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Eshkol Assures Jewish Agency That It Will Exercise Responsibility For Immigration

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA)--Prime Minister Levi Eshkol gave his assurance today that the Jewish Agency will be expected to continue to exercise responsibility for "needy immigrants and refugees" notwithstanding the establishment of a Ministry of Absorption by the Government. Mr. Eshkol stated that position in a letter to Aryeh L. Pincus, chairman of the Jewish Agency. The letter was intended to clarify the future position of the Jewish Agency which many believe is in jeopardy as a result of the Cabinet's decision a week ago to set up an Absorption Ministry. Delegates to the 27th World Zionist Congress, especially those involved in fund-raising for Israel abroad, had expressed fear that the new ministry was intended to usurp the Jewish Agency's functions in the sphere of immigrant absorption and that this would have repercussions on fund-raising overseas. Some of those delegates told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that Mr. Eshkol's letter had relieved their anxiety.

The text of the letter to Mr. Pincus was approved by the Cabinet yesterday. It said: "From the various meetings which we have held together it is clear that there have arisen some misunderstandings as a result of the decision of the Government as announced June 9 (to establish an Absorption Ministry). In order to remove any doubt, I wish to state that the Government did not intend by that decision to take over responsibility relating to needy immigrants and refugees which has always been primarily the responsibility of world Jewry. In establishing the Ministry of Absorption, its functions and responsibilities will have to be determined by a joint committee of the Government and Jewish Agency which has been appointed and will report shortly.

(Herut Party leader Menachem Beigin, who is on a United States tour on behalf of Israel Bonds, will remain in the U.S. until June 25, having received Premier Eshkol's assurance that no Cabinet vote will be taken on the absorption ministry until he returns to Israel. JTA incorrectly reported yesterday that Mr. Beigin is in the U.S. on behalf of the United Jewish Appeal. Mr. Eshkol notified the Herut leader of the delay after receiving an appeal from the Bond organization to make it possible for Mr. Beigin not to cut short his visit.)

A movement gained ground at the Zionist Congress today for the establishment of non-political independent aliyah (immigration) organizations in Western countries. Membership would be contingent on a declared intention to settle in Israel as soon as possible. Adherents of the idea were convinced that it would advance what is the major Zionist goal — aliyah from the West on a large scale. There are already a number of such spontaneous aliyah groups in several Western countries. They have no party connections and, in some cases, local Zionist offices are not even aware of their existence. Spokesmen for Western aliyah movements met with newsmen yesterday. They are Simon Olswang of England, Pessah Shindler of the United States, Charles Meyer of France and Ivor Triefenbrun, of Glasgow, Scotland. They said their various groups had one aim only — to organize the settlement in Israel of all individual Jews so disposed. They proposed that the indigenous aliyah movements act as independent bodies within the Zionist Organization framework but with no political attachments. They should be given the fullest cooperation of the WZO through its various national organizations and the Jewish Agency, the Congress delegates said. The movements would be represented on national Zionist bodies and in the WZO and would be activated by the local groups or "chugim." They stressed that what potential olim (immigrants) wanted was shlichim (emissaries) from Israel who were selected for their ability, not on the basis of party membership. Mr. Meyer, a French lawyer who heads a group of religious academicians in France who want to settle in Israel, said that modern methods must be introduced into the immigration and absorption processes and suggested the use of computers to select jobs for the newcomers.

Find Desire For Fuller Jewish Life Principal Aliyah Factor

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA)--The desire to lead a fuller Jewish life is replacing Zionism as the principal reason for settlement in Israel by Jews from the United States and Canada, according to a study by the Israel Institute for Applied Social Research submitted to the 27th World Zionist Congress. The study found that such personal factors as anti-Semitism and opposition to American national policies were minor reasons for aliyah (immigration). A total of 1,672 American newcomers, who came to Israel before March, 1966 and who were more than 18 years old on arrival, were interviewed in the study. They constituted 83 percent of the newcomers, who ranged in age to 65.

Debate Amendment Empowering Actions Committee To Name WZO President

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA)--An amendment to the World Zionist Organization's constitution that would empower the actions committee to elect the president of the WZO was hotly debated in the Congress' steering committee today. The committee agreed by a 17-to-7 vote that there should be an amendment, but the drafting of it was postponed until tomorrow. The actions committee, governing body of the WZO between congresses, will apparently be saddled with the task of selecting the next president in view of incumbent Dr. Nahum Goldmann's declaration yesterday that he did not want another term in the office. Dr. Goldmann appeared to mean what he said and a movement to draft him lost most of its steam. The matter of his succession became a constitutional issue because the WZO constitution stipulates that the Congress elect the president. But it makes no provision for circumstances in which there is no candidate.

Ascher Kirschblum of the Union of General Zionists, a faction headed by Dr. Emanuel Neumann of New York, demanded that elections be held now because, in his opinion, there was a candidate in the person

of Dr. Neumann, Labor Zionists and other factions insisted however that the election be deferred to the actions committee. Dr. Neumann stated prior to the Congress' opening last week that he had no aspirations for the presidency.

The steering committee today adopted a resolution to admit up to five non-political Zionist personalities to the WZO Executive. The move opened the way to representation of the Sephardic movement and other factions that have no party framework. A majority of at least two-thirds will be required for their admission, however.

Israel Opens West Bank To Jordanians, Other Arabs, For Summer Vacation Visits

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA)--Israel has cautiously embarked on an experiment that will permit Jordanians and visitors from other Arab countries to spend their summer vacations with relatives or friends on the West Bank. The first such visitors, Palestinian students enrolled at Arab universities, crossed the Allenby Bridge near Jericho yesterday. According to Col. Shlomo Gazit, director of the military government department of the Israeli General Staff, "the experiment is for one month only" and "after we see how it works we will consider the next batch" of applicants. An initial total of 3,000 applications out of some 10,000 have been approved for the first month. The applications are made by West Bank residents.

Col. Gazit said that the visitors would be permitted to visit Jerusalem in accordance with the Government policy of guaranteeing free access to the Holy Places and that they might apply for permission to travel throughout Israel. He said that one of the aims of the experiment was to let the vacationers see for themselves that conditions on the West Bank are far better than reported in the Arab press. Permission will not be granted the visitors to go to the Gaza Strip. Also barred are applicants for visitors from Egypt, Syria and Algeria, the countries that have taken the most militant stands against Israel. Col. Gazit said that about 40 percent of the applications received to date are on behalf of people living in Jordan, 20 percent on behalf of Arabs from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and the rest for Arabs in 20 other countries. He said that the applicants would be responsible for the behavior of their guests and that if there were any mass demonstrations the program would be stopped.

Beisan, Jordan Valley Settlements Shelled; Settlers Spend Night In Bomb Shelters

TEL AVIV, June 17 (JTA)--Four Israeli settlements in the Beisan and Jordan Valleys were shelled last night by El Fatah units armed with 120-millimeter mortars who positioned themselves on the East Bank of the Jordan River, well behind the cease-fire demarcation lines and out of range of Israeli small arms fire, a military spokesman reported today. There were no Israeli casualties but settlers were forced to spend the night in bomb shelters. They emerged early this morning and returned to their normal chores.

According to the spokesman, the shelling started at midnight when Yardenia came under mortar and small arms fire, which was returned by Israeli units. A short time later, two shells exploded near Bet Yosef and Israeli positions near Geshur were attacked with machinegun fire. Positions near Ashdot Yaacov were also hit by what the military spokesman described as "flat trajectory" fire which could be either artillery or small arms. Israeli units returned the fire and silenced the Jordanian positions.

(Iraq and Kuwait have pledged full support of Arab terrorist activities against Israel and called for "Islamic and friendly nations" to redeem "usurped rights" in Palestine. Agreement was reached during a meeting in Baghdad.)

Foreign Ministry Denies Jarring Expecting Reply On Peace Overtures By Jordan

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA)--Foreign Ministry sources tonight disclaimed all knowledge of a reply that foreign newspapers said was expected from Israel by the United Nations peace envoy, Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, in connection with alleged peace overtures from Jordan. According to the reports, Jordan asked for Israeli peace terms through Dr. Jarring. A Foreign Ministry spokesman said such overtures had been made by Jordan many times and have always been rejected because Israel insists that anything of a substantive nature be thrashed out in direct talks between the two parties, not through an intermediary.

Cabinet Asks Bank Of Israel For \$37 Million Loan For Aircraft, Other Purchases

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA)--The Cabinet has asked the Bank of Israel for a loan of \$37 million for the purchase of civilian aircraft and other civilian outlays. A Treasury spokesman explained that the loan request stemmed from the fact that under a new tightening of United States credits, the Export-Import Bank no longer loans as large a proportion as before for aircraft purchases in the United States.

Israel's national airline, El Al, plans to buy two more Boeing 707 jet airliners and one of the giant Boeing 747 passenger planes for which a down payment of \$18 million is required. Another \$10 million is needed for construction of the oil pipeline now being built from Eilat to Ashkelon and \$6 million to complete a new dam at the Dead Sea Potash Works. The other \$3 million is needed for equipment for a petro-chemical complex being erected in the Arad area.

The Government decided to ask the bank for the loans rather than commercial banks because of existing high interest rates. The transaction is subject to approval by Parliament.

Israelis Vote U.S. Their Favorite Foreign Nation; Holland Second, France Third

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA)--Israelis voted the United States their favorite foreign nation, a public opinion poll revealed. Holland came in second. France was third although three out of four persons felt the Gaullist Government was unfair in its treatment of Israel.

Israel And Lebanon Circulate Letters In Security Council On Border Fray

UNITED STATES, June 17 (JTA)--Israel has submitted a letter to the Security Council alleging a breach of the cease-fire by Lebanon on Friday. In the letter to this month's president, Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg of the United States, Israel said that the Lebanese sent mortar fire against the village of Manara in the Upper Galilee and that Israel returned the fire, in self-defense, silencing the Lebanese positions. The letter cited a June 1 incident in which, Israel alleged, a similar attack had been carried out against the village of Malkiye in the Upper Galilee. Israel did not ask for a Council meeting but only that the letter be circulated among the 15 members.

Lebanon earlier sent a letter to the Council alleging that Israeli troops penetrated its territory Friday and attacked the village of Me's Eljabal with 30 mortar shells, destroying 10 houses and injuring four persons. "This wanton and unprovoked attack by Israel was not preceded by any firing from Lebanese territory across the Lebanese borders as alleged by Israeli broadcasts; nor was it preceded by any infiltration across those borders," Lebanon said.

Israel Accedes To UN Protocol On Refugees, Will Participate In Outer Space Parley

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., June 17 (JTA)--Israel has become the 17th nation to accede to the protocol on the status of refugees. The protocol will extend refugee status under the 1951 convention on refugees to persons who became refugees as a result of events after Jan. 1 of that year. The protocol has been in force since Oct. 4, 1967. The states that are parties to the protocol agreed to cooperate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and to report to the UN on the condition of refugees, implementation of the protocol, and laws and regulations relating to refugees.

Israel is also one of 54 countries that have accepted invitations so far to participate in a UN conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, to be held in Vienna from Aug. 14 to 27.

Anti-Semitic Articles In Acapulco Newspaper Blame Jews For Deaths Of Historic Figures

MEXICO CITY, June 17 (JTA)--A newspaper in the popular resort city of Acapulco has published a series of bitterly anti-Semitic articles in which Hitler was referred to as "the century's greatest man." The articles, which alleged Jewish responsibility for the deaths of historic personalities from Christ to Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy, were denounced by Sergio Nudelstejer, director of the American Jewish Committee's Mexico-Central American office here. He said that publication of the articles in the newspaper "Tropical" represented dangerous anti-Semitic provocation, particularly as Acapulco is visited by thousands of tourists every year and is a favorite vacation spot of Americans.

The articles appeared under the name of Angel Segura Leyva who, according to Mr. Nudelstejer, plans to publish them in book form.

Becker Denies Arab Rights Violated In Territories; Invites ILO Delegates' Inspection

GENEVA, June 17 (JTA)--Delegates to the International Labor Organization (ILO) conference here, who charged Israel with violating the human rights of Arabs in the occupied territories, were told today that those territories are open to inspection by visitors and that any fair-minded person could see for himself that the charges were pure fabrication. The speaker, Aharon Becker, secretary-general of Histadrut, Israel's labor federation, added that the federation stood ready "in the spirit of labor solidarity to offer any assistance and encouragement which the ILO may request" in connection with an inspection of the territories.

Mr. Becker addressed his remarks to the Arab delegates and, specifically to the delegate from Poland who he accused of repeating "trumped-up charges" against Israel "wholly in line with the hate propaganda in Poland where a handful of Jews who remained after the Nazi massacre is now being vilified, condemned and hounded from their jobs." Mr. Becker also spoke of the plight of Jews in the Arab countries. He said that while many speakers dwelt eloquently on the subject of Arab refugees, none of them had a word to say about Israel's appeals to the Arabs for peace, which so far, have fallen on "deaf ears." He reminded the gathering that the ILO is not a political platform but a forum for the discussion of human problems. "Surely peace must be a basic tenet for the very existence of the ILO," he said.

Rumania's Federation Will Honor Chief Rabbi, Delegations From Abroad Invited

BUCHAREST, June 17 (JTA)--The Federation of Jewish Communities here will hold festivities from June 28 to July 1 in honor of the 20th anniversary of the election of Dr. Moses Rosen as Rumania's Chief Rabbi.

Among the guests will be Israel's Sephardic Chief Rabbi Itzhak Nissim, the chief rabbis of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, a delegation of American Jewish religious leaders, including representatives of the Joint Distribution Committee, and delegations from Argentina and Canada.

(In Jerusalem, the Israel Foreign Ministry has "advised" several Cabinet ministers not to visit Rumania at this time in order to avoid causing that nation difficulties with the Soviet bloc, an informed source told JTA today. Invitations have been received from the Bucharest Jewish community by Dr. Zerach Wahrhaftig, Minister of Religious Affairs; Dr. Josef Burg, Minister of Social Welfare; and Moshe Kol, Minister of Tourism and Development. The Foreign Ministry has not, however, objected to the planned journey to Rumania of Zeev Sharef, Minister of Commerce and Industry, who is scheduled to go there Sunday, because his mission is connected with trade and technical agreements between the two countries. It has also not objected to the projected visit of Rabbi Nissim, whose visit is considered to be of a less official nature.)

Los Angeles Arabs Reported Nervous, Sympathetic With Sirhan's Anti-Zionism

WASHINGTON, June 17 (JTA)--The Arab community on the West Coast is nervous over possible reprisals in the aftermath of the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy and has "gone into hiding" ever since it was learned that the accused gunman is an Arab, Sirhan Sirhan, the Washington Post reported from Los Angeles today. According to Post reporter George Larduer, there is, at the same time among Los Angeles' 25,000 Arab-Americans, a "widespread rationalization, even sympathy, for the murder for which Sirhan stands indicted. His anti-Zionism is widely shared," Larduer wrote and "time and again it is argued that the real villain is 'international Zionism' and secondarily, Kennedy's support of jet fighters for Israel." Mr. Larduer said that "not a few of the Arab-American organizations show the same sort of persecution complex so widely attributed to Sirhan. It also makes them candidates for the overtures of the American far right and white racists."

The Post report named four Arab-American organizations that had been active before the assassination. They are the United American Arab Congress, formed after Israel's victory in the June, 1967, Six-Day War "to help raise funds for Arab refugees and to combat 'support of Zionism by the American press'; the American Arab Citizens Council; the Americans (of Lebanese-Syrian ancestry) for America; and the Arabic Society of Americanists. The United American Arab Congress has likened Israel to "Nazi Germany" and "Fascist Japan" in its propaganda, Mr. Larduer reported. "Sirhan does not appear to have been a member of any of the Arabic organizations in the city," he said, but "according to one report, Sirhan and several of his brothers attended meetings of the so-called 'American Arabs' which was allegedly a youth auxiliary of the UAAC."

According to the Post report, the Arab community in Los Angeles has been the target of a few minor incidents by cranks since the assassination. But Sirhan's family is under tight security guard. Mr. Larduer said it was an open question how successful the Arab organizations have been in resisting overtures from the extreme right. "One UAAC newsletter last summer warned against 'white racist groups...coming out in support of the Arabs' and cautioned its members against aligning themselves with 'hatemongers,'" Larduer said.

The Larduer report on the plight of West Coast Arab-Americans followed by two days an anti-Israel article by the Washington Post's senior White House correspondent Chalmers M. Roberts, who charged that Israelis were trying "to take political advantage of the fact that a Jordanian-born man is accused of killing Senator Kennedy." Mr. Roberts, who is close to both President Johnson and Secretary of State Dean Rusk, claimed in his story that "Israelis and their more passionate American supporters are trying to nail down a policy of firm American support" for Israel in an election year. He also chastized "cynical American politicians (who) long have noted that there are no Arab votes of consequence in this nation whereas the much sought after Jewish vote and financial support is often of critical importance in such cities as New York and Los Angeles." Observers here saw the Roberts article as an attempt to generate support for Administration policy which is currently directed toward improving American relations with the Arab states. Administration sources have expressed concern lest Sen. Kennedy's assassination arouse anti-Arab feelings in the United States and embarrass these attempts.

Reform Rabbinical President Hits Jewish Secularism, Decries New State of Rabbi

BOSTON, June 17 (JTA)--The president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Reform rabbinic association, today called for action to combat the "dangers to the American Jewish religious community stemming from the secular-oriented synagogue in a God-ignoring society." Rabbi Levi A. Olan, of Dallas, in his address before the 79th annual meeting of the CCAR, also urged a redefining of the role of the rabbi "who is heir to a tradition of an affirmative God-faith" but "now confronts a congregation whose members are successful and affluent without the help of God" and who "is troubled by the increasing irrelevancy of his high calling to the busy schedule in which he is imprisoned."

Rabbi Olan described "our age as the most secular since the days of Constantine" in which one-third of the world has dedicated itself to Communism while others have become convinced by technological and scientific advances that they "can do almost everything without God." He said that the Jewish future "is threatened by the colossal ignorance of Judaism of the modern Jew more than by any other force without or within the community," and that while it is still essential to emphasize community fundraising to ensure Jewish physical survival, "we must find new funds for our work in which we have neglected to a large extent the religious needs of our congregations."

Rabbi Olan said that the rabbi's traditional scholarly function has been subordinated in the congregation to that of an officiant, an administrator and a public relations expert since "it is the secularized layman who today defines the office of rabbi." The result, he stated, is a spiritual leader "left with a vacuum which is then filled with disquiet, often frustration and, at worst, despair."

The rabbinical leader restated the CCAR's position in opposition to the war in Vietnam. "We are witness to a callous enjoyment of prosperity, a bacchanalian revelry of luxurious living and sumptuous partying while children are burned with napalm, boys are killed and wounded in the hundreds of thousands, homes are reduced to dust and millions are made homeless."

Funeral Services Held For Joseph Lichtenbaum, Poet, Author And Translator

TEL AVIV, June 17 (JTA)--Funeral services were held here Sunday for Joseph Lichtenbaum, poet, author and translator, who died here Saturday at the age of 73. A native of Poland, Mr. Lichtenbaum settled here in 1920. He was awarded the Brenner Prize in 1960 for a book of poems and received the Tchernikhovsky Prize in 1953 for his translation into Hebrew of the Polish classic, Pan Tadeusz, by A. Mickiewicz. It was the censorship of Pan Tadeusz by Polish authorities that precipitated the student demonstrations in Warsaw that later developed into an official anti-Semitic campaign.