

JTA daily news bulletin

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc. 660 First Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016

Contents copyright: Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

Vol. XXXV-Fifty-First Year

Wednesday, January 10, 1968

No. 7

Eshkol Says Israel Is Willing To Talk With Arabs on All Issues, Including Jerusalem

NEW YORK, Jan. 9 (JTA)--Prime Minister Levi Eshkol told a nationwide television audience today that Israel was prepared to discuss any and all issues at the peace table with no taboo, "not even for Jerusalem," but he made it clear that there was no possibility of Israel ever agreeing to return to the pre-June borders. Mr. Eshkol appeared on the National Broadcasting Company's "Today" program, and was interviewed by Pauline Frederick, the NBC correspondent at the United Nations.

The Prime Minister disclosed that Israel had given United Nations Ambassador Gunnar Jarring an agenda for negotiations with Egypt and one for talks with Jordan. "I think the agenda includes almost everything," he commented. "And in addition, we said the other party may present some writings, too." When Miss Frederick suggested that the Arab acceptance of the Jarring mission represented a step of progress, Mr. Eshkol agreed that that would be the case if the Arab states "accept the (Security Council) resolution as it was really meant by the powers who proposed this resolution." He promised that Israel would give Ambassador Jarring a sympathetic approach and help, so that he would be able to make progress.

Mr. Eshkol said the most important result of his meeting with President Johnson was "the increase of understanding between the two nations." He staunchly refused to go beyond the terms of the U.S.-Israel communique issued yesterday, on whether Mr. Johnson promised him more or new military planes.

USSR Not Moving on Diplomatic Relations; Sees Link Between Viet Nam and Mideast

The Prime Minister said, in response to questions from Miss Frederick, that Israel had tried to reestablish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, "but it was of no avail. I did not succeed." In response to another question, he said "there is some connection" between the Viet Nam crisis and the Middle East situation, but noted that "it is difficult to say something definite if this is really tied up one with the other, but there may be some element in it."

Miss Frederick asked whether, if Israel retained the territory it had taken in the June war and extended democracy to that area so it was represented, the Arabs would not outnumber the Jews in the Knesset. Mr. Eshkol said that would not be the case today, and stressed again that the future of the occupied territories would be decided at the peace table.

"What we want today," he said, "what we ask, what our desire is, is to meet at a round table and discuss, first of all, discuss peace and establish a real peace treaty which we were not able to establish during all these 20 years... Then we'll come to discuss about borders, secure and agreed, as it was phrased in the United Nations."

Mr. Eshkol concluded on a note of optimism that peace talks would eventually be held. "I believe," he said, "that, one day, common sense will prevail and our neighbors will see that there is no other way out."

Johnson's Reply to Arms Request Reported 'Affirmative'

President Johnson responded "affirmatively" to Prime Minister Eshkol's request for United States armament aid to Israel, it was learned here today. Israeli sources here made that disclosure following Mr. Eshkol's return last night from Texas, where he had spent 22 hours as Mr. Johnson's guest.

After a full, frank and extremely friendly discussion, Israeli sources said, President Johnson agreed with Mr. Eshkol that both countries -- the U.S.A. and Israel -- are interested in the establishment of secure and recognized borders between Israel and its neighboring states. The mechanics for implementation of that mutual goal are still to be worked out, but Israel made it clear to the President that the peace mission undertaken to the Middle East by the special United Nations emissary, Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring has been approached by the Israeli Government with extreme courtesy, sympathy and understanding.

Examples of Israel's interest in concretizing its peaceful approach to the Arab states, it was pointed out to President Johnson, are the facts that it was Israel that had proposed measures for release by Egypt of the 15 foreign ships stranded since last June in a section of the Suez Canal, and that Israel last week freed 500 Egyptian prisoners of war, out of a total of 5,000 held by Israel.

Another important matter that came up in the Johnson-Eshkol talks, according to Israeli sources, concerned the long-standing joint agreement by the United States and Israel for the development of the large-scale desalination project in Israel, which is to use nuclear energy for both electrification and desalination purposes. Mr. Eshkol was understood to have pointed out to the President that Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, previously named by the President as the official in charge of coordinating that project on behalf of the United States, had virtually vacated that position since he was sent to Saigon as the U.S. Ambassador there. Mr. Johnson was understood to have indicated that he would soon appoint another envoy to represent the United States in connection with the project.

Israeli sources said there was no specific discussion regarding the Viet Nam war between the two statesmen, and there was no mention whatever of the attitude toward the Viet Nam war on the part of Jewish organizations in the United States.

Cordial Telegrams Exchanged by Leaders; Robert Kennedy Favors U.S. Aid to Israel

As a mutual follow-up to the Texas talks, cordial telegrams were exchanged today between the President and Mr. Eshkol. In his wire, signed "Ladybird and Lyndon Johnson," the President asserted that the American and Israeli people "will have a better understanding of our mutual problems" as a result of the Eshkol visit and that "we will together move forward in accordance with our understanding." He termed the Eshkol visit "helpful and, I think, will be quite productive."

Replying on his own behalf as well as Mrs. Eshkol's, the Israeli Premier stated that "our conversations in your Texas home, Mr. President, enabled us to deepen our mutual understanding and, I am sure, will be a further milestone in the relations between our countries." "I came away from the meeting with you," Mr. Eshkol added, "deeply touched by your friendship to my people and your concern for peace."

In his New York hotel suite today, Mr. Eshkol met, among others, with Senator Robert F. Kennedy. The New York Democrat said after their talk that he favored action by the United States toward supplying Israel with "whatever assistance is necessary to preserve Israel's borders and protect the integrity of its people."

This afternoon, Mr. Eshkol paid a visit to Yeshiva University. Later today, he met at his hotel for an off-the-record briefing with members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. The Conference is composed of 21 organizations, representing virtually all Jewry in the United States.

This afternoon, Mrs. Eshkol paid a visit to Roosevelt Hospital, to see a Plaza Hotel security guard, Aaron Greenberg, who was stabbed last Saturday while on guard duty at the hostelry. He had foiled an attempted robbery in a suite on the floor below the one where the Israelis stayed, shooting the suspect. The suspect was not connected by police with any possible attack against Mr. Eshkol.

Mr. Eshkol's schedule tomorrow includes a major address at a luncheon to be tendered in his honor by the Overseas Press Club. In the evening, he will be the guest of honor at a dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel under the sponsorship of 50 leading national Jewish organizations, headed by the Israel Bond Organization and the United Jewish Appeal.

More than 2,500 Jewish leaders from all walks of life and from every section of the country are expected to attend the dinner. Serving as hosts and spokesmen for the sponsoring organizations, which represent every shade in the spectrum of American Jewish communal, cultural and philanthropic endeavor, will be Edward Ginsberg of Cleveland, general chairman, and Max Fisher, of Detroit, president of the UJA; and Abraham Feinberg of New York, president, and Samuel Rothberg, of Peoria, Ill., national campaign chairman of the Israel Bond Organization.

U.S. Still Interested in Limiting Arms to Mideast, State Dept. Says

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A State Department spokesman said today that President Johnson's appeal of last June to the Soviet Union, to curb the Arab-Israel arms race by seeking a ceiling, still stands, despite Moscow's failure to answer. Official spokesman Carl Bartch made known that, despite the communique issued yesterday following the Johnson-Eshkol talks in Texas, the United States Government remained interested in limiting the shipment of arms to the Middle East region. He said, however, that he did not know of any response from Moscow to President Johnson's proposal.

Mr. Bartch declined to say whether President Johnson yesterday actually agreed to the sale of additional jet aircraft to Israel, and he referred to the joint communique issued after the talks. He said "No Comment" when asked whether the United States was urging Moscow to reply to the June proposal on the limitation of arms shipments to the Near East.

House GOP Leadership Urges Immediate U.S. Approval of Israel's Arms Request

A "public pledge" of U.S. jet sales to Israel, to restore the balance of power, is required to maintain "the credibility of America's commitment" to Israel, the Republican leadership of the U.S. House of Representatives said today. Commenting on the Texas meeting of President Johnson with Israeli Prime Minister Eshkol, Rep. Charles E. Goodell, chairman of the House Republican research and planning committee, called on the President to openly pledge U.S. assistance to Mr. Eshkol to restore "a power balance in the Middle East."

As the "first imperative" action, Rep. Goodell, a New York Republican, asked immediate approval of the arms sought by Israel to balance Soviet shipments to the Arabs. His statement followed a similar warning recently by House Republican leader Gerald R. Ford that security interests of Israel and the United States must be publicly acknowledged by President Johnson, to deter Communist pressures.

Speaking as Republican research and planning chairman, Rep. Goodell said: "The issue in the Middle East is no longer whether the United States can prevent Soviet penetration. That has already occurred. The uneasy balance of the past no longer exists. The first imperative action is for the President

to counter the Communist military buildup by approving the sale to Israel of modern aircraft and weapons that are the equal of advanced Soviet weapons now in Nasser's hands."

Controversies Mark Opening of Jerusalem Parley of Ashkenazi, Sephardi Congregations

JERUSALEM, Jan. 9 (JTA)--The first world conference of Ashkenazi and Sephardic congregations, which has been the target of disputes among Orthodox Jews from its inception in the United States, opened here last night in an atmosphere of continued differences among Orthodox Jews. The opening session, held in the convention auditorium, was attended by President Zalman Shazar, several Cabinet members, delegates and guests who filled the 3,000-seat hall to capacity.

The Orthodox rabbis from many overseas countries who attended were put under a religious ban by the Agudat Israel, an ultra-Orthodox political party in Israel. Leaflets and posters throughout Jerusalem denounced the convention. Several rabbinical organizations in the United States, Britain and Italy boycotted the meeting. Leaders of the Mapai Party said their religious members would not attend, asserting that the conference was sponsored by the Mizrahi Party.

Rabbi Joseph Karasick, president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, was barred from sending to the press a statement urging the Israel Government to bar immigrants from the Conservative and Reform movements. However, in his address to the convention last night, Rabbi Karasick charged that the "grafting of divisive ideologies of Judaism on Israel would sever the religious ties between the State and the Diaspora."

Moscow's Chief Rabbi, Yehuda Leb Levin, sent a cable of congratulations to the conference in which he expressed "astonishment" over the action of Israeli Sephardic Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Nissim having proclaimed a day of fasting on behalf of Soviet Jewry in December. In his message, which was read to the assemblage, Rabbi Levin declared that many rabbis had visited the Soviet Union and seen for themselves "what great honor Jewish there enjoyed."

Patrons of the conference are Israeli Chief Rabbis Nissim and Issar Yehuda Unterman, and Dr. Zerach Warhaftig, Minister of Religious Affairs. Chief Rabbi Emeritus Israel Brodie of Britain, chairman of the conference, became ill suddenly and was unable to deliver his prepared keynote speech. The conference was chaired by Britain's Spanish and Portuguese rabbinical leader, Dr. S. Gaon. Some 600 delegates from some 20 overseas countries, including Chief Rabbi Moshe Rosen of Rumania, are attending the conclave.

A conciliatory note was struck by Dr. Gaon, who told the conference that it was the duty of the synagogue to spiritually prepare the younger generation for migration to Israel. Dr. Rosen, bringing greetings for Rumanian Jewry, said that Rumanian Jews were an integral part of the Jewish nation and that no power in the world had succeeded or would succeed in uprooting them from their foundations.

Limit on WZO Membership Linked to Immigration Rejection, Mrs. Halprin Reports

NEW YORK, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A proposal to limit the World Zionist Organization to a membership of only those pledged to personal aliyah, as proposed recently by Yitchak Korn, general secretary of the Ichud Olami-Poale Zion, was decisively rejected at the recent meetings in Jerusalem of the Jewish Agency executive, according to Mrs. Rose L. Halprin, chairman of the Jewish Agency-American Section, who has just returned from the meetings.

Instead, she said, the executive of the Jewish Agency will propose to the next World Zionist Congress, to be held in June, the maintenance of the "unity and integrity of the World Zionist Organization as a world Jewish mass movement composed of many ideological wings. There will be created, however, within the structure of the WZO, a 't'nuat magshimim,' a group of persons who will have taken the pledge of personal aliyah."

She said that the members of the Jewish Agency, both Israeli and American, recognized that the question of aliyah must assume a pre-eminent role in the work of the Zionist organization. But, she pointed out: "Aliyah from the West is a two-way proposition that involves both the willingness of the immigrant to go to Israel and the ability of Israel's economy to make available for the newcomer a work opportunity commensurate with the immigrant's training and needs. Until this is accomplished," she continued, "aliyah from the West will be necessarily hampered."

There was a strong consensus of opinion at the meeting, Mrs. Halprin said, that while "aliyah will have to assume a major role in the program of the Zionist organization, the WZO has other essential functions in the Jewish world in the continuing struggle against assimilation and alienation. The Zionist organization will have to continue and intensify its educational and cultural programs among the Jews of the world to develop better understanding between Israel and the Diaspora and, in this way, to foster and develop the potential of immigration to Israel from the affluent countries."

The meetings of the Jewish Agency executive, Mrs. Halprin said, were "fruitful," in having cleared the air and in making it possible to plan for a constructive discussion of the future of the movement at the next World Zionist Congress.

Declaring that there has been much misunderstanding in the press of both Israel and the United States of what transpired at the meetings of the Jewish Agency, Mrs. Halprin said that the decisions of the executive were clear as to the future lines of structure of the movement.

Navy Orders Sailors to Follow Local Bias Rules Against Jews, Others, in New Orleans

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9 (JTA)--United States sailors taking part in next month's New Orleans Mardi Gras festival have been ordered by the Navy "to comply with the policy of discrimination against Negroes, Jews and Italians adhered to by many of the carnival balls," it was reported here today.

The Navy Department issued a directive stating to Navy personnel: "Whether or not this meets with your personal or official approval, it is the way things are, and we have to go along with it."

Milwaukee Drive Sets Record Goal of \$3,950,000; Israel Emergency Fund to Get \$2.2 Million

MILWAUKEE, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A record goal of \$3,950,000, including a target of \$2,200,000 for the special Israel Emergency Fund, has been set for the 1968 campaign of the Jewish Welfare Fund of Milwaukee. The annual regular campaign last year totalled \$1,600,000.

The JWF campaign cabinet approved the peak quota for the regular campaign this year because of the growing pressure of local needs, according to Herbert H. Kohl, campaign general chairman. He said that local and national beneficiaries of the drive were not receiving sufficient funds.

Miami Federation Raises 1968 Quota by \$200,000; New Goal is \$1,991,000

MIAMI, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A goal of \$1,991,000 -- \$200,000 more than was initially set for the 1968 Miami Combined Jewish Appeal -- has been announced for the campaign by Leon Kaplan, president of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation. The drive this year will be a joint campaign for the CJA and for the Israel Emergency Fund. However, since the United Jewish Appeal did not set a national goal for 1968 for the Emergency Fund, the Miami Federation is following that "no limit" policy for the Emergency Fund aspect of its 1968 drive.

Mr. Kaplan said the goal was increased because the original objective would barely have met the minimum needs of the more than 40 agencies which are beneficiaries of the Federation. He said the additional \$200,000 was needed "so that we can stop starving our local agencies."

Canadian High School Boy Forbidden to Wear Skullcap in Class; Jews Protest

TORONTO, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A Jewish, 17-year-old high school student has been forbidden to wear a skullcap while attending class because school officials said it was in violation of a department regulation prohibiting religious symbols in a classroom.

The incident took place at Bathurst Heights High School in North York, a suburb of Toronto. Sydney Midanik, chairman of the community relations committee of the Canadian Jewish Congree, and a member of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, protested on behalf of the youth, Arnold Green-spoon. He took the matter to North York's Department of Education, arguing that a skullcap is not a religious symbol.

Jewish students at the school are permitted to don skullcaps only in the cafeteria during their lunch period. Murray Chusid, a North York alderman said today: "The Board of Education is wrong, the principal is wrong, and the regulation is wrong."

Boston College, Jesuit, To Teach Bible in Jerusalem; Cushing Lauds Effort

BOSTON, Jan. 9 (JTA)--Boston College, a Jesuit institution, will hold an Institute of Archeology and the Bible in Jerusalem in July and August, with Dr. David Neiman, the first rabbi on the college's theology faculty, as institute director.

Rev. William Leonard, chairman of the theology department, said that seminars, lectures and readings will be augmented by work in excavations in Israel. Richard Cardinal Cushing hailed the Institute, declaring that creation of "continuing contacts with the people of Israel is good for scholarship and ecumenism."

Rev. Leonard said that faculty members for the institute will include Prof. Baruch H. Levine, an expert on biblical studies at Brandeis University, and members of the Hebrew University. Excavation sites will include areas in the occupied West Bank sector.

Dental Unit at Hebrew University Gets \$100,000 Gift from Chicago Industrialist

NEW YORK, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A \$100,000 personal donation to the American Friends of the Hebrew University was made by William Getz, of Chicago, a dental industrialist. The donation will go to the Hebrew University's Alpha Omega Research and Postgraduate Center in Jerusalem. His contribution was the most recent of a series of gifts he has made to dental schools, totaling \$1,275,000 in less than a year. Various American institutions have benefited from his generosity.

Assn. for Jewish Camps Reports 20,000 Residents During Summer of 1967

NEW YORK, Jan. 9 (JTA)--The Association of Jewish Sponsored Camps reported here today that over 20,000 adults, children and senior citizens attended its 38 affiliated summer resident camps last year. G. William Wolfston, president of the AJSC, said that the camps are all non-profit institutions operated by Jewish philanthropic, ideological, religious and cultural organizations and community agencies.