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Eshkol Visit to Johnson Set for January 7-8 at LBJ Ranch in Texas

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26 (JTA)--The Israel Government has officially announced that Prime Minister and Mrs. Levi Eshkol have accepted an invitation from President Johnson to spend January 7 and 8 as house guests at the LBJ ranch in Texas, according to reports received from Jerusalem today.

White House sources later confirmed the planned visit to the ranch. They said that it was possible that officials of the Executive agencies, such as the Departments of State and Defense, would go to the ranch at the time of the Eshkol visit. All official meetings and negotiations will take place there, the White House authorities said.

Mr. Eshkol's visit to this country will take place a month earlier than scheduled, at the request of President Johnson. The talks between the two leaders are expected to cover a wide range of topics, including such matters as arms sales to Israel, economic questions and topics of a political nature.

U.N. Mideast Emissary Sees Eban for Second Round of Talks; To Go to Cairo

JERUSALEM, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, Secretary-General Thant's special United Nations representative to the Middle East, arrived here from Cyprus this morning and met with Foreign Minister Abba Eban in their second round of talks. Ambassador Jarring is scheduled to leave here tomorrow and, according to the Egyptian radio, is due in Cairo Thursday.

Cairo Reports 'Palestine Liberation' Groups Plan More Anti-Israel Terror

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Rival "Palestine Liberation" movements are now meeting in Cairo to discuss escalation of guerrilla operations against Israel, according to reports received here today. The Cairo newspaper, Al Ahram, said the Arab representatives of the various terrorist groups convened "to explore the possibilities of bringing about unified Palestine action, mobilizing all potential guerrilla groups, and escalating the armed struggle in occupied territory."

The meeting followed the resignation of Ahmed Shukairy as chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Younger Arabs were reportedly urging more action against Israel, and less talk. The meeting sought to organize a council representing all elements, to coordinate and increase the tempo of terrorism against Israel.

Lebanese Student Leader, Trained in Syria, Nabbed by Israelis as Agitator

JERUSALEM, Dec. 26 (JTA)--The Syrian-trained chairman of the Lebanese Students Union was arrested by police here today after infiltrating the country with a gang of saboteurs. He was charged with agitating for civil disobedience and strikes among young, educated Arabs of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The student leader, whose arrest was disclosed this morning, is in his senior year at Beirut University, and is a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

French Press Reports Horrors of Anti-Jewish Persecutions in Syria, Egypt

PARIS, Dec. 26 (JTA)--First-hand reports of the desperate plight of Jews in Syria who are afraid to leave their homes, and of daily beatings, torture and sexual degradation of Jews imprisoned in Egypt, were published here today.

The conditions that Jews endure in Syria, whence they are forbidden to emigrate, were described in a letter published in Le Monde, which detailed official repressions and persecutions reminiscent of those suffered by Jews in Nazi Germany in the 1930's. Syrian Jews, the writer said, are forbidden to travel more than three miles from their homes and must carry special identity cards stamped with the word "Jew." They have been summarily dismissed from jobs, cannot dispose of their assets, and are confronted by a Government-imposed boycott of Jewish shops by state employees and military personnel.

Their situation is aggravated by the fact that Syrian Jews generally live in the same neighborhoods as Arab refugees. The worst conditions, the letter said, are in the border town of Kamechli, where Jews are afraid to leave their homes. Assets belonging to Jews abroad have been confiscated.

A tale of horrors suffered by the Jewish inmates of Axouzaabel Prison, in Egypt, was told in a nine-page article in the weekly Express, by a former inmate who remains anonymous so as not to further jeopardize the prisoners who remain. The Chief Rabbi of Alexandria, he wrote, received especially severe treatment, being trussed up on cell bars in the manner of a crucifixion. As many as 70 prisoners are packed into cells meant to hold no more than 30, he reported. Jews are subjected to almost daily beatings and there were several cases of torture and forced sodomy, he claimed. There were 350 Jews imprisoned last June, the article stated, and 200 still remain. The others were expelled from the country after being forced to renounce their Egyptian nationality and leave all of their property and assets behind.

Dr. Wexler, B'nai B'rith Head, Charges de Gaulle Stand is 'Vulgar,' 'Mischievous'

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26 (JTA)--President Charles de Gaulle of France has been asked by Dr. William A. Wexler, International President of B'nai B'rith, to "seize an early occasion to right the wrong you have done — to the Jews — and to de Gaulle." The B'nai B'rith letter to Gen. de Gaulle, stating the organization's response to the French President's recent expressions, was revealed today.

Gen. de Gaulle was told: "You have given renewed currency to vulgar and mischievous stereotypes of the Jewish people which, thanks to the growing ecumenical spirit promulgated by Vatican II, were falling into desuetude. Now, old and shabby anti-Semitic canards will seek to dignify themselves through the invocation of your name, despite what may be your personal sentiments. Thus you have brought needless hurt to a people to whom France brought liberty, equality, and fraternity, and who have served her loyally."

Dr. Wexler added: "The book of Jewish history already contains too many grim chapters; they do not need another gloss that blames the victim for the crime." B'nai B'rith, said Dr. Wexler, had "long admired the historic role you played in the liberation and re-creation of France." But the organization was now moved "to express our deep disappointment and chagrin over the gratuitous and groundless remarks you made against the Jewish people in your press conference of November 27."

Ben-Gurion Sends Protest Letter to de Gaulle, Recalls Franco-Israel Relations

TEL AVIV, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Former Premier David Ben-Gurion was disclosed today to have sent a lengthy letter to French President Charles de Gaulle, in which he expressed astonishment at the General's November statements assailing the Jewish people and Israel.

According to the evening daily, Maariv, the former Premier outlined his view of Israeli-French relations since Israel's statehood, and particularly since 1954. He recalled his long talks with the French President, particularly his conversation with Gen. de Gaulle at the funeral services for former West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. Mr. Ben-Gurion also touched on the anti-Israel attitude of the French Government on arms supplies. It was indicated that Mr. Ben-Gurion anticipated a reply from Gen. de Gaulle.

Jerusalem City Government Accepts Unified Labor Party; Kollek Remains Mayor

JERUSALEM, Dec. 26 (JTA)--The Jerusalem municipality has a united labor party following the formal merger last night of the Israel Workers Party (Rafi) with the Alignment consisting of Mapai and Achdut Avodah. Unification of the three labor factions on a national scale will take place next month. Teddy Kollek, of Rafi, will remain Mayor of Jerusalem. His immediate predecessor in that office, Mordechai Ish Shalom, of the Alignment, is expected to be appointed deputy mayor.

Israel Cabinet Approves Plans to Set Up New Higher Education Authority

JERUSALEM, Dec. 26 (JTA)--The Cabinet has approved in principle the creation of an authority of higher education. It authorized Education Minister Zalman Aranne to draw up a bill under which the authority will be charged with the preservation of academic freedom and planning for the development of existing institutions of higher learning. The new authority would replace the present higher education council.

New Attacks Against Israel, Zionism, Unleashed in Controlled Soviet Press

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26 (JTA)--The Soviet Union has unleashed a new attack on Israel and Zionism with an article in a leading Russian newspaper seeking to link Zionism with Nazism and anti-Semitism. This was reported here today in dispatches from Moscow.

The new wave of attacks followed a short-lived indication of possible moderation emerging from the Warsaw conference on Middle East policy, concluded last week by Communist leaders from eight countries. The Warsaw communique referred to Israel's right to exist, but stressed the primacy of unconditional withdrawal from occupied territories.

Today's attack in the Young Communist League newspaper, Komosomolskaya Pravda, alleged that Zionism sought to exploit anti-Semitism to manipulate Jewish working class people. The writer, Yuri Ivanov, quoted Theodor Herzl, father of modern political Zionism, as allegedly stating that anti-Semitism was "useful" when directed against workers and "harmful" only when directed against Zionists. The new U.S.S.R. press and radio propaganda indicated that the anti-Israel campaign would continue unabated. The line is based on charges that Israel employed "Nazi" methods against the Arabs.

Parades, Traditional Relay Races Feature Chanukah Observances in Israel

JERUSALEM, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Israel ushered in Chanukah at sundown today with parades, public candle-lighting ceremonies and the traditional torchlight relays which saw youngsters and sportsmen racing over the countryside in the manner of the Maccabean heroes of old. Eighteen youth groups participated in a torchlight relay from City Hall here to the Hebrew University and Hadassah Hospital buildings on Mt. Scopus, which is part of Israel for the first time in 19 years.

Hotels in both West and East Jerusalem were packed with pilgrims and tourists here to mark Christmas or Chanukah, depending upon their faith. This caused the Knesset (Parliament) to adjourn at an earlier hour than usual so that members could return to their homes in other parts of the country, there being no accommodations left for them in the capital. Hundreds of visitors, turned away by capacity-filled hotels, sought sleeping quarters in nearby towns in Israel and on the West Bank.

Jews Start Chanukah Observance; Reform Leader Pleads for End to All Warfare

NEW YORK, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Jews around the world began celebrating Chanukah tonight, lighting the first candle of eight which, on successive nights, will mark the festival. Chanukah commemorates the victory of the Jewish people in ancient Palestine over the forces of religious oppression launched by Antiochus Epiphanes, a Syrian king who attempted to force the Jews to accept Hellenism in place of Judaism. The victory, led at first by Matathias the Hasmonean, then by one of his sons, Judah Maccabee, culminated in the year 165 before the Christian Era in triumph and the refurbishing of the Temple in Jerusalem.

A plea for world peace in the spirit of Chanukah, "the first war for religious freedom in history," was issued today by Rabbi Levi A. Olan, of Temple Emanu-El, Dallas, who is president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (Reform). Terming the Maccabean rebellion "a necessary conflict for men to rid themselves of oppression," and noting that the technique necessarily employed warfare, the Reform leader pointed out: "The time has come to substitute law for force." "Americans," he continued, "proclaim themselves a society of law and not of men. It is time to end all wars and begin living as a federation of nations under law."

The Chanukah observances in New York, some of which included a torchlight parade this evening in protest against Soviet anti-Semitism, have been marked in traditional form the last three weeks by the performances of the annual Chanukah Festivals for Israel Bonds, conducted by the Greater New York Committee for State of Israel Bonds. The last of this year's series of festivals will be staged next Monday night, as usual at Madison Square Garden. At least 18,000 persons are expected to attend that event.

Rabbi Tells Chanukah Torchlight Rally of Synagogue Shutdowns in Leningrad

NEW YORK, Dec. 26 (JTA)--A New York rabbi who returned from a visit to the Soviet Union, two weeks ago, reported here tonight that "in the entire city of Leningrad, there now remains only one synagogue to serve 300,000 Jews." He also said that the last known private minyan (prayer gathering), held as a consequence of the synagogue shutdowns, was forcibly closed by Soviet authorities in Leningrad a few months ago.

Rabbi Jacob Goldberg, of the Fort Tryon Jewish Center, made these revelations at a mass rally following a Chanukah torchlight parade through the streets of New York in protest against the religious and cultural repression suffered by Jews in the USSR. The parade and rally, one of 18 such demonstrations held in American cities from coast-to-coast on the eve of Chanukah, was sponsored here by the New York Jewish Community Relations Council's Coordinating Committee on Soviet Jewry, and the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, an organization embracing 25 national Jewish organizations.

Rabbi Goldberg's report on the restrictions on Jewish worship in Leningrad bore out earlier charge by the Conference that more than 450 synagogues in Russia have been systematically closed by Soviet officials over the last 10 years. Only 60 synagogues remain in the entire country to serve the Soviet Union's 3,000,000 Jews. The closing of the synagogues compelled the growth of private prayer gatherings which are now being systematically repressed, the Conference said.

Rabbi Israel Miller, chairman of the Conference, said that the mass rallies and demonstrations in the U.S.A. demanded that "the USSR remove the disabilities and inequities which block religious and cultural development of Russian Jewry, and accord them the necessary communal facilities available to other religious and cultural groups; to permit the reunion of families split by the holocaust of World War II; and halt the virulent anti-Semitic campaign of intimidation carried on since the Six-Day War."

Outside New York, rallies and torchlight parades in which thousands participated were held in Newark, N.J., San Jose and San Francisco, California, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Ga., Norfolk, Va., Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Boston, St. Louis, Trenton, N.J., Waterbury, Conn., Miami, and Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Bank on Fifth Avenue Features Menorah Midst Thoroughfare's Christmas Decorations

NEW YORK, Dec. 26 (JTA)--An 18th century Chanukah menorah went on display today in the window of the American Bank and Trust Co. on Fifth Avenue, where it will remain through January 3, the last day of Chanukah. The rare Jewish art treasure, that once belonged to the Sargarez Synagogue in Hungary, is on loan to the bank from the Jewish Museum.

The menorah, cast in brass in Poland about 1750, measures six feet high and three-and-a-half feet wide. It has a spread-eagle ornament on top and, underneath, the inscription in Hebrew, "to kindle the lights of Chanukah."

The American Bank and Trust Co. is affiliated with the Swiss-Israel Trade Bank of Geneva and the Foreign Trade Bank, Ltd., of Tel Aviv. The lights on the bank's menorah, kindled for the first time tonight, will shine every night of Chanukah, adding the Jewish symbol of the Feast of Lights to the rest of the decorations featured along Fifth Avenue by all other establishments in observance of Christmas.

65 Conservative Youth from Los Angeles Petition U.N. on Soviet Jewry's Fate

NEW YORK, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Sixty-five members of the United Synagogue youth movement, who volunteered to act as couriers, arrived here from Los Angeles today to present petitions protesting Soviet anti-Semitism to the United Nations and the Soviet legation on the eve of Chanukah. The petitions, bearing the signatures of 5,000 Los Angeles residents, also protest the restrictions on Jewish cultural and religious expression in the Soviet Union.

Canadian University Abolishes Student Questions on Religious Beliefs

LONDON, Ont., Dec. 26 (JTA)--The University of Western Ontario, here, announced today that it will remove questions on religious belief from registration verification forms that are filled out by enrolling students. The announcement, by university president D. Carlton Williams, was in response to students' complaints that the question was an infringement of their civil liberties.

Dr. Williams said that the information on religion was kept for the convenience of others, especially chaplains, and was not used by the university. The university's faculty club announced last week that it would hold no official functions on the grounds of clubs that were discriminatory in membership policies.

Montreal Survey Shows 22.7% of Students in Protestant Schools Are Jewish

MONTREAL, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Attendance of Jewish children in Protestant schools in Montreal was estimated to be 14,618 out of a total school population of 64,323, Louis Rosenberg, director of research of the Canadian Jewish Congress, reported today.

The report pointed out that, of these 14,618 children, 7,713 attend elementary schools and 6,905 study at high schools. Jewish children form 22.7 percent of the total enrollment of the Protestant schools, with 18.9 percent in elementary schools and 29.3 percent in high schools. In 1967 there were 12 Protestant elementary schools and six high schools in Greater Montreal in which Jewish children formed the majority.

Rabbi Emanuel Rackman to Hold Retreat for Jewish Chaplains at Berchtesgaden

NEW YORK, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, spiritual leader of Fifth Avenue Synagogue and assistant to the president of Yeshiva University, has been designated by the Department of Defense to conduct a religious retreat for all Jewish chaplains in Europe to be held in Berchtesgaden, Germany, from January 3 to January 7, 1968.

Rabbi Rackman is a member of the Commission on Jewish Chaplaincy of the National Jewish Welfare Board, which recruits, endorses and serves Jewish military chaplains. The commission is composed of representatives of the major rabbinical bodies in the United States; the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Rabbinical Council of America and Rabbinical Assembly.

A recipient of the Army Commendation Ribbon with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Rabbi Rackman is a colonel in the Air Force Reserve and a member of the Association of Jewish Chaplains of the U.S. Armed Forces. He served as a Jewish chaplain in the U.S. Air Force from 1943 to 1946. In the latter year, he was a military aide to the European Theatre Commander's Special Adviser on Jewish Affairs. Sponsored annually by the Department of Defense for chaplains of the three major faiths, religious retreats provide chaplains with opportunities for study and meditation, and also enable them to keep abreast of current spiritual trends.

116 Immigrants from United States Arrived in Israel in November of 1967

JERUSALEM, Dec. 26 (JTA)--The Jewish Agency announced today that 116 immigrants from the United States arrived in Israel during November 1967, compared with 104 in the same month of 1966.

AMPAL-American Israel Corp. Declares Dividend of 30 Cents per Share

NEW YORK, Dec. 26 (JTA)--The directors of AMPAL-American Israel Corp. announced today a dividend of 30 cents per share, equal to a rate of 6 percent on its 4 percent preferred stock, payable January 30 to shareholders of record December 29. This will be the 26th consecutive annual dividend paid by AMPAL-American Israel Corp. AMPAL is a New York company providing capital for Israeli enterprises, and has paid annual cash dividends without interruption since its formation.

TV Series in New York to Deal With Yiddish Language and Literature

NEW YORK, Dec. 26 (JTA)--The Jewish Theological Seminary of America announced today it will present a four-part television series on the Yiddish language and literature to be carried in the metropolitan area by ABC-TV beginning Sunday, January 7 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. The series, which will run through January 28, will commence with an exploration of the Yiddish language, its origins and how it is spoken by Jewish communities in different parts of the world. Subsequent broadcasts will contain readings from Yiddish literature by Harold Flender, a survey of the Yiddish press by Moses Howell and a discussion of the impact of Yiddish writings by David Horowitz.

Los Angeles Community Planning Memorial to Victims of Nazi Holocaust

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Sites for a proposed memorial to the more than 6,000,000 Jewish victims of Nazi genocide and other victims of World War II are being surveyed here by a special committee of the Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles. The committee, appointed by Mrs. Maurice Saeta, chairman of the JFC planning department, is headed by Morton M. Silverman.

Pesach Yuditch, Yiddish Journalist, Labor Editor, Dead at 81

NEW YORK, Dec. 26 (JTA)--Pesach Yuditch, a Yiddish journalist well-known in left-wing and labor circles, died here yesterday at the age of 81. Born in the Ukraine, he came to the United States in 1909, was editor of the *Neie Welt*, organ of the Jewish Socialist Federation from 1914 to 1922, and later joined the staff of the *Morning Freiheit*, Communist-oriented Yiddish daily, as labor editor.