

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

Tuesday, March 5, 1968

No. 44

Jerusalem Sees Nasser Speech as Threat to Jarring Mission, Rejection of Compromise

JERUSALEM, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Col. Nasser's fire-eating speech at Helwan last night in which he pledged the recapture of territories taken by Israel in the Six-Day War, may jeopardize the Jarring peace mission, informed sources said here tonight. Official Israeli circles took a serious view of Nasser's statement that a Middle East settlement could not be attained by peaceful means.

In the course of his long speech, President Nasser did not mention Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, the United Nations envoy, but the tone of his speech was violent and Nasser apparently reacted to the applause of his audience. His speech, informed sources said, indicated how, because of internal Egyptian pressures, Nasser was liable to spike attempts at a peaceful solution. The speech itself, it was said, was evidence of powerful opposition to Nasser within Egypt, an opposition stronger than had previously been suspected, even by Nasser himself. The speech was described here as a continuation of an intransigent position and a rejection of any attempt at compromise.

Jarring Completes Talks at UN, Returns to Cyprus Headquarters Today

UNITED NATIONS, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, the special UN envoy to the Middle East, has "completed the consultations which were the purpose of his visit" here, the United Nations announced today, and will return to his Nicosia, Cyprus headquarters tomorrow. A UN announcement said that Dr. Jarring "had extensive conversations with the Secretary-General and members of the secretariat concerned with his mission. He also met with a number of permanent representatives."

The envoy arrived here on the evening of Feb. 28 and immediately plunged into a series of conferences and consultations on his plans to move his mission out of the preliminary stage of past months into a new phase which would involve the presence of Israeli and Arab missions at Nicosia.

Security Forces, in West Bank Operations, Smash Two El Fatah Bands

TEL AVIV, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Israeli security forces announced today the killing of two El Fatah gang members and the arrest of 18 others, including two senior commanders from whom it was learned, for the first time, that some members of the Arab terrorist and sabotage organization were trained in East Germany. The arrests and the seizure of large stores of El Fatah arms and ammunition followed a sweeping search of Arab villages near Ramallah and the surrounding countryside where an El Fatah gang early Saturday morning sabotaged a heavy equipment storage depot owned by the Mekorot water company and murdered a Druze watchman. The watchman's rifle was found among the arms seized.

The two El Fatah commanders, Kamal Nimri, an engineer, and William Naguib Nasser, a sabotage expert, were netted at an identification check in one of the Arab villages under curfew. Their "cooperation" with Israel authorities led to the arrest of the other gang members and the discovery of the El Fatah arsenals, a security spokesman said.

Naguib Nasser, a known El Fatah leader admitted that he had instructed saboteurs in Algeria and Syria and had also trained El Fatah recruits in East Germany prior to their departure for the Middle East. He said he entered Judea (the West Bank) early in February after being briefed by Abu Amr, senior commander of the El Fatah camps in Syria.

Information Form Captured Leaders Results in Capture of Gang, Seizure of Weapons

The questioning of the two leaders led security forces to a cave near Ramallah where part of the terrorist gang was hiding. One of them was killed and another wounded in a brief exchange of fire. An arms cache consisting of 10 bazooka shells, 20 grenades, two rifles and four sub-machine guns was later discovered in a garage in Beth Hanina village along with a pile of El Fatah posters. Four gang members were arrested in Ramoon village. Eight were arrested at Dahariya village on Mt. Hebron where 11 sub-machine guns, one medium machine gun and more grenades were found. Another four were seized in Gaza along with seven submachine guns, one heavy machine gun and a bazooka.

An Arab murder ring that specialized in killing fellow Arabs suspected of collaborating with Israeli authorities was broken up in Nablus today after security forces demolished four buildings that had been used as hideouts. The group, all members of El Fatah, was rounded up after one of them attempted to escape over the rooftops of the Nablus casbah, the old oriental section of town. The owners of the buildings were also arrested. The ring was uncovered as a result of eye-witness reports that linked it to the murder of a young Arab taxi driver in Nablus.

The northern section of the Gaza Strip was under curfew today following the death of two Israeli irrigation workers Sunday afternoon when their jeep hit a mine south of Yad Mordechai. The victims, both immigrants from Tunisia, employed by the Mekorot water company, were buried in the new immigrant township of Sderot today.

State Dept. Indicates U.S. Is Moving Towards Diplomatic Relations With Egypt

WASHINGTON, D.C., Mar. 4 (JTA)--The State Department today indicated that the United States was moving toward resumption of diplomatic relations with Egypt and that Egyptian policies had improved. The Department welcomed an admission by President Nasser that his charges that U.S. aircraft aided Israel last June were wrong. Robert McCloskey, the State Department spokesman, said "we regard President Nasser's reported remarks as an encouraging development." The reference was to an interview with Nasser published by Look Magazine.

The State Department official said they regarded Nasser's admission as a constructive step toward resumption of relations. Officials recalled that the main stumbling block to resumption of relations was withdrawal of the false charge. Mr. McCloskey declined to comment on whether talks are underway on the restoration of relations or on the situation in the Middle East generally. He stressed that the U.S. regarded the "focus" of events as the United Nations, and that the United States looked toward the Jarring mission.

Eshkol Rejects Kollek Charges of Bureaucratic Delay in East Jerusalem Projects

JERUSALEM, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Prime Minister Eshkol in the Knesset (Parliament) today rejected charges by Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem that bureaucratic obstruction in Government offices there was delaying urgently needed assistance in housing and employment for East Jerusalem residents.

Mr. Eshkol spoke in reply to two agenda motions by opposition party members -- V. Shemtov of Mapam and S. Z. Abramov of Gahal (Herut-Liberal alignment) -- which repeated Mayor Kollek's criticism and suggested the establishment of a special body for Jerusalem affairs. Their suggestion was referred to the Knesset committee on internal affairs which will report back to the house. Mr. Eshkol enumerated Government activities for the benefit of East Jerusalem residents such as improved health, education and welfare services, the improvement of trade and providing jobs. He said that Mayor Kollek, as a member of the Government office in Jerusalem, could have voiced his complaints directly.

Goldmann Says He Will Decide in May Whether to Retain Zionist Presidency

JERUSALEM, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Dr. Nahum Goldmann has advised Prime Minister Eshkol that he would not think of resigning from the presidency of the World Jewish Congress or the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture which he heads, but that he has not yet decided whether he will continue as head of the World Zionist Organization. This information was contained in a statement issued by the Jewish Agency in Dr. Goldmann's behalf in order to "clarify" reports on his recent talks with the Prime Minister. The newspaper, Maariv, reported last week that Mr. Eshkol had asked Dr. Goldmann if he thought he could continue to carry the burden of leadership of the WZO in addition to the several other international Jewish organizations that he heads.

According to today's statement from the Jewish Agency, Prime Minister Eshkol at no time suggested that Dr. Goldmann resign from his other positions but asked him to undertake the renewal of the Zionist movement by making its primary task the promotion of immigration from Western countries. Dr. Goldmann promised to let Mr. Eshkol know by May if he decides to retain the WZO presidency. He also asked the Prime Minister if he could suggest a fitting candidate to succeed him in that post which would make his decision much easier, the Jewish Agency statement said.

Chief Rabbi Complains of Archaeological Work Near Temple Site

JERUSALEM, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Chief Rabbi Nissim has complained to Prime Minister Eshkol about archaeological work going on in the vicinity of the West Wall in Old Jerusalem. In a letter to the Prime Minister, the Chief Rabbi protested what he called the "invasion" by archaeological groups of a building that is partially used by the Beth Din, the supreme rabbinical court. He said that the court, which now uses less than half the rooms, will soon need the whole building. The building is owned by the Jerusalem municipality. Mayor Kollek rejected an earlier protest by the rabbi.

Meanwhile archaeologists headed by Professor Mazur of the Hebrew University have begun digging near the south wall of the Temple area on a license issued by the Ministry of Education. The Chief Rabbinate had protested that work as well.

Wolfson Gives \$2.88 Million For Gardens Around Jerusalem Old City Walls

JERUSALEM, Mar. 4 (JTA)--The Wolfson Foundation of London, created by Sir Isaac Wolfson, announced today a gift of 1.2 million pounds sterling (\$2.88 million) to the Municipality of Jerusalem to provide for the planting of gardens around the walls of the Old City.

Deny Arab Report That Israel Is Boycotting Firms Doing Business With India

NEW DELHI, Mar. 4 (JTA)--An Israeli spokesman here described as "sheer nonsense" a report from Cairo carried by an Indian news agency today alleging that Israel was planning to boycott firms doing business with India in retaliation for the latter country's official support of the Arab states in the Middle East dispute.

Yaacov Yannay, deputy director of the economic division of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the report was a "fabrication" by the Arabs in an attempt to mislead Indian public opinion and turn Israel's friends in India against her.

U.S. Warns Soviet Anti-Jewish Propaganda Is Pre-Conditioning to Mass Murder

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Mar. 4 (JTA)--The United States representative on the United Nations Human Rights Committee told the Soviet Union today that anti-Jewish propaganda material of the nature of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" was "the most spectacularly successful of all the instruments preconditioning to mass murder." He warned that "at all costs, no matter what temporary political advantages the Soviets may gain from this line, it must be avoided."

The American representative, Morris B. Abram, spoke in the continuing debate in the Commission opened by the Israeli representative Friday when he condemned the rehabilitation by the Soviet authorities of Trofim Kichko, the Ukrainian author of the anti-Jewish book, "Judaism Without Embellishment." Mr. Abram reminded the Commission that four years ago he had declared that "this book, issued by an official organ of Soviet society, is a damnable instance of religious hate-mongering, a vicious piece of anti-Semitic literature, reminiscent of Hitler, Goebbels, Streicher and other depraved Nazi authors."

He recalled the world-wide protest against "this recrudescence of anti-Semitism in the Ukraine where some of Hitler's worst anti-Jewish policies found fertile and long cultivated soil during the German occupation" and said the result had been that the "Soviet Union, under the force of world opinion, retreated from its support of the book."

But Kichko, Mr. Abram reported, is now "actually back at work" and last October wrote an article in the official publication of the Young Communist League of the Ukraine alleging a mythical world-Jewish conspiracy. Further, the American representative told the Commission, Kichko was honored by the Supreme Soviet last January.

The Soviet record regarding the Jews "is not by any means all black," Mr. Abram said, but "political policy considerations joined with an aversion to religion, has produced a crisis within Soviet society of which the Kichko phenomenon is a symptom." He said that "history tells us that if the Jewish religious group is not safe, none other is; that if one Christian may be burned as a witch, another may be declared to be one."

The Austrian representative, Felix Ermacora, supported the position taken Friday by the Israeli representative, Petr E. Nedballo, the Ukrainian representative, assailed the Israeli statement and said it had been made to divert attention from Israel's treatment of the Arabs. He accused Israel of "continuing interference in the internal affairs of the Ukraine."

Greek Regime Assails 'Jew Husband' of Actress Melina Mercouri

WASHINGTON, Mar. 4 (JTA)--An attack on film producer Jules Dassin as the "Jew husband" of actress Melina Mercouri has been made by the military junta ruling Greece, according to a report published today by the Washington Post. Miss Mercouri was attacked because she charged that the new regime in Greece is Fascist.

The Greek Government's Consul-General in New York, George J. Gavas, the Post said, conveyed to the Greek Embassy "reports that the American Communist Party started financing the actress Melina Mercouri, her Jew husband Jules Dassin and . . ."

The Greek Consulate-General in New York refused to discuss the Washington Post report with a JTA reporter. It was said that Mr. Gavas, was en route to Athens.

Nemesis of Nazi War Criminals Says Their Search, Prosecution Must Be Pressed

GENEVA, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Simon Wiesenthal, director of the Jewish Documentation Center on Nazi Crimes in Vienna, told a meeting at the Jewish Community Center here that the struggle to bring Nazi war criminals to justice must continue because it compels a guilty generation to answer for its crimes and has curbed rightist tendencies. He also said that greater efforts must be made in that struggle because in a few years, prosecution of Nazi war criminals would be barred by application of the West German statute of limitations.

He expressed opposition to the practice of referring to the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis, rather than to the 11 million civilians from many European countries whom they killed, including the six million Jews. He asserted that by talking only about the six million Jews, one reduced the problem to an issue between Nazis and Jews.

Munich Court Throws Out Wanted Nazi's Defamation Suit Against Wiesenthal

BONN, Mar. 4 (JTA)--A Munich court today rejected a suit by war criminal Erich Rajakovich against Simon Wiesenthal, head of the Vienna Jewish Documentation Center, in which Rajakovich claimed that he had been defamed in certain passages of Mr. Wiesenthal's book, "The Murderers Among Us." Rajakovich was an aide to Adolf Richmann. He is wanted in Holland to face charges of mass murder in connection with his role in the deportation of Dutch Jews to the death camps.

Three Czechoslovakian jurists have accepted the invitation of the Central Office for Prosecution of Nazi Crimes to come to Germany to testify, it was learned today. The jurists are expected to arrive here later this month.

Ambassador Rabin To Present Credentials to President Johnson Today

WASHINGTON, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Rabin, new Israel Ambassador to the United States, will present his credentials to President Johnson at the White House tomorrow morning. The occasion will be the first meeting of Gen. Rabin with the President. It is expected that a brief discussion of issues of mutual current interest will take place.

Canadian Jewish Congress Supports Bill to Punish Hate Propaganda

OTTAWA, Mar. 4 (JTA)--A bill to curb the dissemination of hate propaganda, now before the Canadian Senate, was strongly endorsed in a brief presented by a Canadian Jewish Congress delegation to a special Senate committee on hate propaganda here today. The 22-page document, the first major presentation to the Senate committee on the subject, urged adoption of the legislation with only one important addition, "the inclusion of the category of religion among the 'identifiable groups' whose protection against hate propaganda is the major aim of the Government's legislative proposal."

The CJC brief defended the proposed bill against critics who have called it a "gag law." Noting that the bill does not envisage "prior censorship" and that under its provisions "no public official or policeman has the right to ban any written material or to prevent a speaker from expressing himself," the CJC brief said that "talk of a 'gag law' or of capricious and dictatorial banning of speakers or articles is irresponsible and unwarranted."

The eight member delegation which presented the brief was headed by Michael Garber, national president of the Canadian Jewish Congress, and included Saul Hayes, executive vice president and Louis Herman, national chairman of the CJC-B'nai B'rith Community Relations Committee. The brief stated that it represented the views of "the Jewish community across Canada."

In support of the proposed legislation, it cited a statement by the Chief Justice of the High Court of Ontario to the effect that "the power of the State must be invoked to protect any group which is subject to the vilification which has been expressed...in various parts of the world." It also referred to three psychological and psychiatric studies on the lasting effect that racial hate propaganda has on its victims.

Council of Jewish Women Bids Senate Vote Cloture on Civil Rights Debate

WASHINGTON, D.C., Mar. 4 (JTA)--The National Council of Jewish Women today urged the Senate to vote for cloture this week so that action on pending civil rights legislation is not subjected to further delay. Mrs. Leonard H. Weiner, president of the service organization, said at a meeting of its national board's executive committee that "it is unthinkable that the cloture vote should fail again now that the Senators are confronted with the full report of the President's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders."

The executive committee issued four topical statements at its two day session here covering civil rights legislation, urban needs, foreign aid and human rights. In the latter category, the NCJW expressed "concern and dissatisfaction" that the United States has ratified only one of the pending United Nations human rights conventions, that dealing with slavery. "It is astonishing and disturbing that the United States, long a beacon of moral leadership, should lag behind in this basic expression of commitment to universal morality," the statement said.

Wexler Urges 'Positive Approach' By Jews to Interfaith Dialogue

PHILADELPHIA, Mar. 4 (JTA)--Dr. William A. Wexler, president of B'nai B'rith, recommended that the Jewish community adopt a "responsive approach" to the "continuing interest" of Pope Paul VI and Catholic liberals in strengthening Catholic-Jewish relations. He told B'nai B'rith's National Commission on Adult Jewish Education that "mature interreligious dialogue" should be encouraged because the Jewish community is "neither isolated from nor immune to the religious pluralism of its surroundings and the ecumenical atmosphere should be able to sustain even theological dialogues without distorting them into theological debates." He said his views had been reinforced during his private audience with the Pope last January.

A shortcoming in dialogues is that the process is generally limited to clergy, educators and others on leadership levels "because too many laymen in the adult community are illiterate about their own faith and traditions," Dr. Wexler declared. He told the commission that its educational purpose is an "inescapable prerequisite" to the dialogue process "since the adult Jew cannot interpret his Judaism for others if he himself is crippled by ignorance of its meaning."

Educator Says Israel Seeks to Meet Integration Problems Through Education

HARRIMAN, N.Y., Mar. 4 (JTA)--American and Israeli efforts to integrate people of diverse cultures were compared and analyzed at the fifth annual conference of the American Histadrut Cultural Exchange Institute at Arden House. Dr. Judd L. Teller, conference director, described the seminar as an attempt to pool the experience of the two nations in how best to educate groups from diverse cultures with dissimilar or no educational background.

Dr. Chaim Adler, of the Hebrew University, a visiting professor at Harvard, told the 90 participants in the session that he was critical of the centralization of administrative power in many Israeli institutions but he warned of "separatism" which could develop from giving parents too much control of school systems. He pointed out that "modern society faces the deep dilemma of attempting to integrate at the expense of the quality of education or face mounting social unrest in view of the unjust and unjustifiable lack of such integration."