

JTA daily news bulletin

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc. 660 First Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016

Contents copyright: Republication only by previous arrangement.

Vol. XXXV--Fifty--First Year

Monday, September 9, 1968

No. 173

Artillery Duels Rage Along Suez Canal and Jordan Demarcation Line

TEL AVIV, Sept. 8 (JTA)--Fierce, prolonged artillery duels erupted on two Israeli fronts today, the most serious extending over the entire 103 mile length of the Suez Canal where Israeli and Egyptian units battled until United Nations observers finally managed to implement a cease fire just as evening fell. The other clash, between Israeli and Jordanian artillery, was centered in the Beisan and Jordan valleys where at least four Israeli settlements came under intense bombardment. There are no UN observers on the latter front but the shooting subsided before noon after Israeli gunners were reported to have inflicted heavy damage on Jordanian positions. A military spokesman said that in both instances, the shooting was started by the other side.

The Suez clash was regarded as the most serious from both military and diplomatic points of view. The Suez Canal zone has been the focus of attention at the UN Security Council for the past week where Israel has charged Egypt with responsibility for a raid by commandos who ambushed an Israeli patrol two weeks ago, killing two soldiers and kidnapping a third. Only last Friday another Israeli soldier was killed and three were injured when their jeep hit a mine on a Sinai road near the canal. The shooting today reportedly was begun by Egyptian snipers who fired on a party of Israeli sappers who had just dismantled and detonated a mine on the canal's East Bank.

The Egyptian fire was returned in kind but ten minutes later Egyptian artillery opened up and soon the shelling of Israeli positions became general, from Kantara at the canal's northern entrance to Port Tewfik in the south. Nearly two hours later, a cease fire was arranged through the UN observer teams and Israeli gunners complied. But the Egyptians kept shooting and the Israeli artillery was forced to resume fire. Another cease fire was called and again the Israelis agreed but the Egyptians continued to fire for another half hour.

Like the Suez clash, the fighting on the Israel-Jordan demarcation line began with a relatively minor exchange of small arms fire after Jordanians aimed bazooka shells at an Israeli border police armored car in the Beisan region. Jordanian mortars and artillery opened fire beginning an exchange that lasted for three hours. As more Jordanian guns were brought into play, the settlements of Beth Joseph, Yardena, Neve Urr and Maoz Chaim came under fire, sending civilians into bomb shelters. No casualties were reported on the Israeli side. It was disclosed however, that seven Israeli border policemen were injured by Jordanian gunfire in two incidents near Neve Urr and Yardena on Friday.

Those attacks started when a border police armored car came under small arms and bazooka fire. The fire was returned but a short time later another armored car received a direct hit which set it afire. The bazooka attacks originated from positions near Manshiyeh village in Jordan. Those positions were reported hit in today's clash.

Meanwhile it was disclosed that schools in Yardena and Beth Joseph were not opened on schedule last week because of a lack of bomb shelters. School inspectors ordered the suspension of classes in both settlements until adequate arrangements could be made to protect the children in emergencies.

Eshkol Confers With Cabinet on Means to Halt Bomb Outrages in Cities

JERUSALEM, Sept. 8 (JTA)--Prime Minister Levi Eshkol congratulated today the police and security services for the speed with which they smashed the Arab gang responsible for the bombing outrage in Tel Aviv last week in which one man was killed and some 70 persons injured. The Prime Minister also thanked the public for its cooperation in the capture of the vandals and in preventing the widening of rioting against Arab residents by infuriated Jews. He took pains to praise those Jews who had protected innocent Arab citizens from attacks by "hoodlums."

Mr. Eshkol, in reporting to the regular Cabinet meeting on the hand grenade blasts, called the attack an atrocity aimed at killing civilians indiscriminately and said such outrages must be viewed with the utmost gravity. He then reported on his talks with Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and Police Minister Eliahu Sasson on means to prevent both such sabotage acts and the ensuing riots. Mr. Sasson told the Cabinet meeting that the arrested saboteurs had confessed to all but two of the recent sabotage acts in Jerusalem in recent weeks -- the bomb planted in the courtyard of the East Jerusalem American consulate and the explosive charge left by a house in an outlying quarter of Jerusalem. No injuries occurred in those two incidents. Mr. Sasson, in a statement over Kol Israel, warned Arab residents of the West Bank, as well as Arabs in neighboring states, to refrain from such acts of terror and sabotage. Speaking in Arabic, the Police Minister stressed that most of the Arabs who took part in the grenade planting and similar sabotage acts during the past month had been caught and had confessed.

Police officials, reporting on the speedy apprehension of the vandals, said a dragnet was out for two brothers from Hebron who were the leaders of the gang and for one of the four men who actually placed the explosives in trash cans in Tel Aviv last Wednesday. The other three were among the 18 men seized after the blasts, many of whom admitted their roles in a series of such actions, the police reported. The police said that the Tel Aviv bomb planters also carried out the bombing of the Orient

Cafe in Jerusalem and the placing of grenades in trash cans in Jerusalem. The leaders were identified as Abdul Rahim Tahim Jaber of Hebron and his brother Munir Jaber.

A police cordon thrown quickly around the Tel Aviv bus depot area, the officials said, made possible the almost immediate capture of two of the men who placed the explosives. Some 300 Arabs were detained and questioned. Most were released but a few were detained for further questioning. Police then learned that two graduates of a Jerusalem secondary school, Abdul Latif Said Kamak, 20, and Salim Nouseibah, 20, were among the four who placed the bombs. From them, police apparently learned the identity of the other two, one of whom--Ahmed Sanduka--was arrested when he returned to his East Jerusalem home the night of the bombing. Marwan Haref, the fourth man, was still at large today.

The police said that the escape plans of the quartet were disrupted when incorrectly-set fuses detonated the grenades before they could make their getaway. All of the arrested men were remanded for further investigation. A group of 17 men and three youths was arraigned in magistrate's court here on Friday for further investigation of charges of responsibility for the "night of the grenades" three weeks ago, placing of a time-bomb near Bikur Holim hospital in the center of Jerusalem and planting of a grenade near a filling station. The three youths were charged with conspiring to cross into Jordan to join terrorist gangs there. Two of the men pleaded not guilty. One apprehended Arab was not charged and it was indicated he would be a state witness.

Israel Expels Four Arab Leaders To Jordan For Fomenting Hostility

TEL AVIV, Sept. 8 (JTA)--Four prominent Arab leaders of East Jerusalem and Hebron, who were accused of fomenting the hostile atmosphere in which the recent bombing outrages in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv were carried out, were served with expulsion orders and expelled across the Allenby Bridge to Jordan Friday morning. The four were identified as Kamal Dejani, 45, a judge and former minister in the Jordanian Government; Dr. Daud Husseini, 65, a member of the family of the ex-Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin el-Husseini; Mrs. Zalicha Shihadi, the leader of the Arab nationalist women's organization, and Yasar Amer, 45, a Hebron lawyer.

Defense Minister Moshe Dayan signed the expulsion orders served on the three residents of East Jerusalem, and Brig. Gen. Rafael Vardi, commander of the West Bank, signed the order against the Hebron lawyer. Authorities said the action against the quartet was a direct result of the investigation into the Tel Aviv bus depot bombing outrage.

Nixon, Humphrey Urge U.S. Military Aid to Israel at B'nai B'rith Conclave

WASHINGTON, Sept. 8 (JTA)--Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, addressing the triennial national convention of B'nai B'rith here, reiterated today his support of continued United States military aid to Israel and condemned anti-Semitism unleashed by the Soviet Union in connection with the occupation of Czechoslovakia. Richard M. Nixon, the Republican Presidential nominee, who was to address the convention tonight, was expected to amplify a weekend statement that he favored sale of United States military jets to Israel, according to advance information on his text, which was not available at JTA Bulletin presstime.

The Democratic Presidential nominee told the 1,200 delegates and guests he felt that the real answer in the Middle East was "arms control" but that Israel had a right to be strong enough to deter aggression and defend itself and that the United States had "a duty to respond favorably" to Israeli requests for defensive arms "on grounds of our own security interests." He said also that "we should be particularly outraged by the shabbiest tactic, by the blatant appeal to anti-Semitism as justification" for the invasion of Czechoslovakia, which he declared dramatized "the cynicism and ruthlessness of the Soviet decision to occupy Czechoslovakia." He said he was also "dismayed by the revival of anti-Semitism in Poland" but he asked that differentiation be made between the Polish regime and the Polish people. He added that the United States "has and will make clear its revulsion to such policies."

In his weekend statement, made at a press conference aboard his private plane during a San Francisco-Houston flight, Mr. Nixon said also that "it would be a great threat to peace if Israel's neighbors, bent on a war of revenge and smarming" from the Arab defeat in the Six-Day War, "are ever given the impression that they could launch a war with Israel and get away with it." Declaring also that it was "vital" for Israel to maintain military "superiority" relative to its Arab neighbors, Mr. Nixon said that "if it takes Phantom jets, they should have Phantom jets." He added that "right now it is essential for Israel to maintain a solid military advantage in the interest of peace."

Speaking at an earlier session, Dr. William Wexler, president of B'nai B'rith advised Jews to have compassion for Negro aspirations, but said that at the same time they could not ignore "Black Power" chauvinistic discrimination against Jews. "There should be no challenge to the black community's desire to remove the shackles and to share fully in the bounty of a society of freedom, equality and abundance," Dr. Wexler said. On the other hand, he went on, "we cannot shrug off a practice of discrimination in reverse that ousts a Jewish school teacher or Jewish principal or Jewish school administrator from his job in a ghetto neighborhood to satisfy the new Black Power criteria for self segregation. We cannot shrug off the penalty of a gutted business to a victimized ghetto shop-keeper." The B'nai B'rith head said that white America had failed to find an acceptable answer to the Negro problem. He called for "black answers" from the "silent majority" of the black community. "Perhaps what is needed is a militancy of the majority, a determination by this silent element to find its voice and make itself heard."

Goldberg Fears Possible Soviet - U.S. Confrontation if New Mideast War Erupts

CHICAGO, Sept. 8 (JTA)--Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg, former chief United States delegate to the United Nations, warned here today of a possible United States-Soviet confrontation in the Middle East and declared that the United States must "make it clear to the Soviets that we will not stand by and commit a 'Czechoslovakia' in the Middle East." The former Supreme Court associate justice, who is now president of the American Jewish Committee, spoke at the opening session of the 54th annual convention of Hadassah, the women's Zionist Organization of America, which presented him with its Henrietta Szold citation, Hadassah's highest honor.

Mr. Goldberg told the 2,000 convention delegates and guests that if the UN peace mission of Ambassador Gunnar Jarring ended in failure, it might set off another Arab-Israel war and that if that happened, "no one can guarantee that a direct Soviet-United States confrontation would not take place." He said the United States must continue to seek to end the arms race in the Middle East "while recognizing that Israel cannot disarm alone" and that the Soviet Union had "already gone too far in arming its Arab clients." He added that Israel's fear that an arms imbalance, particularly in supersonic warplanes, already exists "would seem to be justified" and that the United States had "no choice but to prevent such an imbalance" and that "an essential measure here and now is to sell Israel Phantom jet fighter aircraft."

Reiterating that only a negotiated peace could settle the Arab-Israel conflict, Mr. Goldberg said the United States must continue to try to persuade the Arab states against falling into the "dubiously protective embrace of the Russian bear" and must also seek to "compel Israel to pursue a path of flexibility, moderation and magnanimity," attitudes in which he added Israel "would not be found wanting." Above all, he declared, the United States must use its influence with Israel, the Arab states and Russia "in support of a genuine peace agreement" achieved by direct negotiations.

The convention also was told of Hadassah plans to re-establish a general hospital on Mt. Scopus to provide medical care for 100,000 Arabs and Jews in East Jerusalem and part of the West Bank. The original Hadassah hospital on Mt. Scopus was isolated from Israel during 19 years of Jordanian occupation. The decision to re-habilitate and re-open it was made by the Hadassah national board on the basis of a report from Dr. Kalman J. Mann, director general of the Hadassah Medical Organization in Israel. He estimated the cost of rehabilitating the buildings and other facilities at \$5 million with another \$2 million annually for maintenance. Hadassah raises some \$12 million yearly for its health, youth and education projects in Israel.

"The hospital on Mt. Scopus, in the decade it was functioning before access was denied to us by the Arabs in 1948-49, formed the center of hospital care in the entire Middle East, especially for key people in government, royalty and so on," Dr. Mann said. "The re-building and re-opening of the hospital is a must," he added. Dr. Mann reported also that the issue for the Hadassah Medical Organization of treatment of wounded Arab soldiers and, particularly, of wounded members of the El Fatah terrorist group was resolved by a decision to treat them in accordance with "the high motives of our own upbringing," in exactly "the same way as we treated our own."

Sharp Increase Reported in Jews Leaving Poland After Czech Occupation

WASHINGTON, Sept. 8 (JTA)--A sharp increase in the number of Jews leaving Poland has followed the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, according to information from reliable sources received here. Since mid-August, about 100 Jews have been leaving Poland each week for Israel or western nations. Since June, 1967, when Poland severed relations with Israel, more than 1,100 Jews were known to have left Poland, according to the report. The exodus reportedly was caused by the anti-Semitic campaign and purges conducted by the Polish regime in the guise of "anti-Zionism."

The Polish Communist press recently accused Jewish intellectuals in Czechoslovakia of "Zionism" and with having had a major role in "counter-revolutionary" activities cited by the Soviet Union and invading Warsaw pact countries as justification for the occupation. Leading doctors, engineers, and other Jewish professionals have left Warsaw and other Polish cities, the report said.

Ten-Man Czech Delegation Arrives Unexpectedly in Israel for Conference

JERUSALEM, Sept. 8 (JTA)--A ten-man delegation from Czechoslovakia arrived here unexpectedly last night to attend the international congress on poultry raising. The group was headed by Prof. Clemens, dean of the veterinary faculty at Brno University. A Rumanian delegation is also participating and the Soviet Union announced that it would send a representative but he has not arrived yet.

Israel Cabinet Approves Ratification of Convention on Hijacking

JERUSALEM, Sept. 8 (JTA)--The Cabinet decided today that Israel will ratify the 1963 Tokyo draft convention on aerial crimes which obligates the signatories to prevent and take action against the hijacking of commercial aircraft. Israel will be the seventh nation to ratify the convention which requires 12 signatures in order to become effective international law. Israel's ratification will require certain legislative changes which are expected to be approved by the Knesset (parliament) after which the Israel Government will deposit its instrument of ratification with the United Nations. The anti-hijacking clause binds the signatory nations to the speediest possible release of hijacked aircraft and their passengers and crew landed on their territory.

Israel Bond Conclave Sets \$100 Million Sales Goal for Rest of 1968

NEW YORK, Sept. 8 (JTA)--A campaign to sell \$100 million in State of Israel Bonds during the last four months of 1968 was unanimously adopted here today at the closing session of a three-day economic emergency conference of the Israel Bond Organization. The goal was set in a response to a cabled message from Prime Minister Levi Eshkol of Israel who declared that the need for Israel Bonds is "greater than ever, since the drastic cuts in the current development budget necessitated by heavy but vital defense expenditures can only be covered by increased sales of Israel Bonds."

The \$100 million goal for the last third of the year was proposed to the assemblage of 450 Jewish leaders from the United States and Canada by Samuel Rothberg, of Peoria, Ill., national campaign chairman of the Israel Bond Organization. He disclosed that during the first eight months of the year, the sale of Israel Bonds in the United States, Canada and other parts of the free world amounted to \$35,548,700. "Every Israel bond sold will indicate," he said, "that we are prepared to back our brothers in Israel and stand at their side." Mr. Eshkol's mention of "drastic cuts" in Israel's development budget referred to the diversion of \$57 million for defense needs last May from a development budget of \$289 million. "Internal stability, social improvements and economic development are as important for our survival as diplomatic and military readiness, and we look to Israel Bonds to give us the capital needed to continue these advances," Mr. Eshkol said in his message.

Dr. Joseph Burg, Israel's Minister of Social Welfare, told the final session, that despite the tremendous burden of defense, Israel was determined to maintain the standard of living which has been attained, both for new immigrants and for those who have been there for many years. He stressed the importance of Israel Bonds for reconstruction and rehabilitation and said they created new possibilities for urgently needed industrial development.

Louis H. Boyar, chairman of the board of governors, announced that more than 600 Reform, Conservative and Orthodox synagogues would participate in a special effort for Bond sales during the forthcoming High Holidays.

An earlier session heard from Zeev Sharef, Israel's new Finance Minister and Minister for Commerce and Industry, who called on the delegates to remember the past weeks' events in Czechoslovakia and declared, "it is we who have prevented the Middle East from becoming another Eastern Europe." Our friends will do well, he said, "to give us the tools to maintain our strength."

Mr. Sharef emphasized that the flow of Soviet arms and technological support to the Arab states, placed a defense burden on the people of Israel proportionately greater than current U.S. expenditures for defense. He said Israel was forced to spend a higher proportion of its resources on defense than almost any other country in the world and warned that this could continue for years, as long as the Arabs refuse to make peace. He said Israel's economic growth would have to be extremely rapid during the next few years and would demand additional resources as well as additional, better trained manpower, goals which depend heavily on funds provided through Israel Bonds.

Abraham Feinberg, president of the Israel Bond Organization, said that the failure of the Arab states to respond to Israel's call for peace negotiations has reduced the people of Israel "to a twilight existence in which they are denied the fruits of peace as well as of victory." The \$100 million goal adopted by the emergency conference was anticipated at its opening session by Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz, vice president of the Israel Bond Organization who stressed that increased bond sales were needed to fill the gap created by Israel's defense needs. "The pace of economic growth can be maintained through an increased response to Israel Bonds, which have been the backbone of the country's economic expansion during the past 17 years," he said.

Anti-Semitic Beliefs Said to Exist Among More Than 17 Million Americans

TORONTO, Sept. 8 (JTA)--About 17.5 million Americans hold "fairly strong anti-Semitic beliefs" according to a paper distributed to 200 delegates from six countries attending an international conference of Christians and Jews here. The paper, prepared by Harry Leishman, race relations coordinator of the American Jewish Committee, was based on a study sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

The conference, organized by the National Conference of Christians and Jews and its affiliate, the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, also took up problems of poverty, urban unrest and student rebellion at its five-day session which ended last night. The delegates heard a suggestion by Rabbi Gunther Plaut of Toronto that synagogues and churches give up their tax-free status so that they could become politically active. There is no reason why a religious leader should not be able to proclaim from his pulpit his support or opposition to a politician's candidacy, Dr. Plaut declared.

Dr. Zwi Werblowsky, dean of the humanities faculty of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, criticized American campus rebels whom he contrasted with Israeli students. He suggested that the American students were in revolt against their educational system because they were "pampered products" of an affluent society and had no other outlets for their energies. Israeli students, he said, have a greater cause than "student power"--the survival of their nation. "This emergency leaves little time for other pastimes," Dr. Werblowsky said.

The conference itself was the target of criticism by one of the delegates because of the absence of representatives of the poor, the young and the racially oppressed from deliberations addressed to their problems. Norman J. Johnson, director of Community Action, of Pittsburgh, said, "what right do we have to talk about them? They are not here, because among all our Ph.D.'s and D.D.'s and rabbis, we think we are too great to have them."