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American Jewish Leadership Pledges Full Support at Eshkol Farewell Dinner

NEW YORK, Jan. 11 (JTA)--American Jewry, represented by some 2,500 prominent men and women from almost every element of organized Jewish life in the United States, assured Prime Minister Levi Eshkol tonight of moral support in the achievement of peace, and material support for Israeli economic programs in the coming year.

The pledges of unlimited aid to Israel were voiced by Edward Ginsberg of Cleveland, general chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, and Samuel Rothberg of Peoria, national campaign chairman of the Israel Bond Organization, who served as co-chairmen at a farewell dinner in honor of the Prime Minister and Mrs. Eshkol. The dinner, at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel, was sponsored by 55 national Jewish organizations. The Israel Bond Organization, the principal source of investment funds for economic development, and the UJA, which raises funds for immigration and settlement in Israel, have been the two foremost channels of major American Jewish aid to Israel. The large audience included prominent figures in Jewish communal affairs, business, public and academic life and the arts and sciences.

Mr. Eshkol, responding to the pledges, said that Israel had come out of the May-June crisis and war with "one central resolve" which was that "history cannot be pushed back; it must be pushed forward." He reiterated Israel's determination not to return "to what has been rightly described as fragile armistice" and "brittle arrangements" and to belligerence. He said Israel would cooperate fully in any moves toward "direct negotiations, leading to an unequivocal, unambiguous peace treaty."

Right of Jewish People to Retain Place in History Seen at Stake

What is at stake for Israel, he declared, "is the right of the Jewish people to retain its place in history. We think that we are no less entitled than anyone to have the right to live and build our lives without suffering, without being defenseless, without being dependent on the changing favor of others."

He described his talks with President Johnson at the LBJ ranch in Texas last weekend as "good and thorough." He extended thanks to American Jewry for its steadfast support of Israel in its hours of crisis.

The co-chairmen of the dinner were Mr. Ginsberg and Mr. Rothberg. Principal addresses were also delivered by Abraham Feinberg, president of the Israel Bond Organization and Max M. Fisher, president of the UJA. All, speaking on behalf of American Jewry, praised Mr. Eshkol's leadership of the Jewish State, lauded Israel and its people, and pledged continued aid to Israel in all fields.

Mr. Ginsberg paid warm tribute to Mr. Eshkol's leadership, and stressed the close ties which unite Jews of every land with the people of Israel. He pledged the fullest support by American Jews to Israel in facing all problems and all emergencies. Addressing the Prime Minister, Mr. Ginsberg said:

"You come to us as the proven leader of that state and that people whose very existence is part of the fiber and substance of our own daily lives. There is no day when our hearts and thoughts do not turn to Israel. There is no day when the hope and the prayer for Israel's well-being are not in those thoughts. What we did in June, through UJA's Emergency Fund and through the sale of Israel Bonds, we will do again. The same love for Israel which poured out in June is still in our hearts.

"Step by step, problem by problem, need by need, and, if necessary, emergency by emergency, we will help you to do what has to be done. We will do it as you have done it, by never losing sight of the final goal: the goal of a people reborn, in their own land, working and doing, making their full contribution to human advancement and the welfare of men everywhere, and living at last in security and peace."

Mr. Rothberg introduced Mr. Eshkol as "a world statesman who has borne the mantle of leadership in Israel in its most critical hours of decision, a courageous champion of Israel's freedom, a dynamic architect of its defense and economy, an inspiring symbol of its future, whose achievements have written an unforgettable chapter in the epic of Israel reborn."

The Israel Bond leader stressed the role of Mr. Eshkol and the entire State of Israel in giving pride and self-respect to Jews everywhere, not only recently but throughout the entire 20 years of statehood. Addressing the Prime Minister, Mr. Rothberg said:

"In good times or bad, in war or peace, what you built you built for us, what you sacrificed you sacrificed for us. You fought our battle for dignity, for integrity, for self-respect." He pointed out that Israel still faces many problems and many dangers in the immediate future, and added:

"In this moment of destiny, we must declare the renewal of our pledge and our commitment to stand by Israel as long as she needs us. We take this pledge as the greatest insurance for our own future as Jews as well as for the future of Israel."

Mr. Fisher defined the forthcoming 20th anniversary of Israel as "one of the great triumphs of human freedom in today's world." Israel's example, he said, has reminded people everywhere that "freedom is most precious, and that there are still men and women in the world who are prepared to fight to win freedom and defend it, with their lives if need be."

"It was Israel of old and the Jewish people," Mr. Fisher continued, "who gave to mankind the concept that men are born to be free under God. And now in our time we again see Israel showing by its example, by its courage, by its deeds, by its welcome of a million and a half refugees from oppression, by its refusal to give way to those who would destroy its liberty, that human freedom still has meaning and can be as precious to men as life itself."

A special commemorative medal struck in gold by the American Israel Numismatic Society was presented to Mr. Eshkol by Mr. Ginsberg, on behalf of the organizations sponsoring the dinner. The medal bears a bas-relief portrait of the Israeli leader on the face, and on the back the inscription: "Six-Day War, 10 June 1967."

The invocation at the dinner was offered by Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein of Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun, New York, and the benediction by Rabbi Edward T. Sandrow, president of the New York Board of Rabbis. A musical tribute to Mr. Eshkol in the form of Jewish traditional and Israeli melodies was presented by Jan Pearce, tenor of the Metropolitan Opera Company. The national anthems of the United States and Israel were sung by Cantor Norman Atkins.

Meets With Religious Groups; Colorful Ceremony at City Hall

Mr. Eshkol met this afternoon at the Plaza Hotel with the leadership of the American Zionist movement. He was greeted by Mrs. Rose L. Halprin, chairman of the Jewish Agency - American section, who presided; and Rabbi Israel Miller, president of the American Zionist Council. Forty representatives of all branches of American Zionism heard Mr. Eshkol outline the tasks ahead for Zionists, as he viewed them.

Gov. Nelson Rockefeller visited Mr. Eshkol at the hotel, and hailed the progress of Israel.

A ceremony was held at City Hall, where several hundred officials and well-wishers watched Mayor and Mrs. John Lindsay greet Premier and Mrs. Eshkol. A youth band played the national anthems of the United States and Israel, and the flags of the two countries were flown. The Lindsays and the Eshkols exchanged gifts.

Several hundred faculty members and students at the Jewish Theological Seminary listened to remarks by the Premier during a brief visit to the Conservative seminary this afternoon. Other students watched the event on closed circuit television. Mr. Eshkol was greeted by Chancellor Louis Finkelstein.

A delegation of the Synagogue Council of America, headed by President Philip Rudin, met with the Prime Minister today. Rabbi Rudin told Mr. Eshkol that the overwhelming support of American Jews to Israel in the crisis and war last summer had prompted the SCA to join in a convocation to explore the religious meaning of modern Israel.

Rabbi Rudin told Mr. Eshkol that the convocation will be held at Columbia University, February 22; and that it was inspired by reports from rabbis throughout the United States that, on the Saturday before war broke out on June 5, synagogues were filled to capacity by Jews seeking to give expression to their feelings of concern over the threat to Israel's existence. The SCA represents the congregational and rabbinical organizations of Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Judaism.

Among other events honoring Mr. Eshkol was a luncheon tendered for him by the editorial board of The New York Times. The International Council of Women gave a luncheon in honor of Mrs. Eshkol.

After spending eight days in the United States, Mr. Eshkol was due to leave tomorrow for Canada. He will visit the Jewish communities in Toronto and Montreal, then confer in the capital, Ottawa, with Canadian Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson.

Red Cross Announces Israeli-Egyptian Agreement on Prisoner Exchange

GENEVA, Jan. 11 (JTA)--The International Red Cross announced here today that agreement had been reached by Israel and Egypt on a general exchange of prisoners of the June war.

The exchange will begin in a few days at the Suez Canal, the announcement said. Israel is holding more than 4,000 Egyptian prisoners. Egypt is detaining 16 Israeli soldiers, most of them airmen.

Reports of Religious Ban by Agudat Against Congregational Parley Termed Incorrect

JERUSALEM, Jan. 11 (JTA)--Reports that the Agudat Israel had issued a "herem" (religious ban) against the World Conference of Ashkenazi and Sephardic congregations now in session here, were described today as incorrect and due to mistranslation of a Hebrew statement into English. Menachem Porush, an Agudist leader, explained that his organization had issued a stern warning to "Torah-true" rabbis to boycott the conference, but had not issued a religious ban. His statement was made in response to numerous inquiries resulting from the original report. Agudist sources expressed regret over the misunderstanding, which they ascribed to a faulty translation into English from the Hebrew.

Israel Planning Fast, New Boats to Counter Soviet Types Aiding Egyptian Attacks

JERUSALEM, Jan. 11 (JTA)--Israel has designed and is rushing production on a new class of heavily-armed, highly-maneuverable and very fast boats as the answer to the Egyptian missile-carrying gunboats of the type that sank the Israeli destroyer, the Elath, last September.

The new vessels, though small, are understood to have the ability to detect and destroy submarines, planes and large warships, in addition to missile boats. Informed sources said that the boats should enable Israel to maintain qualitative superiority over the Soviet-armed Egyptian navy.

The review of Israeli Navy's capacity began before a Komar-type vessel sank the Elath on September 21 with Styx missiles, it was indicated. Sources said the closest existing design to the new vessels was the PGM aluminum-hulled patrol boats developed by the United States several years ago to cope with the Komar class vessels supplied by the Soviet Union to Cuba.

No information was given as to the number of ships planned in the new class, or how soon they would be commissioned.

Soviet Mission Reported in Amman, Supply of MIGs to Jordan at Issue

LONDON, Jan. 11 (JTA)--A 10-man Soviet mission arrived in Amman yesterday, it was learned here today. The Daily Telegraph said that the mission, although ostensibly purely economic and technical, will almost certainly raise the question of military aid too. Just before the Russians arrived, King Hussein flew off for a surprise meeting with King Faisal of Saudi Arabia but the Jordanian king was expected to return to Amman today.

King Hussein is under increasing pressure to accept Soviet weapons in view of America's continued arms embargo on Jordan, the Daily Telegraph said, adding that Washington's decision to end financial assistance to Jordan has also played into Russian hands. The report further said that, while Russia would be only too happy to supply Jordan with cut-price MIGs as she does to Syria, Egypt and Iraq, King Hussein realizes it is the Americans who can put pressure on Israel to hand back the West Bank. At this stage, King Hussein presumably does not want to jeopardize relations with Washington nor an arms deal with Moscow, the newspaper said.

Israel Discount Bank Buys Hias Immigrant Bank; Fiscal Statement Gives Details

TEL AVIV, Jan. 11 (JTA)--Israel Discount Bank, the country's second largest bank, has purchased Hias Immigrants Bank, it was announced here today. The Hias Bank will be operated as the IDB Trust Company, according to Daniel Rekanatti, Discount general director, who said the new trust company will be a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Its capital will be \$2.5 million, Mr. Rekanatti added.

The general director said the firm's New York branch, situated on Fifth Avenue there, contributed a very significant part toward the bank's 10 million pound (\$3.5 million) profit for 1967.

As of December 31, 1967, the company's total assets reached a record of 2,133,949,597 Israeli pounds (\$609,699,885) up from 1,643,571,591 pounds (\$547,857,197), an increase of 30 percent. The 1967 Dollar equivalents reflect the recent devaluation of the Israeli pound from 3 to \$1 to 3.50 to \$1.

The net operating earnings for the year, after provision for taxes and transfer to inner reserves, increased from 6,946,752 Israeli pounds (\$2,315,584) to 7,652,314 pound (\$2,186,375). After payment of the dividend due on the preferred shares, the 1967 earnings represent 2.67 Israeli pounds (\$.76) per ordinary share, compared to 2.41 pounds (\$.80) per ordinary share for 1966.

A cash dividend of 13-1/3 percent in Israeli pounds, which amounts to 1.33 pounds (\$.38) per ordinary share, will be proposed to the annual meeting of the shareholders to be held on February 13. The same dividend in Israeli pounds was paid in 1966, which at the then prevailing rate of exchange was 44 cents.

Terrorists Hit Eilat-Ashdod Oil Pipeline; One Saboteur Killed

TEL AVIV, Jan. 11 (JTA)--Saboteurs struck at the Eilat-Ashdod oil pipeline Tuesday night but loss of oil from damages was insignificant, it was reported here Thursday. The action, in which one saboteur was killed, marked the first time the pipeline was used as a target. The victim was killed apparently while handling explosives. The sabotage was discovered when it became evident that some oil was lost on its way to the terminal. The damage, which was repaired, was found some 18 miles from Mitzpeh Ramon.

Israel Holds Memorial Services for Holocaust Victims Whose Death Date is Unknown

JERUSALEM, Jan. 11 (JTA)--Memorial services were held today in synagogues throughout Israel for victims of the Nazi holocaust whose day of death is unknown. The Israeli rabbinate had fixed today, the tenth of Tevet, as a general Kaddish day for such victims of Nazism.

At the Yad Vashem, the Institute for the Remembrance of the Holocaust, ashes taken in 1947 from the Treblinka death camp in Poland were brought for burial. They were turned over to the Yad Vashem by Prof. Jacob Shinkman, who was a member of a Jewish vengeance squad in postwar Europe that hunted down Nazi war criminals. The rites were attended by survivors of the holocaust and by public figures, including Development Minister Moshe Kol. An eternal light was kindled in the Memorial Hall, where the ashes were deposited. The number of Jews murdered by the Nazis at Treblinka is believed to have been about 800,000.

Secretary of Navy Reverses Order Permitting Bias, Calls It 'Wrong'

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11 (JTA)--The United States Navy, responding to widespread protests, has reversed an order that the names of officers and crewmen of ships visiting New Orleans in February be made available to organizations planning segregated Mardi Gras parties. The protests developed when it was learned that the Navy had issued a memorandum describing discrimination against Jews, Italians and Negroes in New Orleans as "the way things are" and declaring that "we have to go along with it." The reversal was disclosed in a letter from Navy Secretary Paul R. Ignatius to Rep. Jonathan B. Bingham, Bronx, Democrat, one of those who had severely criticized the original Navy memorandum.

Protests also had been made by the American Jewish Congress, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the American Italian Committee Against Discrimination, Rep. William F. Ryan, Manhattan Democrat and the American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Labor Committee.

Secretary Ignatius wrote to Rep. Bingham: "There is no excuse for discrimination. In the past, the Navy has provided private organizations lists of officers and men who might be invited to private events. These lists were provided without regard to race or origin. The commandant of the Eighth Naval District, which includes New Orleans, has been directed to ensure that his command does not provide prospective guest lists to organizations which practice racial or national-origin discrimination in the issuance of invitations." Four Navy ships will be in New Orleans during Mardi Gras week.

Sources said it had long been both Navy and Defense Department policy not to sanction official participation of units or individuals in segregated events. The Defense Department permits military personnel to attend segregated events as private individuals, if they so choose.

Mr. Ignatius also wrote Rep. Bingham that it was "unfortunate" that the officer who drew up the memorandum -- who was not identified -- had said that segregation was a fact "and we have to go along with it." The Navy Secretary declared: "He was wrong. No Navy man has to go along with it."

The American Jewish Congress issued a statement today saying it was "gratified" by the Secretary's action and urging that all branches of the military service and all branches of government "take similar positive and public action, so that the shopworn excuse of compliance with local custom may no longer serve as a cover for official discrimination." The American Jewish Committee similarly expressed satisfaction over the reversal of Navy policy.

Johnson Reportedly Feels Pro-Israel Americans Should Support Viet Nam Policy

CHICAGO, Jan. 11 (JTA)--The Viet Nam situation figured in the Johnson-Eshkol talks, according to Peter Lisagor, White House correspondent of the Chicago Daily News, who covered the meetings at the La Tur Ranch.

Lisagor asserted in a dispatch to the News that "Israeli sources interpreted one phase in the joint statement as an indication that the President may have induced Eshkol to show more sympathy towards the U.S. involvement in Viet Nam." That statement, he said, "noted the mutual dedication of both governments to, among other things, 'resistance to aggression wherever it occurs.'"

Lisagor declared that "no specific reference to Viet Nam was made but the President is known to believe that those who support American assurances to Israel in case of aggression ought not to oppose the U.S. role against aggression in South Viet Nam."

Jewish Leaders to Explore Possible Help to Refugees in Viet Nam

NEW YORK, Jan. 11 (JTA)--Three American Jewish communal leaders will leave tomorrow on an exploratory trip to determine the feasibility of a Jewish welfare and rehabilitation program among refugees in Viet Nam, it was announced here today. The project was suggested last spring by an official of the Joint Distribution Committee, at whose suggestion a temporary body called the American Jewish Service Committee on Civilian Relief in Viet Nam was formed.

The mission consists of Morris B. Abram, president of the American Jewish Committee, who is chairman of the temporary body; Jacob Trobe, executive director of the Jewish Child Care Association; and Hyman Wachtel, assistant to the director-general of Malben, the program for rehabilitation of the aged and handicapped immigrants in Israel conducted by the JDC.

Reform Leaders Urge Halt to North Viet Nam Bombing as 'Test' of Peace Move

NEW YORK, Jan. 11 (JTA)--The two principal rabbinical and lay bodies of Reform Jewry in the United States -- the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations -- appealed to President Johnson today to "test" the peaceful intentions of North Viet Nam by taking what they called the "small risk" of an immediate halt to the bombing of North Viet Nam. The appeal was signed by Rabbi Levi A. Olan, of Dallas, and Irving Jay Fain, of Providence, on behalf of the UAHC.

(In New Delhi, today, Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath, president of the UAHC, addressing top religious leaders from all over the world, also called on President Johnson to halt the bombing of North Viet Nam.)