

JTA daily news bulletin

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

Contents copyright: Republication only by previous arrangement.

Vol. XXXV-Fifty-First Year

Thursday, January 11, 1968

No. 8

Eshkol Replies ~~Shapira~~ de Gaulle, Hopes French Head Will Change Mind Again

NEW YORK, Jan. 10 (JTA)—Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, addressing the Overseas Press Club here today, said that he hoped French President Charles de Gaulle would resume friendly relations with Israel but that he felt Gen. de Gaulle did not grasp the philosophy and significance of Jewish statehood.

Mr. Eshkol commented on President de Gaulle's recent letter to former Premier David Ben-Gurion, who had written to the French President in protest over his November 27 attacks against Israel and the Jewish people. Both Mr. Ben-Gurion and the French Government released the texts of the two letters yesterday.

Citing Gen. de Gaulle's reference to Israel having been "planted" in its region, Mr. Eshkol declared that the Jewish people was born in its national homeland, and its moral wealth created there. He said this is what touched him even more than the General's negative references to the Jews. He noted that he personally had met with Gen. de Gaulle in the past and experienced a friendly attitude, but that "all of a sudden, he (de Gaulle) changed his mind." The Prime Minister voiced hope that de Gaulle would change his mind again, and see Israel in a true perspective, resuming friendly relations.

Mr. Eshkol asserted "we did not get the French planes gratis." He added that "in any event, we made these planes famous." He was referring to the French-made military planes sold to Israel which formed the backbone of the Israeli air force.

Discusses Johnson Talks, Soviet Arms, Prospects of Middle East Peace

Mr. Eshkol indicated that, among the military topics he discussed with President Johnson last weekend at the LBJ ranch in Texas, was the Soviet missile weaponry supplied to Egypt. Acknowledging a difference of opinion between the United States and Israeli intelligence services about the type and capacity of missiles supplied to Egypt, the Premier said they were nevertheless very dangerous. He said that even if the present range of those missiles was 60 to 80 kilometers, they might go to 250 or 500 kilometers, and that poison gas might be used in the warheads.

The Premier rejected the premise that direct Arab peace talks with Israel would mean political suicide for Arab leaders. He said such talks must come sooner or later, but that more blood might be shed before the Arabs choose the peaceful path. He saw two trends that had developed in the Arab world. One was that the Soviets had rebuilt the Arab armies since the June war, "at a phenomenal rate." The second trend showed there were "indications that, for the first time, there are hesitations among some Arabs as to whether war would bring new disaster. There are some who are saying to themselves that peace may have to be contemplated."

Conditions necessary to enhance the prospects of peace, he said, included maintenance of Israeli military capacity as a deterrent, prevention of direct or indirect outside intervention, and assistance by the international community on direct negotiations and peace treaties as the only effective solution.

Mr. Eshkol said "it seems to us that the time has come for the Middle East to move along this road," the road of regional cooperation. Stating the process of liberation from colonialism had ended, the Premier said it was only by regional cooperation that the region could be freed of tensions and its fate decided by its own inhabitants. He declined to comment on any new arms commitments generated in the talks with President Johnson. In that context, he merely referred to the joint communique issued in Texas, and said he did not think he should add to it.

Receives Nixon, Abram, 'Presidents Club'; All Pledge Aid to Israel

In other developments connected with the Eshkol visit to New York, Mr. Eshkol received a courtesy visit today from former Vice-President Richard M. Nixon; was honored by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute for Religion with the degree of Doctor of Hebrew Letters; got a pledge of appreciation of Israel's achievements from Frank Baraff, president of the Borough of Manhattan, one of the principal components of the City of New York; and was entertained at the Metropolitan Opera House, where he was a guest of the Metropolitan's board of directors.

Mr. Nixon told the press, after visiting Mr. Eshkol, that it was necessary for the United States to help Israel maintain a balance of power in the Middle East to counter Soviet intrusion into that region. He also advocated direct peace talks between Israel and the Arab states.

Last night Mr. Eshkol was visited by a group of leaders of the American Jewish Committee, headed by Morris B. Abram, president of the Committee.

Addressing an overflow audience of 2,000 students Tuesday in the auditorium of Yeshiva University here — while 500 other students listened over closed-circuit television in the university's synagogue — Mr. Eshkol asked American Jewish youth and Jewish youth from other Western lands to come to Israel to

help the country build its security and aid Israel's economic, spiritual and social development. Merely coming to Israel for a period of about three months, he said, was not enough. The youth, he said, should come to stay for a "much longer period."

Last night, Mr. Eshkol also received a delegation from the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, headed by the Conference chairman, Rabbi Herschel Schacter. On behalf of the 21 organizations in the Conference, comprising a total of about 4.5 million Jews, Rabbi Schacter pledged further aid to Israel. He declared American Jews were united with Israel in its quest for peace, and asserted that Israel and America "share the same ideals, the same goals and the same interests" in the Middle East.

Israel Extends Length of Service in Armed Forces; Some to Serve Six Months Extra

TEL AVIV, Jan. 10 (JTA)--Defense Minister Moshe Dayan announced today that members of the armed forces scheduled for discharge this month will be required to serve an additional six months, through the end of June. He said it was a temporary measure, taken to relieve the need for a large reserve which puts a heavy burden on the nation's economy. He explained that the new order is not an extension of military service but a postponement of release from duty. Service men and women scheduled for discharge in March will also serve through June, only three months of additional duty. Military personnel serving the extra time will receive higher wages, Gen. Day said.

Sen. Javits Tours Israel; Confers With Eban, Dayan, Mrs. Meir

JERUSALEM, Jan. 10 (JTA)--Senator Jacob K. Javits, New York Republican, visited Safad, the birthplace of his mother, today, during a whirlwind tour of Israel, accompanied by Acting Prime Minister Pinhas Sapir. The Senator arrived here Monday night. Yesterday, he dined with Foreign Minister Abba Eban, had tea with Defense Minister Moshe Dayan at the latter's residence, lunched with the Minister of Tourism, Moshe Kol, and met with Labor Minister Yigal Allon. He also met with the former Foreign Minister, Mrs. Golda Meir, and with Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem. Sen. Javits, nevertheless, found time for a walking tour of Old Jerusalem yesterday, visiting the West Wall and the Jewish and Christian quarters. He also toured the West Bank.

Rabbi Jakobovitz Advises Orthodox to Counter Dissidence With Persuasion

JERUSALEM, Jan. 10 (JTA)--Dr. Immanuel Jakobovitz, Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth, warned here last night that Orthodoxy must learn "in this democratic age," that spiritual leaders cannot impose their authority by rules but "only by persuasion and winning over dissidents can their convictions prevail." Dr. Jakobovitz spoke at the world conference of Ashkenazic and Sephardic synagogues which opened here Monday.

The conference also heard from Israel's Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi Issaihar Unterman, who opposed legislation for a unified Orthodox liturgy. Rabbi Unterman held that unification would come about of its own accord as a result of improved communications media.

The heads of the various delegations representing Orthodox congregations in America and other countries were received by President Zalman Shazar last night, and were later welcomed by Jerusalem's Mayor Teddy Kollek at a reception at the Israel Museum. The wives of delegates who accompanied them to the conference met at a separate session this morning under the chairmanship of Mrs. Sarah Herzog, widow of Israel's late Chief Rabbi. Later, the group toured East Jerusalem, visiting the West Wall and the sites of synagogues that were destroyed during the Jordanian occupation of the city.

WJC Parley in London Calls on Jewry to Mark Warsaw Ghetto Revolt Anniversary

LONDON, Jan. 10 (JTA)--Jewish communities all over the world were called upon to "solemnly commemorate" the 25th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt next April as an inspiring day to inform the younger generation of that tragic and heroic chapter in Jewish history. The call was issued by the governing council of the World Jewish Congress. In a statement at its closing session here today, it cited the Warsaw uprising of 1943 as "the forerunner of and an example for the Jewish people in Israel of the necessity for self reliance in resistance to oppression."

Dr. Nahum Goldmann, president of the WJC, warned earlier that Israel's struggle for peace may prove harder and take longer to achieve than her military victory. He pledged the continued support of Israel by Jewish communities all over the world.

The governing council also heard reports on Negro-Jewish relationships in the United States, the situation in West Germany, and the world-wide repercussions of Gen. de Gaulle's Nov. 27 press conference. The council expressed satisfaction with French Grand Rabbi Jacob Kaplan's "dignified response" to Gen. de Gaulle on behalf of French Jewry.

Guests and other speakers at the session were the council chairman, Dr. Joachim Prinz; Dr. William Wexler, president of B'nai B'rith; Herman Edelsberg, director of the B'nai B'rith international council; Alderman Michael Fiddler, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews; Sir Barnett Janner, chairman of the Board's international affairs committee; Lavy Becker, of the Canadian Jewish Congress; and Yehuda Hellman, secretary-general of the Conference of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Ben-Gurion, French Issue de Gaulle Exchange; French Leader 'Surprised' at Reactions

TEL AVIV, Jan. 10 (JTA)--Former Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion made public his recent correspondence with French President de Gaulle, at a jammed press conference here late yesterday afternoon, and voiced the opinion that, while "there are things in de Gaulle's letter that should better not have been said," the French leader was still friendly to Israel, and criticism of him in the press has been exaggerated. Mr. Ben-Gurion brought to the press conference a copy of a letter he had written to Gen. de Gaulle last Dec. 6, and the General's reply, dated Dec. 30. The texts of both letters were made public at the same time by the French Government in Paris.

Mr. Ben-Gurion had written to Gen. de Gaulle that he was "saddened and disturbed" by the latter's remarks at a press conference in Paris last Nov. 27. At that time, de Gaulle delivered a lengthy political tirade against Israel, charging Israel was a "war-like state bent on expansion" and accusing Israel of starting last June's Middle East war against France's advice. At the same time, de Gaulle impugned the Jewish people "throughout the ages" as "an elite people, sure of themselves and domineering," who had "created ill will in various countries at various times."

In his letter to Mr. Ben-Gurion, de Gaulle denied that he intended any disparagement of the Jewish people, and expressed surprise at "the emotion apparently aroused among certain of them by the fact that I described their people as an elite, sure of themselves and domineering. Some people claim to see this assessment as derogatory, whereas in fact there cannot be anything disparaging in underlining the character, thanks to which this strong people was able to survive and to remain itself after 19 centuries spent under incredible conditions."

But Gen. de Gaulle's letter, though contrary to the disregard he usually manifests toward the emotions and controversies his remarks may arouse in others, was not an apology. He reiterated to Mr. Ben-Gurion his complaint that Israel ignored France's warning not to attack last June, and repeated the French Government's request that Israel withdraw from occupied Arab territories in order to make possible Arab recognition of Israel.

Ben-Gurion Replied Point by Point; De Gaulle Affirms 'Friendship,' Opposes Occupation

Mr. Ben-Gurion's letter, which in French translation filled 15 pages, recalled the suffering of the Jews through history and told the French President that his Nov. 27 references to the history of Zionism "were based on incorrect and imprecise information." Mr. Ben-Gurion wrote: "You spoke of the establishment of a Zionist homeland between the two world wars; the changing of a sincere desire into burning and conquering ambition; a lack of modesty, the Israeli state warlike and bent on expansion, the dream of those who wanted to exploit the closing of the Strait of Tiran."

"It is not through strength, and not simply through money and certainly not through conquests, but through our pioneering creativity that we transformed a poor and arid land into fertile soil and created townships, towns and villages on desertlike and abandoned terrain." Mr. Ben-Gurion rejected Israeli responsibility for the Arab refugees, maintaining that they fled during the 1948 fighting with the British, not after the establishment of the State of Israel. "The Jewish people is equal in its right and duties to all the other peoples, not more but not less," he told de Gaulle.

The French leader in his reply, asserted that France was always a friend of Israel and that the Israelis should have known that France would not allow the destruction of their country. "This was guaranteed by our official talks not so long ago and by the fact that I had publicly described Israel as 'a friendly and allied state,'" de Gaulle wrote. "But this is precisely the reasons why I always said -- and to yourself in the first place -- that, in order to justify the task thus undertaken as it was proceeding, and to insure its future, Israel had to exert strict moderation in her relations with her neighbors and in her territorial ambitions."

"Of course, I do not in any way contest that the unfortunate blockade of the Gulf of Akaba was unilaterally damaging to your country, and I am not unaware of the fact that your country had reason to feel itself threatened, in view of the tension prevailing in the Palestine area following the flood of abuse lavished on Israel as well as the pitiful condition of the Arabs who sought refuge in Jordan or were relegated to Gaza."

"But I remain convinced that, by ignoring the warning given in good time to your Government by the French Government, by taking possession of Jerusalem and of many Jordanian, Egyptian and Syrian territories by force of arms, by exercising repression and expulsions there...by affirming to the world that a settlement of the conflict could only be achieved on the basis of the conquests made and not on the condition that these be evacuated, Israel is over-stepping the bounds of necessary moderation." Gen. de Gaulle also repeated France's offer to mediate a solution within the framework of the United Nations, "not only on the political plane but also in the field."

Jewish, Negro, Italian Defense Bodies Protest Navy Approval of Social Segregation

NEW YORK, Jan. 10 (JTA)--The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Italian Committee Against Discrimination, protested a reported U.S. Navy directive, instructing sailors to comply with the New Orleans Mardi Gras policy of discrimination against Jews, Negroes and Italians.

A telegram, signed by Benjamin R. Epstein, national director of the ADL, Dr. John Morsell, assistant executive secretary of the NAACP, and Surrogate S. Samuel DiFalco, chairman of the American Italian Committee, was sent to Paul R. Ignatius, Secretary of the Navy. The wire stated:

"Press stories report that the Navy has instructed United States sailors participating in the New Orleans Mardi Gras festival next month to comply with the policy of discrimination against Jews, Negroes and Italians, maintained by organizations participating in the Mardi Gras carnival balls.

"The alleged Navy directive, dated Dec. 6, 1967, and circulated to all officers of the five ships designated to represent the Navy at Mardi Gras, is reported to have been signed by Lt. Com. James B. Eller. It is further reported to contain the following: 'Most of the organizations will not issue an invitation to a Negro, a Jew or an Italian. However, the Jews, Negroes and Italians have carnival balls of their own and also are selective as to who can attend their carnival balls. 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.'

"If the press reports are accurate, the undersigned urge that you repudiate this directive as entirely inconsistent with established U.S. Navy policy."

President Johnson, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, was called on today by the Jewish Labor Committee to "order the United States Navy to withdraw its support of the New Orleans Mardi Gras as long as one Italian, Negro and Jewish sailor or Naval officer cannot be part of the celebrations on an integrated basis."

"It is time to rip the mask of bigotry from the face of the Mardi Gras in New Orleans," Adolph Held, national president of the JLC, wired the White House. In his telegram, Mr. Held said "sending in a naval fleet as part of a celebration that condones segregation is a gross misuse of the taxpayers' money. Furthermore, a directive that seeks to rationalize this bigotry not only offends the minority groups that have been singled out, but clearly is in excess of the powers of the Navy Department, and contravenes national policy. A reversal of both the visit and the directive would underscore your Administration's unequivocal commitment to equal rights for all Americans."

Defense Dept. Confirms Navy Ruling on Bias; Issues Further Explanation

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10 (JTA)--The Department of Defense issued a statement today, virtually confirming that the Navy had advised its personnel on ships in the New Orleans harbor to tolerate local discriminations there against "Negroes, Jews and Italians" during the Mardi Gras festival in New Orleans. In its statement, the Defense Department declared that, while enlisted men in uniform will be allowed to attend segregated parties and balls in New Orleans during Mardi Gras Week, such men would participate only "as private individuals."

"It is a policy of the Department of Defense," the statement declared, "that we will participate officially in public and private affairs only when they are in every way unsegregated, and anything at which we had an official Navy representative in Mardi Gras Week would have to be an unsegregated event."

"But this does not mean that a naval officer who receives an invitation to a segregated private party cannot attend it as an individual if he wants to."

The decision to attend such a private event, the Department spokesman said, would be left to the conscience of the individual.

The Navy will furnish lists of the officers and men aboard ships visiting New Orleans during Mardi Gras if segregated organizations there request such lists, the spokesman said. He emphasized, however, that the lists would not be broken down to indicate the race, creed or religion of crew members.

Jewish Enrollment at Colleges Hit Peak; Hillel Asks More Federation Aid on Campuses

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10 (JTA)--Jewish enrollment at American colleges increased about 5 percent for the current school year, underscoring the status of the campus as a growing element of the Jewish community, B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations reported here. Hillel officials, attending the annual meeting of their national commission, estimated that 350,000 Jewish students — about 80 percent of the Jewish college-age population — are attending school.

A sampling of enrollment records at 34 of the 79 major American universities where fulltime Hillel Foundation programs are maintained, and 50 of the 163 smaller schools which have Hillel counselorships (part-time directors) showed that Jewish enrollments at the large schools had advanced 2.3 percent and — continuing a trend of recent years — had jumped 15 percent at smaller institutions, many of which had only a scattering, if any, Jewish students five years ago.

Prof. Louis Gottschalk, of the University of Illinois, Hillel's national chairman, noting that an estimated 125,000 Jewish students attend schools which lack Hillel programs, warned that "the quantitative gap is likely to widen without stronger support — particularly from Jewish federations and welfare funds — for the growing Jewish community on the campus."

Dr. Gottschalk added that "many of the so-called small colleges are no longer small in terms of Jewish enrollment. Forty-four of 310 colleges whose requests for Hillel programs are still unfilled each have 500 or more Jewish students."

The Hillel commission, in a resolution, strongly encouraged "the participation of welfare funds, community councils and national organizations" to assist with funds and programmatic resources in strengthening the Jewish campus community through Hillel's functional operations."