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Members of Congress Voice Concern Over Lack of Firm U.S. Commitment to Israel

WASHINGTON, D.C., Mar. 11 (JTA)--A Democratic Senator and two Republican Congressmen today voiced growing concern over the lack of a firm U.S. commitment to Israel in face of the increased Soviet political and military intrusion into the Middle East. Their misgivings were supported by a defense analyst who warned that future Soviet policy in the region would depend upon the extent of the American resolve and commitment to Israel.

Senator Vance Hartke, Democrat of Indiana and two Republicans, Representatives Charles Mathias of Maryland and Donald Lukens, of Ohio, each linked America's policy in the Middle East to this country's deepening involvement in Viet Nam. The three spoke at the ninth annual policy conference of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee. The forum also heard from Israel's new Ambassador to the United States, Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Rabin, Roman Kolkowicz, of the Institute for Defense Analyses and Dr. Abraham Brumberg, editor of the U.S. Information Agency's periodical, "Problems of Communism."

Ambassador Rabin, addressing the dinner meeting tonight, told the assemblage that Israel did not want anyone else "to fight our wars for us." He said that Israelis were ready to defend themselves but to deter aggression, military equipment was required. "The only thing we ask of our friends throughout the world," he said, "is to let us have the means, the equipment to defend ourselves."

The envoy stressed again, to an audience which included many members of Congress, that negotiations leading to peace in the Middle East must be direct. He warned that any international approach that acknowledged the Arab policy of non-recognition and non-reconciliation would only frustrate peace endeavors. Such concessions or allowing the Arabs "to evade the basic necessity of reaching agreement with us directly -- any such approach will fail to solve the problems in the Middle East," he declared. He added that "the question which the world must answer is whether to support the cause of war or the cause of peace. The cause of negotiation and settlement or the cause of non-recognition of a nation's right of very existence."

Hartke Sees Viet Nam and Arab-Israeli Issues as Single 'Package'

Senator Hartke said that because of America's preoccupation with the war in Viet Nam, it may prove necessary to settle the Vietnamese and the Arab-Israeli issues "as a package." He warned that unless Israel's rights were more firmly guaranteed by the United States, there would be another Arab-Israel war "in less than three years."

Congressman Mathias declared that he was "disappointed" with the definition of U.S. policy toward Israel given him by the American Embassy in Tel Aviv recently. He deplored what he called the Administration's failure to clearly enunciate a pro-Israel policy in the wake of British withdrawal from the region.

Representative Lukens charged that the Administration is ignoring "realities" in the Middle East created by Soviet identification with the Arabs and declared that American support of Israel was as necessary in challenging Communism as American involvement in Viet Nam. He said he hoped it would never be necessary to send U.S. forces to aid Israel in a future conflict but "if that is the price of freedom, it is a price we will have to pay." He denounced U.S. arms shipments to Jordan, citing the hostile border situation.

Mr. Kolkowicz said the main reason for militant Soviet moves in the Middle East was the vacuum created by the shift of major American concern and commitment from Europe and the Mediterranean to the "all consuming war in Viet Nam." The Russians are exploiting this situation to push harder in the Middle East. He commended Israel's present policies as "correct" and told the Israelis to "remain firm and pray that Washington is interested in what they are doing."

Dr. Brumberg, an authority on the Soviet Union, said he did not think there was much that American Jews could do to alleviate the plight of Soviet Jewry because he did not believe that Russian policies were "to any extent influenced by pressures from world Jewry." However, he said, a "responsible" and "non-exaggerated" campaign against Soviet anti-Jewish policies could convince the Kremlin to abandon some of its more extreme practices. He cited repudiation of the anti-Semitic book, "Judaism Without Embellishment."

Eban Denies Washington Pressure To Make Concessions to Egypt on Negotiations

JERUSALEM, Mar. 11 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Eban tonight confirmed an earlier denial by a Foreign Ministry spokesman that the United States was pressuring Israel to relax its insistence on face-to-face talks with the Arabs as the only means of achieving peace in the Middle East. Mr. Eban, replying to a parliamentary question in the Knesset, said the report of such pressure, which appeared in the New York Times of March 6, was incorrect. "There have been no suggestions by Secretary of State Dean Rusk as to what form negotiations between Israel and Egypt should take," Mr. Eban said.

He added that the U.S. Government had informed Israel that there had been "inaccuracies" which had caused a "misinterpretation" by the New York Times. The reference apparently was to information supplied The Times by U.S. official sources. The Times' story, date-lined Cairo, alleged that the U.S. State Department was pressuring Israel on the issue of direct talks with the Arabs and had given the Egyptian Foreign Office the gist of a letter on the subject from Rusk to Eban. A Foreign Ministry spokesman here denied the story last week and said it was unthinkable that the State Department would disclose the contents of correspondence between the U.S. and Israel to a third party.

Mr. Eban officially reported to the Cabinet yesterday that Egypt would not negotiate directly with Israel and said he would, however, continue his talks with Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, special UN envoy in the Middle East. Mr. Eban and Dr. Jarring had a meeting in Jerusalem yesterday after which the UN envoy returned to his Cyprus headquarters.

In reply to another question in the Knesset tonight, the Foreign Minister said that a statement by Israel's Ambassador to Washington, Gen. Yitzhak Rabin, that Israel should not retain all of the Arab territory occupied in last June's war, represented the Ambassador's personal view. However, he said, it is not contrary to Israel's official stand. The form that future borders between Israel and her neighbors will take can only be fixed by a peace settlement, Mr. Eban said, adding "whether they will follow the present cease-fire line or take some other shape is something that cannot now be foretold."

Infiltrator Wearing Iraqi Army Officer's Uniform Slain in West Bank Clash

TEL AVIV, Mar. 11 (JTA)--Three Arab marauders, one of them wearing the uniform of an Iraqi army officer, were killed in a clash last night with a three-man Israeli patrol on the West Bank of the Jordan River. The clash touched off a two-hour artillery barrage from Jordanian positions across the river. One Israeli soldier was wounded. Three other Israeli soldiers were injured in a separate incident last night when their command car struck a mine north of Elath in the Negev, near the Jordanian border. One of them was flown to a hospital for emergency surgery.

The West Bank clash began at about 11:00 p.m., local time, when the Israeli patrol ambushed five infiltrators they had spotted moving from the East to the West Bank of the river. They fired at close range, killing one of the Arabs while the others fled in retreat toward the Jordan River. The Israelis pursued them, killing a second marauder. One of the Israeli soldiers was wounded. His companion, a medical corpsman, stopped to tend his wounds while the third soldier continued in pursuit. The latter ran out of ammunition and was under fire from the marauders. He managed to crawl back to the injured man, took his rifle and killed a third Arab and possibly wounded another. At this point, the Jordanians opened fire from across the river, covering the escape of the rest of the gang.

One of the dead Arabs, believed to have been the gang leader, was wearing a uniform with the insignia of a lieutenant in the Iraqi Army. Three Russian assault rifles of the Klatchnikoff type were found at the scene along with a bazooka, bazooka shells, demolition charges and El Fatah posters.

(A Christian Science Monitor correspondent who visited the Jordanian East Bank area, reported that the civilian population was leaving the Jordan Valley and "farming and other normal activities are giving way to militarization of the valley." Correspondent John Cooley said that "the stony hillsides bristle with camouflaged camps and gun positions" and he reported finding "guerrilla camps dispersed throughout the valley." He said the guerrillas "are increasing their control of an enclave running the entire length of the Jordan Valley." He added that "this valley looks as though it were preparing for another war.")

Diplomatic Corps Expected to Boycott Independence Day Parade in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM, Mar. 11 (JTA)--Members of the foreign diplomatic corps will probably boycott this year's Independence Day parade in Jerusalem, just as they did the same event last year, though for slightly different reasons, political observers indicated today. Last year, diplomats refused to attend on the grounds that their countries did not recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Although invitations have not yet been issued for this year's parade, it is expected that most diplomats will stay away because their presence might imply recognition of a united Jerusalem under Israel's rule. The parade route will pass through East Jerusalem.

Chief Rabbinate Seeks Control of Western Wall Area, Halt to Archaeological Work

JERUSALEM, Mar. 11 (JTA)--Chief Rabbi I. Nissim asked a special ministerial committee yesterday to place the entire area around the West Wall in East Jerusalem under the sole jurisdiction of the Chief Rabbinate and demanded that archaeological work near the site be halted.

The Chief Rabbi made his demands during a walking tour of the area by the committee which is headed by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan. Mayor Teddy Kollek, of Jerusalem, was also present. The committee was appointed by the Prime Minister to investigate the status of holy places in the Old City and make recommendations. It was set up after the Chief Rabbinate complained that archaeological excavations near the site of the Temple's south wall might invade the "holy of holies," a spot which in the days of the Temple, was forbidden to all but the high priests. The excavations are being carried out by a team headed by Prof. Benjamin Mazar, former president of the Hebrew University and one of Israel's most distinguished archaeologists. He is working under a license granted by the Ministry of Education. He had assured the chief rabbinate that the diggings would be outside the wall and not in the Temple Mount area.

Sharp Differences Voiced in Human Rights Commission Over Action on Israel

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Mar. 11 (JTA)--Members of the United Nations Human Rights Commission voiced sharp criticism of the Commission's action last Friday in demanding that the Israel Government halt the destruction of homes of suspected terrorists, according to the transcript of the session, which was made public today. The action, carried by a vote of 17 to one with seven abstentions, was criticised subsequently as not truly a consensus of the Commission's views, as a misuse of procedure and as a political action. There are 32 members of the Commission.

Morris B. Abram, the American delegate, told the Commission that the results of the vote did not bear out the contention that the Commission action represented a consensus of the opinions of its members. Sir Samuel Hoare, the British delegate said that his delegation had had to consider whether there was ground for "convicting a government and calling upon it to mend its ways." The situation, he pointed out, involved an occupying power and the question of whether the act was necessitated by military reasons caused his delegation some perplexity.

Anton Prohaska of Austria complained that the discussion had been transformed into a political issue and Waldo Waldron-Ramsey, of Tanzania protested the difficulty of castigating a state on the basis of newspaper reports. Andrea Aguilar Mawdsley of Venezuela, charged that the consensus procedure had been abused and that the members of the Commission had not been given sufficient time to study the facts.

R. Quentin-Baxter, of New Zealand, said the situation should have been left to the Security Council. Per-Olof Forshell of Sweden said the Commission action would interfere with the peace-making efforts of the Secretary-General and his special envoy, Ambassador Gunnar Jarring. The representatives of France, Argentina and Guatemala stressed that they had voted for the action out of humanitarian reasons only and without consideration of political questions.

West Germans Deny Knowledge of El Fatah Training Activities on German Soil

BONN, Mar. 11 (JTA)--Official West German sources indicated today they knew nothing about reported secret military training of El Fatah Arab terrorists in West Germany. They pointed out that possession of arms in West Germany is banned without special permission.

However, informed sources said here it might be possible that some unknown Arabs might have held secret meetings here and later been sent to Algeria for training for operations against Israel. It is no secret, it was pointed out, that there are many Arab students in West German universities who agitate openly on a large scale against Israel.

William Naguib Nasser, an El Fatah leader who was arrested last week as a suspect in a sabotage raid on a water equipment depot near Jerusalem, told Israeli security officials that he had originally been recruited by the El Fatah in West Germany and that he later trained other El Fatah recruits on West German soil before they were sent to the Middle East.

West German Neo-Nazis Score Gains in Westphalian Municipal Elections

BONN, Mar. 11 (JTA)--The neo-Nazi National Democratic Party gave further cause for concern over its rising political power as a result of the votes it captured in three municipal elections held yesterday in Westphalia. The party leader, Adolf von Thadden, said at a press conference tonight that he was pleased with the results and predicted even greater success for the NPD in the forthcoming elections in Baden-Wurtemberg.

In the Westphalian town of Unna, the NPD, which espouses Hitlerian tenets, won 11.7 percent of the vote while in Kamen, its total was 7.5 percent. Had the elections been national instead of local, the right-wing party would have won four and two seats respectively, in the Bundestag, West Germany's lower house, political observers pointed out. In the town of Hamm, the NPD polled 5.9 percent, a larger vote than it was expected to get.

(The official East German news agency, ADN, reported in Berlin today that members of the NPD will no longer be admitted to East Germany. The ban includes party members travelling to and from West Berlin, the news agency said.)

Von Thadden said his party would get 10 percent of the vote in Baden-Wurtemberg where it is planning an all-out election drive. He said the NPD would hold 2000 meetings throughout the state and that it would distribute 7 million electoral "newspapers." Von Thadden said he welcomed a purported statement by West German Chancellor Kurt Kiesinger that the NPD posed no threat to German democracy.

Two Accused in Cologne War Crimes Trial of Mass Murder of Jews in Grodno Ghetto

COLOGNE, Mar. 11 (JTA)--Two wartime Nazis have gone on trial here on charges of multiple murders of Jews in occupied Grodno in Poland. One was Heinz Errells, 53, former SS officer and head of the Nazi security service in Grodno. The other was Kurt Wiese, 53, another former SS officer who headed one of the two Grodno ghettos from 1941 to 1943. Wiese was accused of the murder of Jews in 177 cases, and Errells of participation in the murder of Jews in 27 cases. Each case can mean several killings.

Celler Would Authorize Attorney-General To Admit Russian Jews on Parole

NEW YORK, Mar. 11 (JTA)--Rep. Emanuel Celler, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, told a Madison Square Garden rally tonight that the United States immigration laws should be revised to permit admission of Jews from the Soviet Union if and when they are allowed to leave. The rally was organized by the American League for Russian Jews. A pageant with music was presented to dramatize the plight of Soviet Jewry.

"During the Nazi years, we kept our immigration barriers strongly in place because we didn't believe," Rep. Celler declared. "There is one thing we must do now and that is to make it possible -- now -- that should there be an exodus from Russia, our laws be so shaped that we can, in a minimum of time, permit a goodly portion of the Jews of Russia to enter this land of asylum, just as we did in the case of the fleeing Hungarians and Cubans. For we must support and keep to the hope that Kosygin, who at one time expressed the willingness to permit Jews to join their families elsewhere, would keep his word, if not through any sense of honor, then through a sense of shame induced by the volume of protest."

The New Yorker said that "it is my purpose in legislation I have already introduced, to prepare for such emergency. I do this by proposing to give the Attorney General discretion to permit entries by parolling people into the United States. We act outside of any inflexible numerical limitation or percentage."

Congressman Celler told the demonstrators that "we must be ready should the Soviet Union, by some miracle, by some twist in its devious political machinations, respond to the cry, 'Let my people go!' Above all," he concluded, "let us not be silent, whether as a government, whether as a people, whether as Jews."

Montreal Protestant School Board Seeks Vote For Jews in School Elections

MONTREAL, Mar. 11 (JTA)--The Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal has asked the Quebec Legislature to amend the Education Act to permit the election of Jews to local school boards in Montreal and the city of Outremont, a suburb of Montreal with a large Jewish population. The effect of the amendment would be to give Jews in nine of the 11 city districts the right to vote in school board elections, to sit on the local boards and, eventually, to be appointed to the controlling Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal.

The Jews, in line with a 1928 legal precedent, do not now have the right to vote in Montreal and Outremont school elections. The Education Act excepts territory under the jurisdiction of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal from provisions of the law that "persons professing the Jewish religion shall, for school purposes, be treated in the same manner as Protestants."

At present, five Jews serve on the Protestant School Board by appointment of the Lieutenant Governor in Council under a 1965 law specifying that the Board should be constituted of five Jews and 20 Protestants. Most Jewish children in Montreal attend the Protestant schools. In some of the Outremont schools, the Jewish pupils are actually in the majority.

Travellers Insurance Company Starts Minorities Recruitment Campaign

NEW YORK, Mar. 11 (JTA)--An intensive employment recruiting effort among qualified minority group college students, announced today by the Travellers Insurance Company of Hartford, Conn., will utilize the facilities of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. A memorandum from the company to ADL offices throughout the country indicated that the ADL will assist the company recruiters in helping identify schools with manpower potential which has not been successfully tapped, by suggesting ways of reaching and encouraging response from minority students and by acting as intermediaries, where such help may be necessary, particularly with Jewish students.

A statement by Sterling Tooker, president of Travellers, and Dore Schary, chairman of ADL, described the recruitment plan as an important step toward providing additional people with strong management potential in insurance companies. Mr. Tooker said the program would seek to reach elements which had regarded the insurance business as lacking in real career and management opportunities for them.

Oldest Haggadah, Dating From Eighth Century, Put on Display in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA, Mar. 11 (JTA)--The oldest Haggadah in existence today, a fragmented medieval manuscript dating back to the Eighth Century, went on public exhibit today at the Free Library here, as part of an exhibit of about 1,000 Haggadahs presented by the Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning. The exhibit, which will continue until April 12, was arranged in connection with the Passover Festival. The manuscript had been kept in a vacuum vault at the college. It shows the Passover ritual in its very early state, with many important variations from the traditional text currently used.

American Jewish Committee Hails Appointment of New York Archbishop

NEW YORK, Mar. 11 (JTA)--The designation of Bishop Terence J. Cooke as Archbishop of New York has been hailed by officials of the American Jewish Committee as auguring well for "the development of rich and fruitful relationships between the Catholic and Jewish peoples" of New York City. Bertram H. Gold, executive director, and Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, director of interreligious affairs, noted that Committee officials had met with Bishop Cooke when he was Auxiliary Bishop and said he had demonstrated "a particularly keen and informed understanding of Judaism and the Jewish people."