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Israel Reports 15 Dead, 48 Wounded, 36 Missing in Egyptian Attack on Destroyer Elath

JERUSALEM, Oct. 22, (JTA) — Israelis reacted today with shock and bitterness to the news of the sinking of one of Israel's three destroyers early last night by Soviet-made missiles fired from Egyptian naval units near Port Said.

The initial casualty figures on the disaster were given as 15 crewmen dead, 36 missing and 151 men rescued in a sweeping sea-and-air rescue mission, including 48 injured. The Elath, one of two sister destroyers sold to Israel by Britain, was hit by three missiles in a brief action off the Sinai Mediterranean coast.

Captain Shlomo Harel, commander of the Israeli Navy, charged at a press conference today that Egypt had made an unwarranted attack despite the Egyptian-Israeli cease-fire agreement and despite the fact that the destroyer was on the high seas beyond the Egyptian-claimed 12-mile territorial waters.

Premier Levi Eshkol said that Israel would not forget "this wanton act by Israel's worst foe." He made the comment at a ceremony at President Shazar's residence held to mark the start of Israel's 20th anniversary. He said it was painful that "even this occasion must be tinged with sadness. We mourn some of our best sons, and their memory will be engraved on the scroll of Israel's resurrection."

(Foreign Minister Abba Eban described the attack last night in London, as he prepared to depart for New York and a possible United Nations Security Council session on the Middle East, as "unprovoked aggression and a violation of the cease-fire.")

(At the United Nations, Israel Ambassador Gideon Rafael sent an urgent letter yesterday to the President of the Security Council on the attack, calling it a "deliberate flagrant act of belligerence on the high seas," calling the action "a matter of utmost gravity." He said the attack followed a series of violations of obligations contracted by Egypt by accepting Security Council cease-fire resolutions. He did not ask for a Security Council meeting.

(In Washington, a State Department spokesman declined comment today on reports that Soviet-made missiles sank the Elath. The spokesman indicated that some response to the incident might result from consideration of reports at the State Department in the course of normal business tomorrow.)

Three Direct Hits Scored by Soviet-Made Missiles; Ship Sunk as Rescue Begins

Survivors of the attack said the Elath was off Port Said in international waters opposite Romani on the northern Sinai coast. The crew was preparing for dinner when, suddenly, alarm whistles sounded. Before any crew members could man battle stations, the first missiles hit the ship, turning it to a dangerous angle and causing enormous internal damages.

Despite the damage, crew members began treating the wounded and seeking to repair the ship to enable it to get away. But a second salvo caught the ship and it began to sink. A few minutes later, radio messages were received from the vessel, announcing that the crew was abandoning ship.

Capt. Harel told newsmen he had been informed by ship officers that the Elath's radar screens were clear and that nothing was observed on them just prior to the attack. He said that, suddenly, crew members on watch observed green flares from Port Said, followed by the approach of a swiftly-moving white cloud, the indication of a missile. The Elath had time to change speed and course but the missile, apparently containing a tracking device, also changed course, and hit the Elath amidships, wrecking a boiler. A minute later, a second homing missile hit the machinery rooms, bringing the ship to a dead halt. The explosions stopped all power. Each of the missile one-ton warheads contained 1,000 pounds of explosives.

The ship was listing but still afloat when orders were issued to treat the wounded, most of them suffering from burns, and to try to repair the damage. As the abandon ship order was issued and the crewmen began placing wounded comrades on rafts, the third missile hit the stern of the Elath and it began to sink. A fourth missile exploded in the water, causing more casualties.

Shortly after the Elath sank, Israeli Air Force planes appeared to drop flares, lifeboats and rafts. Soon afterwards helicopters arrived and began picking up survivors. Every available air and naval craft was mobilized for the rescue operations. Some helicopters, which were carrying the most severely wounded survivors, were directed in midair to northern hospitals for surgery. The airlift continued all night through this morning.

Transport planes illuminated the area to enable rapid helicopter pickup. A clearing station was set up on shore. Capt. Harel said he never would have believed that the Air Force pilots could find the scene in the night pitch darkness so quickly and rescue the survivors with such speed.

Capt. Harel said that the missile attack apparently had been prepared in advance and waged from the Port Said area with no attempt to identify the target ship. He said that Israeli naval units regularly patrol the northern Sinai shores to a point west of the Romani village. He said the Elath was on a southerly direction when it was hit. The missiles came from either a Komar or Osso missile-carrying ship. The missiles have a range of about 18 miles.

Eshkol Tells Cabinet Israel's Servicemen, Citizens, Will Not Be Left Unprotected

JERUSALEM, Oct. 22. (JTA) -- Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, speaking at a meeting of the Cabinet, declared today that the "base" Egyptian attack and sinking of the destroyer Elath had "intolerable implications," and that Israel's citizens and servicemen "will not be left unprotected."

Among those attending the Cabinet meeting were Capt. Shlomo Harel, commander of the Israeli Navy, and Gen. Yitzhak Rabin, Israeli chief of staff. Capt. Harel, Gen. Rabin and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan presented a report on the disaster. Members of the Cabinet then stood silently to honor the memory of the dead sailors.

The session began with the statement by Premier Eshkol, who had been briefed beforehand by the military commanders. He charged that the Egyptian attack from Port Said had been carried out without any reason and that the Elath had been outside Egyptian territorial waters. He declared that the attack was "a most dangerous infringement of international sailing rights and must be regarded as an infringement without precedent of the cease-fire agreements."

It was confirmed at the meeting that Lt. Gen. Odd Bull, the chief United Nations cease-fire observer in the Suez-Sinai sector was asked to notify Egypt that the Israeli Navy and Air Force would be in the area of the incident in strength but solely for rescue operations.

The sinking of the Elath, the worst disaster in the brief history of Israel's Navy, reportedly has given rise to considerations of an Israeli retaliation, informed observers said today. However, it was generally believed that the Government would not order any reprisal at all, or that it would at least refrain from immediate retaliation, if it considered that to be the wisest course.

Security Council Members, Led by USA and Japanese, Try Again Today for Mideast Solution

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 22. (JTA) -- Behind-the-scenes activity continued here today as members of the Security Council, led by U.S. Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg and Senjin Tsuruoka, of Japan, this month's Council president, tried again to hammer out some agreement on a draft resolution acceptable to all parties concerned for possible measures to solve the Middle East crisis.

So far, no agreement has been reached, either by the majority of the Council members or by the Arab and Israeli delegations, on the wording of a resolution or the timing of a Council meeting which Mr. Goldberg, Mr. Tsuruoka and Secretary-General Thant had hoped to convene for Tuesday. Mr. Tsuruoka, who met with the 10 non-permanent Council members last week -- without result -- will confer with these 10 again today in an effort to reach agreement on a draft resolution regarding the Mideast crisis.

Yigael Yadin Reports Another Dead Sea Scroll, Longest Thus Far Found

JERUSALEM, Oct. 22. (JTA) -- Professor Yigael Yadin disclosed here for the first time last night the discovery of another Dead Sea Scroll, the longest found to date, which is estimated to be 2,000 years old and contains, among other things, a detailed description of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Addressing a conference of the Israel Exploration Society, the archaeologist said there is no doubt that the scroll was discovered in the Qumrun caves on the shores of the Dead Sea but that the circumstances of its acquisition cannot be revealed for the time being. He did say, however, that the new scroll had been kept in Jordan illegally and was in an extremely bad state of preservation owing to damage received in handling as well as to its age.

The scroll, written in Hebrew on very fine parchment, measures 8.6 meters and has been dated to the Herodian period which is in the second half of the first century B.C.E. Its legible portions contain four groups of subjects: enumeration of sacrifices according to the feasts of Israel, ritual rites including those pertaining to uncleanness and putrefaction, a description of the Temple giving minute details and measurements, and royal statutes including mobilization orders in preparation for a war of extinction threatened by attacking foes.

The description of the Temple is not identical with those contained in other sources known today, Prof. Yadin said. The list of festivals mentions two hitherto unknown feasts -- a wine feast and an oil feast. The new scroll, like the previously discovered Dead Sea scrolls, is attributed to the Essene sect whose origins and exact beliefs are still disputed by scholars. A Bethlehem dealer has reported a scroll stolen from him, and has instituted proceedings for its recovery.

Shazar Officially Opens Israel's 20th Anniversary Celebration; Stresses Further Immigration

JERUSALEM, Oct. 22. (JTA) -- President Zalman Shazar officially opened Israel's 20th Anniversary Year celebrations at ceremonies in his home today in the presence of the Prime Minister, other top Government officials and public figures. The President's proclamation was devoted mainly to a call for immigration to Israel and a call to the Israeli populace to participate actively in the absorption of newcomers.

Strongest Attack on Public Education in Century Seen By American Jewish Congress Report

NEW YORK, Oct. 22, (JTA) — The American Jewish Congress warned today that the nation faces "the strongest attack mounted in this century against the principle of public education" in the efforts to end the ban on state support of sectarian schools in New York, and similar efforts in other states.

The warning was issued by Howard M. Squadron, vice-president of the AJC, in a report to the organization's national governing council meeting here. He cited a national survey undertaken by the AJC's Commission on Law and Social Action as evidence that "determined and well-organized efforts are being made in state after state to seek appropriations for parochial schools through statute and constitutional amendment." He noted at the same time that opponents of such aid are actively fighting these programs in the courts. A total of 16 cases challenging the expenditure of federal and state funds for church-connected schools is now pending, according to the survey.

In addition to the campaign in New York, which succeeded in having repeal of the ban on public support for church-connected schools incorporated into the proposed new state constitution, Mr. Squadron reported that similar proposals have been introduced at constitutional conventions now sitting in Florida and Maryland. In New Hampshire, the legislature adopted a statute (since invalidated by the Supreme Court) allotting a share of the state sweepstakes to finance the operation of parochial and other non-public schools. In Ohio, the legislature passed a bill authorizing the use of public funds to pay for equipment and services at church and non-public schools. In Pennsylvania, a bill before the legislature would give non-public schools a share of the proceeds from the state cigarette tax to pay for instructions in secular subjects.

The Jewish Labor Committee in New York said today it was opposed to the projected New York state constitution and urged its defeat in the November 7 referendum, largely on the issue of the projected repeal in the document of the constitutional ban on state funds to religious schools.

The JLC cited 10 reasons for its stand, all of them involving the Blaine Amendment, which now bars such state aid. The statement said that state aid to religious schools would "spell the eventual destruction of the public school system," bring "soaring" state taxes, and "catapult organized religion into the political arena, pitting one faith against another, in a bitter, no-holds barred struggle for power, money and the minds, hearts and souls of America's children."

ADL Told KKK's Southern Membership Reaches Peak, Birch Group Shifts Toward Race Issues

HOUSTON, Tex., Oct. 22, (JTA) — The Ku Klux Klan has reached a record Southern membership peak of 55,000, and the John Birch Society has turned to the racial issue as a more effective way to gain members than the Viet Nam war, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith reported today at the ADL's three-day executive committee meeting here.

The Klan membership is the highest since the end of World War II, the ADL reported, adding that Klan attitudes "have been absorbed by large sections of the Southern community." Citing present Birch Society membership as around 75,000, the report said that the society was beginning a major recruiting drive based on "exploitation of deep-seated grass roots prejudice against Negroes." The reports were based on studies made by the ADL's 22 regional offices.

Dore Schary, ADL national chairman, told the executive committee that the American Negro community should no more be condemned for actions of its extremists than the total white community should be condemned for the actions of the Klan or the American Nazi Party. He cited the recent meeting in Chicago of the National Conference of New Politics at which delegates forced through a resolution condemning Israel for the Six-Day War last June. He also referred to an anti-Israel attack by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in a newsletter. He warned, however, that though Negro extremists were a minority "they have gained an audience and made an impact, both of which can grow."

U.N. Group Debating Religious Freedoms Hears British Support for Banning Anti-Semitism

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 22, (JTA) — With Israel, the United States and Britain lined up against the Soviet and Arab blocs on whether a draft convention on religious freedoms should specifically condemn anti-Semitism, a 122-member General Assembly committee was set today to continue that debate tomorrow.

Inclusion of condemnation of anti-Semitism drew the support of Britain this weekend when Lady Gaitskell, London's representative in the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee, advocated such a clause in the draft Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance. Thus she supported the attitudes on this score expressed previously by Mrs. Zena Harman and Mrs. Patricia Harris, respectively the Israeli and American delegates participating in the committee's debate.

"During the last 100 years," Lady Gaitskell told the committee, referring to anti-Semitism, "across the European continent from the Atlantic to the Urals, we have witnessed barbarism on a scale never seen before. We have witnessed the most vicious persecution of this minority faith, both through pogroms and Nazi tyranny. This explains why this particular form of religious persecution was originally singled out for inclusion in the draft and why delegations like mine prefer this, rather than to rest on the glib assumption that this dark evil could never happen again."

U Thant Fets Israel's Departing Ambassador; Rafael Remains for Mideast Debate

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 22, (JTA) — Secretary-General U Thant gave a farewell luncheon this weekend for Ambassador Gideon Rafael, the Israeli permanent representative, who has been appointed Director General of the Israel Foreign Ministry, in Jerusalem. Attending the luncheon were representatives of the United States, Britain, France, Holland, Mexico, Dahomey, Philippines and senior members of the Secretariat headed by Dr. Ralph J. Bunche and C.V. Narissaman. No representative of the Eastern bloc was present. Mr. Rafael will remain at the U.N. for the duration of the discussion on the Middle East crisis.

JDC's Broido Tells Mission in Israel that 1968 Budget Remains Vital for Jewish Survival

TEL AVIV, Oct. 22, (JTA) — The relief and rehabilitation work of the Joint Distribution Committee in 1968 remains "a vital and indispensable pre-condition for survival in some cases and for minimum well-being in others for 375,000 Jews in Israel, Europe and Arab and Moslem countries," Louis Broido of New York, JDC chairman, said here yesterday.

Addressing the United Jewish Appeal mission currently surveying the needs of Jews in those countries, he said that the repercussions of the Six-Day War in June had presented the JDC with its most severe challenge in more than a decade, "one which will affect its program and budget for many years to come." He added that the focal point of JDC activities now was in France and Italy, where many thousands of Jews from the Moslem North African countries had found refuge.

He said that all but a few hundred of the 4,000 Jews in Libya had fled to Italy. He reported that, in France, about 50,000 Jews were in need of some form of JDC help. In the past 10 years, he reported, the Jewish population of France had risen from 300,000 to more than 500,000. He said this had resulted in a lack of such communal services as Jewish schools, synagogues, children's homes and homes for the aged.

Members of the UJA mission also heard reports on JDC programs in Israel and later toured the home for the aged in Rishon LeZion sponsored by Malben, the JDC-supported agency for the care of the aged and infirm.

'Americans for Permanent Peace' in Mideast Appeals for Broad Support; Raps State Dept.

NEW YORK, Oct. 22, (JTA) — The recently formed Americans for a Permanent Peace in the Middle East issued an appeal for support in a full-page advertisement in The New York Times this weekend. The advertisement said that the new organization would "seek to put the facts before the American public in order to mobilize public opinion against Washington's lack of initiative" in carrying out President Johnson's five-point plan of June 19, calling for a durable peace in the Middle East. The statement added that President Johnson realized "the need for action" but that "the State Department has to date failed to take one step in that direction."

Meshulam Riklis, Israel-born financier, was listed as acting chairman and treasurer of the group. Herbert Rickman is executive director. The list of sponsors contained Jewish and non-Jewish names.

Three American Nazis Arrested, 10 Beaten as They Try to Disrupt Washington Peace March

WASHINGTON, Oct. 22, (JTA) — Three members of the American Nazi Party were arrested and about 10 others were beaten and bloodied when they shouted anti-Semitic slogans in an attempt to disrupt the peace march around the Pentagon yesterday.

The incident was the first major demonstration by the American Nazis since the slaying of their leader, George Rockwell, last August. The three arrested men were taken into custody after violating regulations governing the peace march. The others were attacked and beaten by peace marchers after provoking them with anti-Semitic taunts. The Nazis wore swastika armbands and storm-trooper uniforms. Most of the peace marchers who fought them appeared to be non-Jewish. The encounter took place on a parking lot. Military Police did not intervene, saying the Army had no jurisdiction in actions of violence between civilians.

(In Tel Aviv, about 200 members of the Israeli Communist Party picketed the United States Embassy there yesterday in a protest against the Viet Nam war. They were joined by a number of volunteers from other countries.)

Four Jews Chosen For Ontario Provincial Parliament; Three Are Incumbents

TORONTO, Oct. 22, (JTA) — Four Jewish members of the Ontario Parliament were elected or re-elected in Ontario general elections, according to tabulations completed yesterday. Three were incumbents. They are Alan Grossman, Minister of Reform Institutions in the Progressive Conservative Government, Toronto; Vernon Singer, deputy leader of the Liberal opposition party, who defeated his Jewish opponent, Murray Chusid, of the New Democratic Party by only 27 votes, in Downsview, a Toronto suburb; and Stephen Lewis, of the New Democratic Party from Scarborough West, another Toronto suburb.

The new Jewish member is Morton Shulman, a physician, known as Toronto's "fighting coroner." A former Conservative, he joined the New Democratic Party and won a seat from Toronto-High Park. Because of the closeness of the vote in the Singer-Chusid contest, a recount has been scheduled. The only constituency in the contests with a substantial Jewish vote is that of Downsview, where Jews constitute 40 percent of the voters.

Ruggero di Segni, Vice-President of Jewish Communities in Italy, Dead at 59

ROME, Oct. 22, (JTA) — Ruggero di Segni, a prominent Italian lawyer and leader of the Jewish community, died here at the age of 59. Mr. di Segni was vice-president of the Union of Jewish Communities in Italy, and a member of the executive board of the World Jewish Congress. He was also associated with the Jewish orphanage here and with the Vittorio Polacco Jewish School.