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Israel Denies Receiving Proposals On Reopening Of Canal If Troops Withdraw

JERUSALEM, July 9 (JTA)--Government officials said here today that Israel had received no proposals for reopening the Suez Canal contingent upon the withdrawal of Israeli troops from its east bank, either from Dr. Gunnar Jarring, the United Nations peace envoy, or from any other sources. The officials were commenting on a dispatch from Cairo in the New York Times today which said that Egypt was prepared to reopen the Canal and permit Israeli cargoes to pass through the waterway if Israeli troops pulled back "a few dozen kilometers" from the Canal's east bank. The Times' correspondent, Eric Pace, attributed the report to "diplomatic sources" in Egypt. The Times also quoted an "Israeli official" as saying that Israel's withdrawal from the canal bank could be brought about only as part of a peace treaty with Egypt.

(Mr. Pace wrote that, according to his informants, the Egyptian offer was "an aspect of the revived Egyptian policy concerning possible elements of a settlement in the Middle East" which was worked out in the last several weeks and communicated privately to Dr. Jarring, to Israel and several other nations.)

Officials here said that as far as Israel had been informed about the Egyptian attitude on the matter, Egypt had been posing conditions for reopening the canal which had nothing to do with the canal itself. These conditions, according to the Israeli officials, had included a "solution of the refugee problem" and the evacuation of the territories occupied by Israel in the June, 1967 Middle East war. Even then, they said, Egypt made only vague promises that the canal might be reopened to Israeli goods but not to ships under the Israel flag. Such a "reopening," in the Israeli view, would be illegal and discriminatory since ships of all other nations are invited to use the canal without any conditions.

The officials here referred to Foreign Minister Abba Eban's stand on the Suez issue, which is that Israel is willing to cooperate in reopening the canal to all flags, including its own, without prior conditions and that the questions of refugees and boundaries can be solved only in the context of peace negotiations.

(The London Telegraph reported from Cairo today that the Suez Canal could be reopened in four months despite heavy damage to its navigational installations. The Telegraph believed that President Nasser's current talks in Moscow could result in a new Egyptian initiative on the canal problem. The paper also referred to unconfirmed reports that a large Soviet dredger has entered the Mediterranean and is headed for Port Said, the Mediterranean entrance to the canal.)

(Mr. Pace suggested in his New York Times' report that Egyptian concessions on the canal issue could be useful in persuading parts of the world that the failure so far of Dr. Jarring's peace mission was the result of Israeli rather than Arab intransigence.)

London Is Scene Of Flurry Of Meetings On Middle East

LONDON, July 9 (JTA)--Ambassador Gideon Rafael, director-general of Israel's Foreign Ministry, conferred for two and a half hours today with United Nations peace envoy Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring. Although their meeting was described as "routine" by Israeli Embassy officials here and by circles close to Dr. Jarring, it was believed to have been significant in view of Dr. Jarring's reportedly scheduled meetings later this week with Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin and UN Secretary-General U Thant. The UN Ambassador has already conferred here with Jordanian Foreign Minister Abdul Moneim Rifai and was scheduled to meet with British Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart today.

Dr. Jarring, it was believed, will meet with Mr. Kosygin in Stockholm where the Soviet leader was due on a state visit Thursday. He was expected to confer with Mr. Thant in Geneva where the latter has just opened a general conference of the UN Economic and Social Council. It was also reported here today that Dr. Jarring was anxious to meet with President Johnson when he returns to New York. Dr. Jarring conferred for three hours yesterday with the Jordanian Foreign Minister and a Jordanian spokesman used the phrase "very useful" to describe their talks. He added that they had covered every aspect "within the scope of the Security Council's resolution" of Nov. 22, 1967.

The London Daily Telegraph's diplomatic correspondent commented today that despite the flurry of meetings and a few apparently optimistic signs, the impression was that no real progress had been made. The writer said that the Jarring-Rifai talks were "very much in the shadow" of President Nasser's discussions with Soviet leaders in Moscow since Jordan's freedom of action was severely limited by what Egypt was prepared to do.

A Conservative member of Parliament, Neil Martin, proposed in the House of Commons yesterday that an international force, "neither Israeli nor Egyptian," undertake to clear the southern end of the Suez Canal under UN supervision so that 15 merchant ships stranded in the waterway since June, 1967 can be freed. The suggestion was presented in the form of a question to Mr. Stewart.

Mr. Martin wanted to know what steps the Government was taking to clear the southern end of the canal in view of Israel's objections to unblocking the northern end. Mr. Stewart replied that he was in touch with all of the governments and some of the private interests concerned, but that it would not be correct for him to make any statement on how the matter was being dealt with. The Foreign Secretary was addressed further on the subject of the canal by Laborite Sir Barnett Janner, who asked, "Is it not

a fact that Israel, Egypt and the UN had agreed to let the ships out through the southern passage but the only people at present insisting on the northern exit are the Egyptians who refuse to abide by the Security Council's decision?" Mr. Stewart replied that it made no sense to issue pronouncements on the exact responsibility of any party at this time.

Visitor To Egypt Reports That Jews There Are Held Under 'Appalling Conditions'

JERUSALEM, July 9 (JTA)--Egyptian authorities are holding Jews as hostages under "appalling conditions" until Israel withdraws from the territories it occupied in the June, 1967 Arab-Israeli war, it was learned here yesterday. The information came from a European visitor who was in Egypt and inquired about the Jewish prisoners at camp called Thaura. The informant said he elicited it from Egyptian Government sources. About 250 Jews are held in the camp's "political wing" which is controlled by security police; they range in age from 18 to 60, the informant said, and have been imprisoned for over a year without trial or charges brought against them.

This report and others of a similar vein have been brought here by travellers who visited Egypt, despite Egyptian attempts to hide the facts, especially from foreigners. Relatives of the prisoners were permitted to visit them once a month or once in six weeks and every time they returned for a prison visit they were shocked by the conditions they saw, according to the reports. Several prisoners have committed suicide and others have made repeated attempts to do so. A number have become mentally unbalanced and are confined to a "mental wing" of the camp, the travellers said.

The reports of inhuman conditions in camps where Jews are confined have been given apparent added credence by the adamant refusal of Egyptian and Syrian authorities to let International Red Cross missions inspect the prisons. Both countries have refused to allow a United Nations representative to inquire into the condition of the Jewish communities. Their refusal has held up Secretary-General U Thant's appointment of a special emissary to investigate the condition of civilians in the Middle East. Israel has agreed to allow the UN inspector to visit the occupied territories on condition that the Arab countries facilitate a like inspection of the Jewish communities within their borders.

Israel Presses For UN Investigation Of Treatment Of Jews In Arab Lands

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., July 9 (JTA)--Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, Yosef Tekoah, yesterday conferred with Dr. Ralph Bunche, UN Undersecretary for Special Political Affairs, and handed him a note renewing Israel's request that a new UN envoy that will study conditions of civilian populations in the occupied territories should also look into the condition of Jews in Iraq, Syria and Egypt. Mr. Tekoah met with Dr. Bunche, as Secretary-General U Thant's representative, since Mr. Thant is currently on a tour of European capitals.

Mr. Tekoah told Dr. Bunche, an Israeli source said, that the refusal of the three states to permit an investigation of the status of Jews there is a cause of grave concern for their welfare. The human rights of Jews affected by the Six-Day War deserve the same consideration as other such affected groups, Mr. Tekoah said, and suggested that the UN should not permit itself to be a party to discrimination by allowing its representative to be blocked from probing the status of Jews.

Last year, Mr. Thant sent Nils Goran-Gussing, of Sweden, to look into Arab complaints of Israeli oppression in the occupied zones. Mr. Gussing reported that life there was normal and that the Arab population of East Jerusalem was mingling freely with the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem. However, the Egyptian and Syrian Governments refused to permit him to make a first-hand investigation of the situation of Jews in those countries. There is no Jewish community in Jordan. Iraqi Jews are reportedly suffering from virulent discrimination.

Military Spokesman Says Port Suez Hit Hard During Exchange Of Fire With Egypt

TEL AVIV, July 9 (JTA)--A military spokesman said today that the Egyptian town of Port Suez, on the west bank of the Suez Canal, was hard hit by Israeli return fire during an artillery duel precipitated by Egyptian forces yesterday. The spokesman said that huge fires and smoke were seen rising from the town, although the adjacent oil refineries were not hit. An Egyptian spokesman in Cairo said today that the Arbayin quarter of Port Suez was hit by Israeli shelling and claimed that 39 civilians were killed. The Egyptians also claimed that Israeli forces suffered heavy casualties and damage.

The Suez clash, the first in recent weeks, began with a single sniper's bullet which mortally wounded an Israeli soldier near Port Tewfik yesterday morning. Late in the afternoon, Egyptian artillery began shelling Israeli positions on the east bank of the canal, starting an artillery clash that lasted six hours. An Israeli military spokesman said that one Israeli soldier was slightly wounded. He said that the Egyptians waited until late afternoon to begin their artillery barrage so that the Israelis would be blinded by the setting sun.

The spokesman also said that two anti-vehicle mines were discovered by border police early today on a track east of Neve Urr in the Beisan Valley. He said that while the mines were being dismantled, Jordanian units opened fire on an Israel patrol. Israeli forces returned the fire. There were no Israeli casualties.

Knesset Approves Appointment Of Joseph Almogi As Labor Minister

JERUSALEM, July 9 (JTA)--The Knesset (Parliament) yesterday approved the appointment of Joseph Almogi as the new Minister of Labor and Mr. Almogi was duly sworn in. He succeeds Gen. Yigal Allon, who was elevated to the rank of Deputy Prime Minister and will be in charge of the new Ministry of Absorption.

Four Leaders In Communist Countries Assert Jewish Life Can Thrive There

GENEVA, July 9 (JTA)--Four Jewish community leaders from Communist countries reported here yesterday that Jewish life and Judaism can exist and even thrive in those lands despite their political orientation and totally secular outlook. They indicated that strenuous efforts are being made, in some cases with Government support, to revive Judaism among the younger generation in communities that were almost destroyed by the Nazi holocaust.

The speakers addressed the governing council of the World Jewish Congress which convened yesterday for meetings that will run through July 11. One of them, Frantisek Fuchs, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Bohemia and Moravia, told the gathering that religions can exist in Czechoslovakia if they want to. "The Government supports us, to be sure," he said. "But we are a sadly depleted community. Out of 15,000 children in Theresienstadt (the wartime Nazi concentration camp) only 100 came back. But now we have a new generation of which we are very proud. We teach them the Jewish faith and Jewish ethics. Our children are not really religious but they feel their Jewishness very deeply and this goes for children of mixed marriages as well," Mr. Fuchs said.

Dr. Benjamin Eichler, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Slovakia, agreed that "Jews can exist as Jews in our country" although there are no denominational schools. "But we give our children a Jewish education through our own resources and we have spoken out against assimilation." Dr. Eichler said that 20 young boys and girls of the Jewish community are presently working on kibbutzim in Israel for the summer.

Dr. Ladoslav Kadelburg, president of the Jewish Communities of Yugoslavia, declared that "we are not the last of our generation of Yugoslav Jews. There will be continuity and I'm glad to say that the attitude of our Government to Middle Eastern politics has not affected the position of Yugoslav Jews in any way." Dr. Moses Rosen, Chief Rabbi of Rumania, asserted that "love of Zion and authentic and devoted citizenship of Rumania are not mutually exclusive and this is generally acknowledged not only by ourselves but by our Government and our people. We Jews of Rumania have no fear at all of being accused of dual loyalties." Rumania is the only Communist bloc country that did not break diplomatic relations with Israel following the June, 1967 Arab-Israel war and the two countries maintain strong trade relations.

Dr. Max Nussbaum, chairman of the American section of the WJCongress told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency later that he was "very impressed with the unique approach of the Rumanian Government to religious groups, including of course, Rumanian Jews." Dr. Nussbaum was a member of the WJCongress delegation that attended celebrations in Bucharest recently to mark the 20th anniversary of Rabbi Rosen's ministry. The governing council unanimously adopted a resolution asserting that "a meaningful Jewish life can exist without regard to differing political, social and economic systems," as well as resolutions on a wide range of international as well as Jewish issues. It welcomed direct contact between the principal parties in the Vietnam war; urged an early ceasefire in Biafra, the break-away province of Nigeria; and called on the United States to ratify the United Nations convention for the elimination of racial discrimination. The council also voted a resolution calling on the Polish Government to abandon its anti-Semitic policies. One of the speakers, Prof. Aryeh Tartakower, said that political anti-Semitism cannot be separated from racial anti-Semitism. He contended that those who hated Israel also hated the Jews.

Polish Leader Says 'Fight Against Zionism' Should Be Ended Right Away

LONDON, July 9 (JTA)--A Polish Communist Party leader said today that the "fight against Zionism" was being "artificially maintained" by some of the party organizations and should be ended "as fast as possible," it was reported here today in dispatches from Warsaw. The remark was attributed to Zenon Kliszko, the party's ideologist, who spoke at the opening session of a meeting of the Polish Communist Party's Central Committee. According to the reports, Mr. Kliszko charged that "some organizations, especially officials and clerks, maintain an atmosphere of anti-Zionism" that was "false and exaggerated." He also contended that "the Jews and the Zionists are being made identical" by those who are continuing the campaign.

Mr. Kliszko is a close associate of Communist Party chief Wladislaw Gomulka. Observers saw in his remarks an indictment of the methods used by Minister of Interior Maj. Gen. Mieczyslaw Moczar, Mr. Gomulka's chief rival, who is believed to have headed Poland's four-month-old "anti-Zionist" campaign, the Warsaw reports said. But in addition to being part of the struggle for power within Poland's Communist hierarchy, Mr. Kliszko's call for termination of the anti-Zionist campaign was seen as an indication of the Warsaw regime's growing sensitivity to charges from abroad that the campaign was thinly disguised anti-Semitism. Its first manifestations occurred during the outbreak of student unrest in Warsaw and other cities last March. Party and Government sources immediately attributed the outbreaks to "Zionist" elements. The controlled press quickly picked up the theme. Scores of Jews have since been arrested and hundreds were expelled from high posts in the Government and Communist Party. Many more lost their jobs, particularly in the communications and entertainment industries.

The officially inspired campaign aroused world-wide fear for the welfare and safety of Poland's surviving Jewish population, variously estimated at between 18,000 and 30,000. A large proportion of Poland's Jews are aged and in need of assistance.

According to the Warsaw dispatches, Mr. Kliszko charged that "an exceptionally harsh tariff (fine) is applied for petty transgressions of persons of Jewish origin...transgressions of a type which are sometimes not seen in others." He said that "it is alien to our party to make a difference...according to criteria of nation or origin." He affirmed the party's opposition to Zionism but said Zionism's

"social basis" in Poland is "narrow." The official Polish press agency, PAP, carried a version of the Kliszko speech which quoted him as saying that the problem of Zionism has been "basically explained and one can and has to take it off the agenda of party propaganda."

Scientists At Prague University Defend Goldstuecker, Assail Anti-Semitism

LONDON, July 9 (JTA)--The scientific council of Prague's Charles University has come to the defense of the university's vice rector, Dr. Eduard Goldstuecker, and has assailed anti-Semitism as barbarian and in conflict with the civilized traditions of the Czechoslovak state, it was reported here.

In a declaration, seen as a response to virulently anti-Semitic mail threatening the life of Dr. Goldstuecker, who is also chairman of the Czech Writers Union and an important figure in the nation's liberalization movement, the council was critical of efforts to incite what it saw as distrust of intellectuals.

On June 23, Rude Pravo, the Communist Party newspaper, published one of the anonymous letters directed to Dr. Goldstuecker calling him a "disgusting Jew" and warning him that "your time will come, your days are reckoned." It also called him a "Zionist hyena." Dr. Goldstuecker published an article in the same issue in which he urged the party to cleanse itself of "people who have tried to smuggle Nazi demagoguery into it." Dr. Goldstuecker was quoted at the time as saying that his life was threatened and that he put himself under the protection of his fellow citizens. He was a victim of Stalinist persecution in the 1950s.

Former Nazis Growing Old And Convictions Are Becoming Harder To Obtain

BONN, July 9 (JTA)--The immutable laws of nature are having an effect on efforts to bring Nazi war criminals to justice. The criminals and those who prosecute them or are summoned to give evidence in court are growing old and as a result convictions are increasingly difficult to obtain. The age factor may also settle the matter of the statute of limitations on Nazis accused of murder which is to go into effect on Dec. 31, 1969. Indications are that it will not be postponed.

The ravages of time on Nazi hunters and hunted alike was brought home last week by the death in Frankfurt of Fritz Bauer at the age of 64. Mr. Bauer, a Jew and a former Stuttgart judge, escaped twice from the Nazis and devoted his life after World War II to bringing Nazis to justice. As chief prosecutor for the State of Hesse, he masterminded the 1964-65 Auschwitz death camp trials in which one of the convicted men was freed because of his advanced age and illness. Mr. Bauer left half of his estate for youth projects in Israel and Poland.

Two days before Mr. Bauer's death the trial of 66-year-old Fritz Beckerle, the wartime Nazi minister in Bulgaria, was suspended because of the defendant's illness. Mr. Beckerle is charged with participation in the mass deportation and murder of Bulgarian Jews. His trial may not be resumed because of his age and physical condition.

But in Cologne today, a jury passed prison sentences on two former Nazis convicted of the murder of at least 2,000 Jewish men, women and children in Mitau, Lithuania in July, 1941. Alfred Becu, 66, received three years at hard labor. Fifty-four year-old Wilhelm Abelt, a police officer, got 18 months. Nevertheless, German judges are finding it increasingly difficult to convict because witnesses are aging, sometimes unable to travel and often have faulty memories. Former Justice Minister Ewald Bucher said recently that the time was coming when judges could only acquit men who, though clearly guilty, had outlived crucial evidence.

Nixon Claims He Wants To Help Allegedly Discriminatory Club Reform From 'Inside'

NEW YORK, July 9 (JTA)--Former Vice President Richard M. Nixon's membership in a New Jersey golf club that allegedly excludes Jews and Negroes was spotlighted here today when Senator Clifford Case, New Jersey Republican, criticized clubs with restrictive membership policies although he declined to rebuke Mr. Nixon directly.

According to the New York Post, Mr. Nixon, who is seeking the Republican Presidential nomination, defended his membership in the Baltusrol Golf Club of Springfield, N.J. and said he would not resign because, "I believe in working for change from the inside." Sen. Case had noted his own and the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy's resignations from the Metropolitan Club of Washington, D.C. because of the club's racially restrictive membership policies.

According to the Post, the Baltusrol Club's president, Robert Finney, said the club elected its members "in the normal way" but refused to discuss the absence of Jewish or Negro members. Carl Jehlen, the club's manager, said "to my knowledge there are no Negro or Jewish members," the Post reported. He said the club's by-laws did not exclude Jews or Negroes but that applicants for membership must be sponsored by active members. Mr. Nixon was reported to have joined the club two years ago.

Mrs. Gertrude Kaphan, Vice President Of American ORT Federation, Dead At 73

NEW YORK, July 9 (JTA)--Mrs. Gertrude Kaphan, vice president of the American ORT Federation died in St. Petersburg, Fla., Sunday at the age of 73, it was reported here today. Mrs. Kaphan was a past president of the Women's American ORT. She had served that agency in the United States and abroad for more than 25 years.