed recently against the Jews in those countries. The appeal, issued jointly by Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits, Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth, and Dr. Solomon Gaon, Haham of the Sephardic community here, associated itself with the Appeal to the World's Conscience on the same subject issued earlier this week by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel.

The joint statement emphasized, at the same time, the thanksgiving due "for the supreme and wondrous deliverance granted to Israel during the past year" during its victories in the Six-Day War.

Conservatives, Jewish School Children, Appeal on Behalf of Jews in Moslem Lands, USSR

NEW YORK, Oct. 12. (JTA) — The executive head of Conservative Judaism in the United States and Canada, and 5,000 boys and girls who are students at more than 700 Jewish schools in the New York metropolitan area, issued separate appeals today, on the eve of Yom Kippur, for the alleviation of the plight of Jews in Arab lands and in the Soviet Union.

Rabbi Bernard Segal, executive director of the United Synagogue of America, representing 820 Conservative congregations, addressed his Yom Kippur message to the suffering of Jews in Egypt, Syria and Iraq who have been imprisoned, thrown into concentration camps or placed under house arrest since the Arab-Israel war broke out last June. He urged Jews and non-Jews alike to offer special prayers on Yom Kippur for these victims and called upon those of the Moslem faith to "recognize this brutal behavior" and to note that such actions "will not contribute toward the reduction of tension in the Middle East."

The plea by the school children to end the cultural, religious and educational discriminations to which Soviet Jewry is subjected was contained in an open letter to Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin. The letter was part of a full-page advertisement that appeared today in The New York Times. According to the Jewish Education Committee which sponsored the ad, each child contributed \$1 toward its publication.

The letter, which urged the Soviet Government to let Russian Jewry live "physically and spiritual-ly" or "let them leave," protested against Soviet bans against Jewish schools, the barring of Hebrew and Yiddish teaching, the closing of 400 synagogues in the USSR, the Moscow Government's failure to permit printing of the Bible in Hebrew, the unleashing of a hate campaign against Jews in the Soviet press, and equating Jews with the Nazis who had destroyed 6 million Jews. The letter expressed the hope that Premier Kosygin would read the appeal and answer it "in good deeds as well as in words."

Czech Agency Pushes Travel for 1,000th Anniversary of Jewish Life; Prague is Vague

NEW YORK, Oct. 12. (JTA) — Cedok, the Czechoslovakia Travel Bureau, is continuing to market its tour program in connection with next year's 1,000th anniversary of Jewish life in Czechoslovakia, although the Czech Government apparently dropped its plans for an official celebration of the event after severing relations with Israel following the Six-Day War.

Cedok's New York advertising and public relations representatives issued a press release announcing four day all-expense tours in Czechoslovakia which take in Prague's 13th Century synagogue, the Jewish Museum and other historic Jewish landmarks, as well as the site of the former Nazi concentration camp at Theresienstadt, which the Czechs preserve as a museum.

Cancellation of the Czech Government's participation in the anniversary celebrations was first reported by the American Jewish Congress on September 5. The AJC had the information from "reliable sources" which it would not identify. This was later denied by Josef Richter, executive vice-president of Cedok, who contended that plans for the celebration rested entirely in the hands of the Czech Jewish community, and that his government never had an official role in the planning. The AJC pointed out, however, that Cedok authorities had placed "great emphasis" on plans for a "major" celebration of the millennial anniversary when an AJC delegation visited Prague in August, 1966.

A spokesman for the publicity agency told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that the role of the Czech Government in the anniversary plans had always been vague "before, during and after" the Israel-Arab war last June. She said that Karel Masek, North American director of Cedok, is leaving for Prague tomorrow to try to get clarification from the Czech Government.

Rumania's Chief Rabbi, Jewish Community Head, Greets Prime Minister

BUCHAREST, Oct. 12. (JTA) — The Chief Rabbi of Rumania, Dr. Moses Rosen, has sent birthday greetings to Rumania's Prime Minister, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, on the occasion of the Prime Minister's 65th birthday. The message, signed by Dr. Rosen, who is also president of the Federation of Jewish Communities, stated: "Rumanian Jews express their affection for the Premier and wish him good health and success in his work for the country and for world peace, based on the rights of all nations, big and small."

President of Brazil Greets Country's Jews; Calls for Mideast Peace

RIO DE JANEIRO, Oct. 12. (JTA) — President Costa e Silva of Brazil extended New Year's greetings today to the Jewish community of Brazil. The President's message expressed the wishes of the Government for a "joyous Rosh Hashana commemoration" and for a "just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

Committee, ACLU Call for Defeat of Charter on Blaine Amendment Issue

NEW YORK, Oct. 12. (JTA) — The New York chapters of the American Jewish Committee and the American Civil Liberties Union voiced opposition today to the new draft Constitution for New York State which will be submitted to the voters on November 7. They based their opposition on the proposed charter's elimination of the Blaine Amendment, the clause which bars the use of public funds for aid to church-supported schools.

In Albany, the State Congress of Parents and Teachers Associations also came out against the new Constitution because it would repeal the Blaine Amendment.

The executive board of the New York chapter of the American Jewish Committee voted overwhelmingly to oppose adoption of the proposed charter. "The serious deficiencies in the new document," it said, "greatly outweigh the gains. We are particularly opposed to the repeal of Article XI,3, known as the Blaine Amendment, which could open the door to massive state aid to parochial and other non-public schools, thereby weakening the public school system. We are also concerned that the gifts and loan provisions may be construed to allow public financing of non-public school construction."

On behalf of the Civil Liberties Union, Prof. Sheldon Ackley, chairman of the organization's New York chapter, declared the group had decided "reluctantly" to oppose the draft because the school clause "would result in intolerable pressure on the State Legislature and on local school boards to appropriate funds in aid of parochial schools." He said the chapter had found many clauses in the new draft for which civil libertarians had fought for years, "but the question of religious freedom is so important and overriding that we feel we can't compromise on this principle and must therefore urge the defeat" of the proposed charter as a whole.

In an editorial prepared for publication next week, Commonweal, liberal Catholic weekly, criticized the role of the Catholic hierarchy on the new Constitution. It said there was a "fundamental deficiency" because the hierarchy was concerned with only one part of the draft. The editorial was to state:

"The voter registration drive being pushed through pulpit, the diocesan press, the parish hall lectures, the church-door handouts, the special programs being beamed over the church's television facilities -- all focus exclusively on Blaine Amendment repeal."

It warned that "the inevitable conclusion is that Catholic interest in the Constitution is selfish and determined by the opportunities the new Constitution would open up in the way of aid to Catholic schools. It goes almost without saying that this is no reason to be for the new Constitution, any more than disagreement on the point alone is sufficient reason to be against it."

Schechter School Opposes Bill to Permit State Aid to Parochial Schools

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 12. (JTA) — The board of a leading Hebrew day school here voiced its strong opposition today to a proposed measure that would permit state aid to private and parochial schools in Pennsylvania. The opposition of the Solomon Schechter Day School, an affiliate of the United Synagogue of America, was stated in a letter to Governor Raymond P. Shafer from Louis Kasoff, president of the school. Mr. Kasoff wrote that in view of the serious financial straits faced by the school "the temptation is great to want to support this bill. However, the use of tax funds to support sectarian schools is a clear violation of the principle of separation of church and state, and the sacrifice of that principle is an exorbitant price to pay" for the relief of financial problems.

The legislation in question, the Mullen Bill, seeks to bypass a constitutional prohibition against the use of Commonwealth funds for any sectarian school by creating a State Nonpublic School Authority that would "purchase secular educational services" from private schools in the state. The measure, now in the House Appropriations Committee, is supported by Catholic groups and by the Beth Jacob Hebrew Schools of Philadelphia.

The Solomon Schechter Day School provides an integrated program of Hebrew, religious and secular studies for elementary school children and is licensed by the Commonwealth Department of Public Instruction.

Congress Given New Bill to 'Perfect and Reform' Immigration Act of 1965

WASHINGTON, D.C., Oct. 12. (JTA) — Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, Massachusetts Democrat, and Rep. Emanuel Celler, New York Democrat, introduced a bill yesterday which, they say, would remove the "inequities" remaining in U.S. immigration policies and "perfect the reforms" initiated in the Immigration Act of 1965.

The 1965 act abolished the national origins quota system as a basis for selecting immigrants and substituted a preference system for various categories of immigrants.

The Kennedy-Celler legislation would provide a new "policy of asylum" for refugees who must now enter the United States under the preference priorities system. It would also grant special immigrant visas to clean up a backlog of applicants that had accumulated under the national origins quota system.