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Israel Cabinet Confers, Takes No Official Stand On Invasion Of Czechoslovakia

JERUSALEM, Aug. 21 (JTA)--Israelis were stunned today by the sudden invasion of Czechoslovakia by troops of the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations. So far no official stand by the Government has been announced, but Prime Minister Eshkol hurriedly returned to the capital from his seaside vacation for a briefing on the situation by Foreign Minister Abba Eban. Consultations on the new crisis in Central Europe went on all day and will continue tonight with a number of Cabinet ministers participating. A Foreign Ministry spokesman told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that so far it had received no requests for visa extensions or political asylum from any of the Czech groups and individuals presently visiting Israel or studying here.

Several hundred Israeli students demonstrated this evening before the Rumanian legation, the only Eastern bloc country that maintains diplomatic relations with Israel. The protest was not against Rumania but, according to student spokesmen, a demonstration of solidarity against the Russian invasion. The students carried signs demanding "hands off Czechoslovakia" and "let the Czechs determine their own brand of Socialism." The more moderate of Israel's two Communist factions today denounced the Soviet takeover as an "imperialistic" move and a "cruel intervention in the affairs of a fellow Socialist state." They urged Communist parties all over the world to express their indignation over the Russian move. Mapam, Israel's left-wing labor party, expressed "shock" and "horror" over the invasion and also called it "imperialistic."

The only member of the Government to comment publicly was Israel Galili, Minister of Information, who told a meeting of information service employes that the invasion of Czechoslovakia could have repercussions in the Middle East and might encourage steps by Israel's hostile neighbors. Czech citizens presently in Israel include a radio team and students. The latter will meet tomorrow at Kibbutz Shomrat, near Acre, to discuss their position and decide what to do. One student told JTA that he would not return to Czechoslovakia until he was sure there would be no mass arrests or purges.

See Chance Of Early Supply Of Jets, Tougher U.S. Middle East Stand

WASHINGTON, Aug. 21 (JTA)--Improved chances of early supply of Phantom jet fighter-bombers to Israel and a tougher United States stand against Soviet-Arab collusion were seen here in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. It appeared that advocates of detente were undermined by the Russian reversion to the overt use of force.

State Department elements had been saying that sale of Phantoms to Israel might upset the Soviet Union whose role in the Middle East it had minimized, reports JTA correspondent Milton Friedman. The Eastern Europe events place Israel and those Presidential candidates taking a strong line against aggression in a good position. It shatters the stand of those who saw support of Israel as a threat to American-Soviet relations, he reports.

Observers have meanwhile expressed concern lest the Soviet reversion to a Stalinist heavy-handed policy affect the present good relations between Rumania and Israel. Rumania was the only Eastern European Communist regime to retain relations with Israel after the Six-Day War. There had also been indications that Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, which severed ties, were recently considering their stands on Israel. Now new fears have emerged that Moscow will accelerate the anti-Jewish and anti-Israel drives launched in June, 1967.

London Observers See Israel Helped, Czech And Slovak Jews Hurt

LONDON, Aug. 21 (JTA)--The invasion and apparent takeover of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union and her Communist allies may benefit Israel but is sure to hurt Czech and Slovak Jews, highly placed British observers believe. They said today that the events in Czechoslovakia may turn out to be useful to Israel since they will "serve as a warning to Egypt and Syria that you cannot expect to ride a tiger and come out of the exercise unharmed," as one observer put it. The United States, it is believed, will now be more wary of Soviet inroads in other regions of the world, including the Eastern Mediterranean, and this too is seen as possibly benefitting Israel.

On the other hand, the new-found liberties of Czech Jews are now almost certainly going to disappear as freedom is snuffed out and replaced by neo-Stalinist repression in Czechoslovakia, the observers suggested. It is now doubtful whether the 1,000th anniversary of the Jewish community in Czechoslovakia, expected to be celebrated next year, will be held. The millenium celebration had originally been scheduled for last year but was cancelled after Prague broke diplomatic relations with Israel following the Six-Day War. It is probable that the celebration of the 700th anniversary of the Old-New Synagogue in Prague, approved by the Government for July 9-11, 1969, will go by the way-side. It had been hoped that Jewish communities around the world would be represented at the historic event. The synagogue, built in 1268, is the oldest one standing in Western Europe.

There is little likelihood that Jewish education will continue or that in the future Czech boys and girls will be able to spend their holidays in Israel. Especially precarious will be the position of prominent Jews connected intimately with the Czech liberalization movement under Communist Party

First Secretary Alexander Dubcek. Most prominent is Prof. Eduard Goldsteucker, president of the Union of Czech Writers, who was that nation's first minister to Israel in 1948 and in 1952 was a co-defendant in the Slansky trial, serving 18 months of a five-year sentence. Another prominent Jewish figure in the new Government following the ouster of former President Antonin Novotny was the economist Dr. Ota Sik, who was vice premier.

It was rumored here that Ladislav Mnacko, the non-Jewish Czech writer who exiled himself to Israel following the Arab-Israel war in protest against Prague's position on the war, is again heading for Israel. He returned home after the Dubcek regime took over earlier this year.

Jewish Organizations Had Enjoyed More Freedom Under Dubcek Regime

Two of the country's principal Jewish spokesmen have never been formally associated with any particular wing of the Czech Communist Party. They are Frantisek Fuchs, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Bohemia and Moravia, and Dr. Benjamin Eichler, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Slovakia. Both officials had been permitted by the Government to attend World Jewish Congress Governing Council meetings in Geneva from July 8-11, 1968 — the first time in 20 years that such a relationship had been permitted by a Prague regime.

Following an April 7, 1968 session, the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in Bohemia and Moravia published in May a declaration demanding concessions that would benefit the country's Jews. Citing the death of 80,000 Czech and Moravian Jews during the Hitler holocaust and "the bitter experience of the 1950s," it nevertheless pledged support for the reform regime.

Jews in Prague have been openly sympathetic with Israel, although the Dubcek regime, still following the foreign policy line emanating from the Kremlin, had not taken steps to restore diplomatic ties in the months following the Six-Day War. Many non-Jews felt the same way, and students on several occasions circulated petitions on street corners asking the Government to renew its friendship with Jerusalem.

Following the Cierna and Bratislava conferences, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's Bonn correspondent Alfred Wolfmann visited Prague and was told by informed Foreign Ministry circles that in the near future there was no chance of such renewed diplomatic ties because such a step would anger Moscow and the other Eastern European states.

Many of the leaders in the Dubcek regime regarded the question of relations with Israel as one of the nation's less important concerns in the face of the continuing Soviet pressure against the democratization process in recent months.

A new Government that is expected to be installed and sponsored by the Kremlin, reinforced by the presence of Soviet troops and tanks in Prague and elsewhere in Czechoslovakia, will probably be conservative and take the same anti-Israel line that was manifested in the joint communique following the Bratislava meeting between Czechoslovakia and her Warsaw Pact allies.

An unresolved question of Jewish concern — the facts surrounding the mysterious death of Charles H. Jordan, former Joint Distribution Committee executive vice chairman — may go unanswered now that the Soviet Union is apparently back in control. Mr. Jordan was found dead in Prague's Vitava River four days after he disappeared from his hotel room on Aug. 16, 1967. According to one story, he had been murdered through the efforts of the Soviet secret police.

Report Israel Finds Egyptian, Jordanian Views On UN Resolution Unsatisfactory

JERUSALEM, Aug. 21 (JTA)--Informed sources said here today that Egyptian and Jordanian views on application of the Nov. 22, 1967 Security Council resolution for Middle East peace, which were conveyed by Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring to Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban, were unsatisfactory to Israel. The United Nations peace emissary came here at noon from his headquarters in Nicosia and spent two hours with Mr. Eban and Foreign Ministry aides. It was indicated another Eban-Jarring meeting will be held soon.

The sources said the current Eban-Jarring talks were concentrating on the meaning of the principal terms used in the Council resolution which mandated Dr. Jarring's mission, specifically the meaning of "a just and lasting peace." A Foreign Ministry spokesman said that Mr. Eban reiterated to Dr. Jarring Israel's readiness to cooperate in achieving a lasting peace based on permanent, secure and agreed boundaries and the complete abandonment of belligerence and all types of warfare. Mr. Eban called to the envoy's attention the speech of Egyptian President Nasser on July 23 in which the Egyptian leader said there never could be peace between Egypt and Israel. Mr. Eban said that this position reflected the stand of Arab leaders at the Khartoum "summit" meeting last August rejecting negotiations, recognition or peace with Israel which the Foreign Minister called "the main obstacle to peace."

In a related development, Mr. Eban met with United States Ambassador Walworth Barbour yesterday for talks that diplomatic sources described as a comprehensive exchange of views on the Middle East situation in general and the mission of Dr. Jarring in particular. The sources said that the positions of the U.S. and Israel on the Middle East are still similar and that mutual consultations and understanding continue. They said that press reports of a divergence of opinion between the two countries were unfounded. The sources stressed a passage in the speech of Ambassador George Ball,

U.S. chief representative to the UN, at last week's Security Council meeting which unanimously adopted a resolution condemning Israel for its Aug. 4 air raid on El Fatah bases near the Jordanian village of Salt.

With reference to the Security Council's Nov. 22, 1967 resolution on the Middle East, these sources pointed out that Mr. Ball said that it did not constitute a series of principles that are self-fulfilling but ones that should be implemented through agreement between the interested parties. The statement was taken as supporting Israel's interpretation that the prerequisite of the November, 1967 resolution is direct peace talks between Israel and the Arab states.

Hold 16 Arabs Suspected Of Grenade Blasts, 2 Jewish Youths Detained For Vandalism

JERUSALEM, Aug. 21 (JTA)--Sixteen Jerusalem Arabs suspected of involvement in the grenade blasts in downtown Jerusalem Sunday night were remanded in custody today for a week. Two Jewish youths are also being held for smashing the windows of an Arab-owned taxi during the riots that followed the grenade explosions.

A Baghdad radio report said today that El Fatah, the Jordan-based Arab terrorist organization, has claimed credit for the grenade attack which was the first of many attempted acts of terror to cause civilian casualties in Jerusalem. Four of the 10 injured persons were still hospitalized today but were reported by doctors to be making satisfactory progress. One of them is Mrs. Yael Mizrahi, who is in the fifth month of pregnancy.

Tekoah Answers El-Farra Note On Jerusalem Rioting

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Aug. 21 (JTA)--A Jordanian letter to Secretary-General U Thant contending that Sunday night's riots by Israeli youths in the Arab section of Jerusalem refuted Israel's claim that Arab and Jews lived peacefully in that city brought a sharp reply from Israel today. Ambassador Yosef Tekoah, chief representative of Israel at the UN, noted in a letter of his own to Mr. Thant that the complaint of the Jordanian representative, Muhammad H. el-Farra, ignored the context in which the riots occurred -- the explosion of grenades planted by Arab terrorists in downtown Jerusalem which injured 10 civilians, two of them seriously. "The letter also omits the fact that the Jerusalem authorities condemned the outburst of a number of Jewish youths incensed by these terror attacks against innocent civilians; that a number of the young men implicated were arrested and immediate steps taken to end the turbulence and prevent its recurrence," he said. The Jordanian letter, with no mention of the grenade blasts, attributed the riots to "indoctrinated hatred towards the Arabs" and alleged that Israeli police were instructed not to intervene "until the Israeli mobs had completed their job."

Jewish Agency Chairman Will Confer In U.S. On Extending Israel Emergency Fund

JERUSALEM, Aug. 21 (JTA)--Aryeh L. Pincus, chairman of the Jewish Agency, disclosed here today that he will confer with American Jewish leaders next week on extending the Israel Emergency Fund campaign for another year, its third, since it was established in 1967 in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. Mr. Pincus said that the campaign may get a different name but its purpose will still be to relieve Israel of the financial burdens of immigrant absorption while the country is forced to spend over 20 percent of its gross national product for defense purposes.

Mr. Pincus, speaking at a press conference, said the division of functions between the Jewish Agency and the Israel Government's new Absorption Ministry has not been finalized yet because it has to be coordinated with fund-raising agencies abroad. But he said it was clear that at least the initial absorption functions would remain within the province of the Jewish Agency. The latter, he said, would continue to be responsible for absorption centers and hostels where new immigrants go on arrival and for the ulpanim where immigrants are given intensive Hebrew language courses. Mr. Pincus said the Jewish Agency would also provide immigrants with those needs not granted to them by the State under existing laws. It would continue to aid immigrants who do not come from the so-called distress countries but who nevertheless may require assistance, as well as immigrants of previous years who have not yet been absorbed in the country's economy, he said.

The Jewish Agency chairman reported a doubling of the immigration rate from Western countries this year compared to the average of the two previous years and a drop in the average age of the newcomers. He said that 70 percent of the immigrants from the United States this year were under 30 years of age and 14 percent were between 34 and 44. In contrast, most immigrants from America before last year were pensioners, he said. He forecast a total immigrant influx this year of between 25,000 and 30,000 compared to about 18,000 arrivals each in 1966 and '67. Mr. Pincus also said that emigrants who left Israel before 1964 would be granted the same rights as new immigrants if they returned.

West Germany's New Ambassador To Israel Presents Credentials To Shazar

JERUSALEM, Aug. 21 (JTA)--Karl Hermann Knocke, West Germany's new Ambassador to Israel, presented his credentials to President Zalman Shazar today as a police band played the national anthems of Israel and West Germany. A small and apparently friendly crowd gathered in front of the President's residence and some of them applauded the German envoy. The occasion was in marked contrast to the similar one three years ago when Ambassador Knocke's predecessor, Rolf Pauls, the first German Ambassador to Israel, was met by a hostile demonstration.

McGovern Calls For Phantoms, Possibly TFX And VFAX Jets, For Israel

WASHINGTON, Aug. 21 (JTA)--Senator George McGovern, the South Dakota Democrat who has just announced his candidacy for his party's Presidential nomination, said here today that he supported the sale of 50 F-4 Phantom jet supersonic fighter bombers to Israel and, in addition, the sale of the more advanced TFX and VFAX jets now being developed "if the military situation warrants it." The Senator voiced his support for Israel and deplored the belligerence of Israel's neighbors in a statement to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. He said that while he regretted the need of any nation to arm itself, "there is no doubt in my mind that Israel is faced with this necessity" because "many of her neighbors have devoted large portions of their financial and human resources to various types of anti-Israel activities" and "continue to proclaim their determination to destroy Israel and consistently refuse to meet with its representatives." In an apparent reference to U.S. arms supplies to Jordan, Sen. McGovern said he was "opposed to any sale, loan or gift of military equipment to nations displaying such a belligerent attitude as that of Israel's neighbors."

Nigerian Embassy In Washington Likens Biafra's Ibos To Jews

WASHINGTON, Aug. 21 (JTA)--The Nigerian Embassy here today likened the case of the secessionist Ibo tribesmen of Biafra to that of the Jews who wanted to form a state of their own because of oppression and declared that "this is a complete falsification of the real issues involved in the Nigerian crisis." The analogy was contained in "background notes" on events in Nigeria published in the "Nigerian Record" issued by the Embassy. "To those outside Nigeria," it said, "the case for the so-called state of Biafra is simple and is this: The Ibos who inhabit the so-called Biafra are another race of Jews who want to form a state of their own because of oppression by fellow countrymen in Nigeria."

To Publish Directory Of Israeli Products Sold In U.S., Importers, Distributors

NEW YORK, Aug. 21 (JTA)--An all inclusive directory of Israeli products sold in the United States and listing their importers and distributors here will be published next month by the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Israel Trade Commission, it was announced here today. The directory will list a variety of goods ranging from knitwear and raincoats to agricultural tools and railroad accessories, according to Max Ratner, president of the Chamber of Commerce.

French Pilots Union, Federation Differ Over Apology To Algerian Government

PARIS, Aug. 21 (JTA)--Differences appear to have arisen between the French Pilots' Union and the International Federation of Airline Pilots Association to which it belongs over the Union's apology to the Algerian Government in connection with efforts to free the hijacked El Al airliner held by Algeria since July 23. The Federation today published an official announcement disavowing the apology. The French Union said yesterday that it had acknowledged to the Algerian authorities that it had "misunderstood" Algeria's stand on the plane issue.

A spokesman for the French Pilots' Union told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that he had been mistaken when he had accused Algeria of stalling on the release of the plane. He said that the union has decided to wait until Algeria completes its investigation of the hijacking. He denied that the French Government exerted any pressure on Air France pilots in connection with the Federation's call to boycott Algeria, a move that was later cancelled. He was unable to say what his union would do should the Pilots' Federation renew its boycott call.

Egyptian Chief Rabbi Reportedly Says Jews Blame Israel For 'Miseries'

PARIS, Aug. 21 (JTA)--The 500 Egyptian Jews arrested in the aftermath of the June, 1967 Middle East war have all been released but Jews remaining in Egypt are deeply resentful of Israel which they blame for "all our miseries," the North African weekly "Jeune Afrique" said in a purported interview with the Chief Rabbi of Egypt, Haim Douek. The magazine, published here, quoted the rabbi as having said that "there was never any Jewish problem here (in Egypt) before the Zionists came to the region. Before the war there were 80,000 Jews in Egypt. Our synagogues were never closed. We were never disturbed in the practice of our faith." The rabbi reportedly said that there are now no more than 2,000 Jews in Egypt and that the release of the imprisoned Jews followed his personal intervention with the Ministry of Interior. The magazine said that Cairo Jews are apprehensive over their future and many plan to leave. It referred to a Jewish teacher who allegedly said he would emigrate to Canada or Australia but "never to Israel because all our misery came from there."

Buenos Aires Authorizes Use Of Facilities At Nominal Rent For Israeli Exhibit

BUENOS AIRES, Aug. 21 (JTA)--The Mayor of Buenos Aires signed a decree today authorizing the Israel exhibition at the forthcoming international trade fair here to use municipal facilities and property on the fair grounds at only a token rental. The keys to the Israeli pavilion were handed to Moshe Yehuda, commercial attache of the Israel Embassy, by Vazquez Yona, municipal engineer, on behalf of Mayor Manuel Iricibar. The Argentine Government meanwhile freed Israel from paying import dues and customs duties on merchandise up to a half million dollars in value which it will bring to the fair. The fair opens in October.

Italian Government Accepts Appointment Of Amiel Najar As Ambassador

ROME, Aug. 21 (JTA)--The Italian Government has formally accepted the appointment of Amiel Najar to be Israel's new Ambassador to Italy. Mr. Najar was previously Ambassador to Belgium and represented Israel before the European Economic Commission. He succeeds former Ambassador Ehud Avriel who returned to Jerusalem to become chairman of the Zionist Council.