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Israeli Foreign Ministry Denies Reports of Washington Pressure for New Concessions

JERUSALEM, Mar. 6 (JTA)--An Israeli Foreign Office spokesman categorically denied tonight a report from Cairo to the New York Times alleging that Secretary of State Dean Rusk had sent Foreign Minister Abba S. Eban a note pressing him to accept demands by Egypt for indirect negotiations for a Middle East settlement. Israel has insisted on face-to-face talks. The spokesman said tonight, in response to questions, that there had been no pressure of any kind from the United States in regard to the form the negotiations with the Arabs should take.

The spokesman said a "continuous exchange of views" is taking place between Washington and Jerusalem but, he said, it was "unthinkable" that the State Department would divulge the content of the messages addressed to the foreign minister to another country.

The spokesman asserted that the United States had repeatedly stressed that it favored a solution to the Middle East dispute based on an agreement and obtained through negotiations. The United States has also made it clear, he added, that it was vital to start the negotiations as soon as possible. He noted that the United States reiterated at every opportunity American adherence to President Johnson's five-point program for settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Other sources today stressed that both the United States and Britain favored roundtable talks between Israel and the Arabs under the chairmanship of United Nations special envoy Gunnar V. Jarring, and not indirect talks conducted by each side separately with him. Ambassador Jarring arrived at his Cyprus headquarters last night following conferences at the United Nations in New York. He is expected to visit Jerusalem shortly and also Cairo and Amman.

Rabin Declares Israel Could Hold Territories for 20 Years, But Wants 'Contractual' Peace

WASHINGTON, Mar. 6 (JTA)--Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's new ambassador to the United States, told the National Press Club here this afternoon that Israel could control the occupied Arab territories for as long as 20 years if necessary if there were no real peace settlement with the Arabs. "From the security point of view, there is no reason why we can't," he said. Ambassador Rabin, who was Chief of Staff of Israel's armed forces during last June's Six-Day War, received a warm greeting from the audience of journalists and writers who jammed the auditorium to hear his maiden address and to fire questions at the Israeli envoy. He declared that Israel urgently wanted a real and permanent "contractual" peace with the Arabs but said that the only way to achieve such a peace and to bring about the withdrawal of Israel from occupied territories was through a face-to-face confrontation with the Arabs.

"We are ready within the framework of such negotiations to come to an agreement on the recognized and secure boundaries of the future," he declared. He said that Israel had no objection to the U.N.'s special envoy, Dr. Gunnar Jarring, serving as chairman at direct Israel-Arab talks. The Ambassador addressed a rhetorical question to the Arab nations: "If you are not ready to talk peace with us, if you are not ready to abandon your policy of seeking Israel's destruction, why then do we have to withdraw even one inch? Just to hand you back the areas which served in the past and will serve in the future as a springboard for your aggression?"

He said there are two basic reasons why the Arabs persist in their hostility. One, he said, stemmed from the hatred of Israel nurtured by Arab leaders to the extent that their own freedom to maneuver is greatly limited. The other is a result of the intrusion of the Soviet Union into the Middle East which holds out to the Arabs the hope of recovering their lost territories without changing their anti-Israel policy. Gen. Rabin doubted that the Soviets want to see warfare renewed in the Middle East. "But I would say that she would not like to see a peace settlement and an end to the tensions in the region unless it be on her own terms," he said. The continued tension and instability in the area, he said, was one of the factors that enabled the USSR to establish herself in the Middle East and to extend her military presence there.

On the subject of American arms shipments to Jordan, Ambassador Rabin said no Israeli was happy to see a country that waged war last June being re-armed while there was still no peace. On the other hand, he observed, it is "perhaps better to have someone other than the Russians in Jordan." With reference of France's continued embargo on the shipment of Mirage jet planes to Israel, Gen. Rabin said "although France refuses to deliver the planes bought and paid for in 1965, Israelis feel a debt to the French Government and people for past assistance and for the quality of French arms." He said there was no doubt that Israel will try to obtain jet planes from other sources.

Ambassador Rabin side-stepped a question on the Viet Nam war. Asked what he, as a general, would do in Viet Nam, he replied that no responsible general would say anything about a war that he did not know at first hand. Asked why Israel forces stopped at the Suez Canal in last June's war, he replied: "try to imagine what the world would have said if we had advanced any further."

Jordanian Shelling of Israelis Resumed in Umm Shurt Area Tuesday Night

TEL AVIV, Mar. 6 (JTA)--Jordanians fired artillery and mortars at Israeli units across the Jordan River demarcation line last night in the third such incident in less than 12 hours. A military spokesman said the artillery fire came from a point on the East Bank of the river just south of the Umm Shurt Bridge. Israeli units returned the fire whereupon the Jordanians used mortars in an attempt to knock out the Israeli guns but were silenced by Israeli artillery. No casualties were reported. The Jordanians initiated two exchanges of fire along the demarcation line Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. and again at noon.

Israel Army sappers demolished five buildings in Ramoon village near Ramallah which had been used as shelters by an El Fatah gang responsible for last Saturday's sabotage of a nearby heavy equipment storage depot and the murder of its watchman. Security forces arrested 18 members of the gang including its two leaders. One gang member was killed in a clash at a Ramallah hideout.

Justice Ministry Preparing Bill to Ease Vote Requirements for East Jerusalem Arabs

JERUSALEM, Mar. 6 (JTA)--A bill entitling residents of East Jerusalem to vote in the next municipal elections without furnishing proof of their residency is in preparation by the Government for submission to the Knesset (Parliament), Minister of Justice Y. Shapiro informed the Knesset last night. The voting privilege is restricted to the municipality. Only bona fide citizens of Israel may vote in national elections for the Knesset. Mr. Shapiro said that the Arab municipal counselors of East Jerusalem so far have not been cooperating with the Jerusalem municipality, although they were invited to do so immediately after last June's Arab-Israel war.

The Ministry of Labor today rejected charges by Mayor Teddy Kollek, of Jerusalem, that bureaucratic red tape was hampering efforts to find employment for East Jerusalem residents and render other needed assistance. The Ministry declared that East Jerusalem, as a part of Israel, was being dealt with in exactly the same way as affairs in other parts of the country are handled. It noted that many measures to assist East Jerusalem residents have been adopted since last June, including the payment of social security.

Curfew For West Bank Inhabitants Shortened By One Hour

JERUSALEM, Mar. 6 (JTA)--The nightly curfew on the West Bank has been shortened by one hour, it was announced here today. The curfew now ends at 3:00 a.m. instead of at 4:00 a.m. as hitherto.

Israel Rejects Jordan Complaints of Desecration of Old City Holy Places

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Mar. 6 (JTA)--Israel presented to Secretary-General U Thant today, documentary and photographic evidence of 20 years' of wanton destruction, desecration and vandalism by Jordan against Jewish property and holy places in Old Jerusalem and surrounding areas which it occupied in the 1948 war against Israel. The evidence, submitted by Ambassador Yosef Tekoah, Israel's permanent representative to the United Nations, was accompanied by a letter challenging Jordan's right to complain about Israel's efforts to clear uninhabitable slums in the area and erect modern housing for Jews and Arabs alike.

Ambassador Tekoah's presentation was in direct reply to letters and documents submitted by Muhammed H. El-Farra, permanent representative of Jordan, to the Secretary General on Feb. 23 and Feb. 28. The Jordanians charged that Israel was destroying the character of "Arab Jerusalem" and was sullyng Moslem holy places by its clearing operations and archaeological excavations in the vicinity of the West Wall.

Ambassador Tekoah accompanied his documents with a 54-page book containing scores of photographs of Jewish homes, synagogues and cemeteries wilfully damaged or destroyed by the Jordanians. The booklet was published in English, French and Spanish.

"With regard to the West Wall," Ambassador Tekoah wrote, "it is to be observed that it is the most Holy Place of all to Judaism." He said that archaeological excavations near the West Wall and the Temple Mount area, had always taken place... "during the period of the Mandate and during the Jordanian occupation... Approval has been granted for the continuation of these excavations, outside the area of the Temple Mount, that is outside the walls surrounding the Haram esh-Sharif." The Israeli envoy noted further that "a clear distinction exists between the Haram esh-Sharif and the Western Wall which were recognized as two separate Holy Places," by the United Nations.

Concerning Israeli slum clearance operations in the Mughrabi quarter of the Old City, a Jewish quarter, Ambassador Tekoah pointed out that though it faces the West Wall it is not a holy place but secular property. "No modern civilized Government or municipal administration would have tolerated the slum conditions which the Jordanian Government created in this Quarter," he said.

Noting that the Jordanian representative complained about plans to construct new housing in the modern part of Jerusalem, including the former "no man's-land" and areas occupied by Jordan in 1948, Ambassador Tekoah wrote that "this complaint refers to vacant land of which about two-thirds is public domain or belongs to Jewish private persons or institutions. Only one-third is owned by private Arab landlords. No person at all is being evicted and none of the land in question belongs to any ecclesiastical institution or is Waqf (Arab foundation for the administration of Moslem holy places) property."

Israel in Mourning as Submarine Dakar is Officially Declared Lost

JERUSALEM, Mar. 6 (JTA)--Flags flew at half mast throughout Israel today following a nationally broadcast statement by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan officially declaring the missing submarine Dakar, which disappeared 41 days ago, to be lost with her 69 officers and crew. The Knesset held a special mourning session attended by President Zalman Shazar while, at a special session of the Cabinet, Prime Minister Eshkol issued messages of condolence to the families of the Dakar's crew.

Funeral services for the deceased Navy men were recited by the armed forces chief chaplain, Rabbi Shlomo Goren, aboard the destroyer Yaffo, ten miles out at sea. Admiral Shlomo Harel, commander of Israel's Navy, delivered a eulogy. Three wreaths were cast into the sea, representing memorial tributes from the Defense Ministry, the Navy and the submarine flotilla.

(Memorial services for the Dakar's crew were held today in New York and Philadelphia, attended by local dignitaries, members of the Israel diplomatic corps and representatives of the four nations which aided Israel in a fruitless search for the submarine. In Philadelphia, Admiral Robert H. Speck, Commandant of the Fourth Naval District, spoke on behalf of those nations.)

The Dakar, a British-built submarine purchased by Israel last year, went missing in the Eastern Mediterranean on Jan. 25, 1968 while on her maiden voyage under the Israel flag from Portsmouth, England to Haifa. A two week air-sea search by Naval units of Israel, the United States, Britain, Greece and Turkey failed to turn up any evidence of the Dakar's fate.

Faint hopes persisted that some clue would be discovered. Today, however, Gen. Dayan informed the Cabinet that such was not the case. Memorial parades will be held on military and naval posts throughout Israel tomorrow. The Chaplain's office announced that the shiva, the traditional seven day mourning period, will begin for the families of the Dakar men today.

The Dakar's loss adds another name — and another nationality — to the long roster of ships that have vanished without trace. But the mystery of how a modern undersea craft with the latest equipment and a highly trained crew could disappear in the heavily trafficked waters of the Mediterranean, will persist. Though built 25 years ago, the Dakar was renovated to an extent that amounted to an almost complete re-building last year. She was equipped with the most modern navigational aids, radar and other devices. Her crew trained in Britain for months before taking over the craft and she underwent extensive tests, including diving to a depth of 360 feet, under the supervision of British and Israeli naval experts. The Dakar left Portsmouth for Israel on Jan. 9 and re-fueled at Gibraltar. After that, she was ordered to proceed to Haifa submerged. A sister submarine, the Dolphin, which accompanied her, arrived at Haifa without incident.

In his eulogy today aboard the Yaffo, Admiral Harel said: "This sea, which was so cruel to us, is actually our only open border to the free world. It was on a mission to safeguard this border and assure its being kept open at all times, that the 69 heroes of the Dakar perished. Their sacrifice has not been in vain."

May Call Chancellor as Witness in West German War Crimes Trial of Ex-Envoy

FRANKFURT, Mar. 6 (JTA)--The court of assizes here is reported to be considering whether to call West German Chancellor Kurt George Kiesinger as a defense witness in the trial of Adolf Beckerle, the German Minister in Sofia, Bulgaria, during World War II, who is being tried as an accessory to the murder of more than 11,000 Jews.

The victims were deported from Bulgaria to the Treblinka death camp in Poland in 1943. It is the contention of Beckerle, whose trial opened last November, that when he participated in the deportations, he was unaware of the fate that awaited the Jews. Dr. Kiesinger, who was deputy leader of the radio department of the Nazi Foreign Ministry in charge of propaganda and counter-propaganda, is believed to be the only witness who can bear out the defendant's claim that the Sofia legation was not on the mailing list for Foreign Ministry documents. Those documents kept Nazi diplomatic missions abroad informed of the policy to annihilate the Jews. Kiesinger's testimony has been demanded by Beckerle's defense counsel. But the court is yet to act on his demand.

Rotterdam Jewish Community To Mark Its 1,400th Anniversary in May

ROTTERDAM, Mar. 6 (JTA)--A huge menorah will be erected in the center of Rotterdam in May when the Jewish community marks its 1,400th anniversary concurrently with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Israel's independence. Events scheduled for the occasion include an exhibit on the history of Rotterdam Jewry which will be opened by Burgomaster Willem Thomassen and Chief Rabbi Louis Vorst. There will also be an Israel Week and an exhibition of Israeli architecture to be opened by Israel's Ambassador, Dr. Daniel Lewin, an exhibit of Israeli graphic art and a concert by the Israeli Chamber Ensemble conducted by Gary Bertini.

Amsterdam To Name City Square After Anne Frank in Memory of Deported Jews

AMSTERDAM, Mar. 6 (JTA)--Dr. Ivo Samkalden, burgomaster of this city, has asked the City Council to name a new square in the former ghetto district after the late Anne Frank in memory of all Netherlands Jews who were deported and murdered by the Nazis during World War II. He also proposed the naming of a new street after the late Dr. L.E. Visser, the anti-Nazi president of the Netherlands High Court, who was removed from office by the Germans in 1941.

Orthodox Seminary Suspends Participation in Voluntary Chaplaincy Draft

NEW YORK, Mar. 6 (JTA)--Yeshiva University has agreed to a request from rabbinical students in its Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Seminary to suspend for one year the Orthodox seminary's participation in the Jewish community's self-imposed draft of newly-ordained rabbis for military chaplaincy duty because of student opposition to the Viet Nam war, it was learned today. The students will instead have the option of volunteering for such duty.

At the same time, a spokesman for the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly disclosed that, because of similar opposition to the Viet Nam war among some rabbinical students at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, the issue of ending Conservative participation in the chaplaincy draft program will be debated at the Assembly's 68th annual convention this month at Kiamesha Lake, N.Y. The spokesman added that the issue as viewed in the Conservative rabbinate is not one of hawks versus doves on the war, but rather the proposition that if Jewish men are on duty in a war, however unpopular, the Jewish community has a responsibility to provide them with spiritual support through provision of military chaplains.

Opposition to United States involvement in Viet Nam has been particularly sharp in Reform Judaism. However, Rabbi Sidney Regner, executive vice-president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, said there was no similar situation of widespread student debate on the war in the Reform seminary, the Jewish Institute of Religion-Hebrew Union College, and that the CCAR was continuing its participation in the Jewish chaplaincy draft program without change.

Under long-established procedures, when a rabbinical student is ordained at each of the three seminaries, he is required to take a physical examination for possible chaplaincy duty before he can take a pulpit. Assuming he is physically fit, he is then available for assignment, through the Jewish Welfare Board's Commission on Jewish Chaplaincy, for military duty.

The Yeshiva University spokesman said that the one-year suspension became effective in January and that the issue will be reviewed at the end of that period.

Greek Ambassador Repudiates Anti-Jewish Reference Ascribed to Consul Here

WASHINGTON, Mar. 6 (JTA)--Greece's Ambassador to the United States today repudiated an alleged attack by a Greek diplomat in the U.S. on film producer Jules Dassin as the "Jew husband" of actress Melina Mercouri.

In a statement to the American Jewish Congress, which sharply protested the attack, Ambassador Christian Palamas said he had ordered an investigation to determine the authenticity of what he called a "derogatory reference to an individual's Jewish faith." Ambassador Palamas told the AJC: "regardless of the outcome of the investigation, I wish to state that Greece has always been free of any Jewish prejudice and is proud of its long history in this respect. Any suggestion to the contrary is unfounded and does not accurately and fairly represent the views of the Government, its officials or the Greek people."

The AJC acted following press reports that George J. Gavas, until recently the Greek Consul-General in New York, had said in a memorandum to the Greek Embassy in Washington that "the American Communist party started financing the actress Melina Mercouri, her Jewhusband Jules Dassin and..." Mr. Gavas has left the consulate in New York and is returning to Greece, the AJC was told by the Greek Embassy.

American Affiliate of Israeli Bank Announces 20 Percent Stock Dividend

NEW YORK, Mar. 6 (JTA)--The American Bank & Trust Company, American affiliate of the Swiss-Israel Trade Bank and of the Foreign Trade Bank of Tel Aviv, announced today a 20 per cent stock dividend payable to stockholders of record as of Feb. 15. Philip M. Klutznick, chairman of the board, forecast that 1968 earnings per new share would be equal to that of shares outstanding in 1967. He said the bank's total assets had increased to \$176.4 million in 1967, 38.8 percent over 1966. Deposits, as of Dec. 31 were \$176.42 million, as compared to \$127 million in the previous year.

Saul Kagan, president of the bank, said that its Fifth Avenue office, opened last October, would be self-supporting within a year of its opening although the norm, he said, was approximately three years. The Israel Central Trade and Investment Company is the largest stockholder in the bank.

Catholic College Adds Rabbi To Faculty To Teach Contemporary Judaism

BOSTON, Mar. 6 (JTA)--Stonehill College, a Catholic institution, announced today appointment of Rabbi Samuel Ruderman of Temple Beth-El, Fall River, to its theology department faculty. Rabbi Ruderman will lecture on contemporary Judaism and Old Testament themes at the North Easton institution. Rabbi Ruderman, a wartime Navy chaplain, has been a member of the faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary and of Connecticut College.

Leib Strongin, Veteran Soviet Jewish publisher, Dead in Moscow

LONDON, Mar. 6 (JTA)--Leib Strongin, a veteran Jewish journalist and publisher of the Soviet Yiddish-language magazine, "Sovietish Heimland," has died in Russia at the age of 74, it was learned here today. Mr. Strongin was for many years the manager of the "Emes," the Moscow publishing house which specialized in Yiddish books and published the Yiddish Communist newspaper, "Emes" ("Truth"). The firm has since been liquidated.