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Johnson, Silent On Jets, Says Jerusalem Is a Critical Issue In Peace Settlement

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- President Lyndon B. Johnson admonished Israel last night to remember that "boundaries cannot and should not reflect the weight of conquest" and reminded them that "it is more certain than ever that Jerusalem is a critical issue in any peace settlement." The President, speaking to some 3,000 members of B'nai B'rith and their guests at the triennial convention banquet at the Shoreham Hotel here, also took issue with Israeli demands for direct negotiations with the Arabs, asserting that "many channels are open. How the talking is done at the outset is not very important tonight."

Mr. Johnson had been expected to announce a decision to deliver supersonic Phantom jet fighters to Israel to meet Israel's need for deterrent strength. The convention had, two days before, heard both Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey and Richard M. Nixon, the presidential nominees, emphasize the importance of meeting Israel's need for these planes. Then, on Monday, President Johnson met secretly with Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon of Israel. It was therefore widely anticipated that when Mr. Johnson made his unannounced and surprise visit to the B'nai B'rith banquet, it would be to respond to Israel's anxiety over the mounting Soviet buildup of the Arab states.

Instead, Mr. Johnson lavished praise on the Jews as a people, condemned Communist anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe, and reiterated some aspects of support of Israel -- but introduced a number of potentially controversial new points. The President said "it is more certain than ever that Jerusalem is a critical issue in any peace settlement. No one wishes the Holy City again divided by barbed wire and machine guns. I therefore tonight urge and appeal to the parties to stretch their imaginations -- so that their interests, and the world's interest in Jerusalem, can be taken fully into account in any final settlement." He singled out Jerusalem for mention after asserting that "boundaries cannot and should not reflect the weight of conquest." The President said that in "recent weeks," progress had been made toward peace in the Middle East. He urged leaders "to maintain and accelerate their dialogue." He did not see direct negotiations essential. "Many channels are open," he said. "How the talking is done at the outset is not very important tonight."

Declares That Israel And The Arabs Must Overcome Each Other's Fears

The President said that the "Arab governments must convince Israel, and the world community, that they have abandoned the idea of destroying Israel. But equally, Israel must persuade its Arab neighbors and the world community that Israel has no expansionist designs on their territory." He declared that "we are not here to judge whose fears are right and whose are wrong. Right or wrong, fear is the first obstacle to peacemaking. Each side must do its share to overcome it."

President Johnson stressed that the number of Arab refugees "is still increasing. The June War added some 200,000 refugees to those already displaced by the 1948 war. They face a bleak prospect as the winter approaches. We share a very deep concern for these refugees. Their plight is a symbol in the minds of the Arab peoples. In their eyes, it is the symbol of a wrong that must be made right before 20 years of war can end. That fact must be dealt with in reaching a condition of peace."

The President said the arms race continued. "We have exercised restraint, while recognizing the legitimate defense needs of friendly governments. But we have no intention of allowing the balance of forces in the area to ever become an incentive for war. We continue to hope that our restraint will be matched by the restraint of others -- though I must observe that has been lacking since the end of the June War. We have proposed, and I reiterate again tonight, the urgent need--now--for an international understanding on arms limitations for this region of the world."

No Nation Involved In The Dispute Is Without Blame, President Asserts

President Johnson asserted that "no nation, that has been part of the tragic drama of these past 20 years is without blame. Violence and counter-violence have absorbed the energies of all the parties. The process of peacemaking cannot be further delayed without peril. The United Nations Security Council resolution of last November laid down the principles of a just and lasting peace." The President reaffirmed the principles he outlined June 19, 1967, and said they remained the foundation of American policy.

On the subject of final boundaries, he said: "we are not the ones to say where other nations should draw lines between them that will assure each other the greatest security. It is clear, however, that return to the situation of June 4, 1967, will not bring peace. There must be secure and recognized borders. Some such lines must be agreed by the neighbors involved as part of the transition from armistice to peace. At the same time, it is equally clear that boundaries cannot and should not reflect the weight of conquest. Each change must have a reason--which each side, in honest negotiation, can accept--as part of a just compromise."

Mr. Johnson affirmed that "no enduring peace settlement is possible until the Suez Canal and the Strait of Tiran are open to the ships of all nations, and the right of passage effectively guaranteed."

He asked the B'nai B'rith to consider the plight of the Vietnamese and others in Southeast Asia-- "a part of the world with which few Americans have family ties." In calling for pursuit of peace there and in the Middle East, he asked: "let us work with our heads instead of our passions--with our sense of justice, and not our bigotry and after 5,000 years, I believe most of you know what I mean."

President Johnson devoted a portion of his address to Czechoslovakia, stating that new military and political risks arose "from this aggressive act." In this connection, he said: "some leaders of Eastern Europe have sought to indict those of Jewish faith for spreading ideas of freedom among their people. This is shocking--not only because it is a thin disguise for anti-Semitism--but because it suggests that freedom is the cause and passion of one people alone. Let there be no doubt in anyone's mind about who cares for freedom: mankind itself cares."

President Johnson was given an ovation when he entered the banquet hall. A cable from Prime Minister Levi Eshkol of Israel, praising Mr. Johnson's "friendship and understanding" in glowing terms was read to the assemblage. Dr. William A. Wexler, President of B'nai B'rith, presented to him a silver esrog box inscribed in Hebrew from Psalms 45:18 reading "I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations, therefore shall the people praise thee forever and ever."

State Department Sees Johnson Speech As Support Of Its Mideast Stand

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- State Department officials today welcomed President Johnson's declaration on the Middle East interpreting it as strengthening diplomatic efforts to persuade Israel that direct peace talks were not essential, that the fate of Jerusalem remained negotiable and on other points. They termed it a "statesmanlike response" to recent developments in the Arab states, especially Egypt. The President's failure to act on Israel's bid for Phantom jet fighter planes, they said, contributed to a greater fluidity and flexibility for American diplomacy.

Israeli diplomats here were seeking clarification on a number of points in the Johnson address. The Israel Embassy was reported to be evaluating the speech to ascertain its full meaning and many nuances. Since the speech followed so shortly after Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon had met with President Johnson and presidential candidates of both parties had urged supply of the Phantoms to Israel from the same forum in which the President spoke, the implications of the President's omissions and new positions were regarded as subjects requiring careful study.

State Department officials said that the President, in his speech, had avoided a new linkage of the United States with Israel at a time of increased tension to avoid a possible East-West confrontation in the Middle East that might develop to America's disadvantage. There also seemed to be concern that the Nasser regime in Egypt was in danger. This anxiety was shared by the President who apparently agreed with a State Department desire to avoid further polarization. President Johnson was credited with expansion of his June 19, 1967 formula to the extent that U.S. diplomats now find open White House backing on points the State Department wanted to push.

State Department officials said the President's "timely statesmanship" reduced the "damage" to the United States among pro-Western Arab elements they charged Richard M. Nixon and Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey had caused in their Sunday speeches to B'nai B'rith -- especially the Nixon speech. The Department was infuriated by Mr. Nixon's proposal that the balance of power should be tipped in Israel's favor to deter aggression.

U.S. Middle East experts said the speech showed President Johnson had "swung away from the domestic politicians" and "pressure" from American Jewry. They said his dismissal of the Israeli demand for direct negotiations "gives us a lot to work with" and his remarks on Jerusalem backed up State Department efforts to keep the Jerusalem question open. The President's comments on the defense needs of friendly states and the balance of power, they said, "fell very far short of what the President said in his joint communique with Premier Eshkol at the LBJ ranch last January." Other remarks by the President, including his reference to the Arab refugee problem, they said, would prove to be "helpful."

Reveal Pentagon Experts Had Recommended Supply of Phantom Jets To Israel

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Defense Department experts, acting in conformity with information from U.S. intelligence agencies on the mounting Soviet military build-up in Arab states, recommended to President Johnson prior to his B'nai B'rith address that he approve the sale of Phantom jet fighter-bombers to Israel, congressional sources disclosed today. These sources said that they were puzzled by the President's failure to act in view of the massive sentiment favoring the transaction which only the State Department opposed. They said the President was fully aware of the presence of Soviet air force and military personnel in Egypt and of the growing ratio of Arab supersonic airpower numerical supremacy over Israel. The Arabs now enjoy an estimated 5 to 1 supremacy in supersonic jets with some evaluations placing the edge as high as 6 to 1.

Congressmen asserted today that if the President continues to hold back the supersonic jets required by Israel, they will be forced to demand that the public be given more details on the extent of the Soviet build-up in Egypt and other Arab states.

Israelis Detect Signs of Danger In Johnson's Arms, Negotiations Positions

JERUSALEM, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- There was no official comment by the Israel Government tonight on President Johnson's B'nai B'rith speech but opinion in Government circles was that the speech spotlighted several points of danger for Israel. One of these was the President's expressed desire to limit armaments to preserve a "balance" which Israelis said, he should know well no longer exists. They said the question at issue was not the quantity of arms coming into the area but the intention with which were being acquired. Some sources said, however, that Mr. Johnson's speech should be seen in the perspective that it followed the speeches by the two presidential candidates containing outright promise of planes for Israel.

Presidents' Conference Asks Johnson For Immediate Action on Phantoms For Israel

NEW YORK, Sept. 11(JTA) -- The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations appealed today to President Johnson to supply Israel with Phantom jet planes to provide a deterrent "to Arab extremism and war-like acts." The appeal noted that "continuing Arab aggression, which has recently been heightened by international tensions, once again raises the spectre of an out-and-out war in the Middle East."

Rabbi Herschel Schacter, chairman of the conference, declared that while both presidential candidates have come out for the supply of the supersonic plane to Israel, "only President Johnson can make such a decision in the near future." He said the Conference was appealing to the President "to initiate immediate steps to make good America's commitment to Israel by providing it with the necessary arms that would serve as a deterrent to war."

Eban Confers With Jarring; Finds Egyptian Stand 'Uncompromising And Belligerent'

JERUSALEM, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Egypt's "uncompromising and belligerent" attitude on a Middle East peace settlement was the principal topic discussed by Foreign Minister Abba Eban and United Nations peace envoy, Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring in their 90-minute meeting here today. Mr. Eban is known to have stressed the gravity with which Israel views recent Egyptian statements and the flare-up of violence along the Suez Canal demarcation line. Today's meeting was Dr. Jarring's last visit to Jerusalem before leaving for the General Assembly opening in New York. The UN emissary visited Amman and Cairo earlier this week and is understood to have conveyed to Mr. Eban the substance of Egypt's stand. This was an indirect reply to certain questions which the Israeli Foreign Minister passed on to Egyptian authorities through Dr. Jarring. The questions dealt with Egypt's definition of "a just and lasting peace", one of the main points in the Security Council's Nov.22,1967 resolution on the Middle East. The Egyptian reply indicated that it is not ready to take any step toward advancing the prospects of peace, it was reliably learned. Today's Eban-Jarring talks touched only briefly on Jordan which Israel considers to be no longer a free agent but dependent on Cairo in its peace stand.

Egyptians Seek To Provoke Israelis To New Exchanges; New West Bank Incidents

TEL AVIV, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Israeli forces in the Suez Canal zone refrained from returning small arms and machine gun fire aimed at them by Egyptian forces near Port Tewfik this morning. But a fierce exchange of fire developed last night along the Israel-Jordan demarcation line in the Beisan valley and southeast of Lake Tiberias, a military spokesman reported. There were no casualties. Israeli units were attacked this morning in the Neve Urr and Beisan regions, starting a brief exchange of fire which ended without Israeli casualties.

The Israeli forces on the east bank of the canal were obviously under orders to exercise restraint as Egyptian units were apparently doing their best to provoke them into an escalation. According to a military spokesman, Egyptian soldiers sent bursts of rifle and machine gun fire across the canal three times in a 35-minute period shortly before nine o'clock this morning. The Israelis did not react and the shooting petered out, the spokesman said.

Nablus Mayor Calls General Strike To Protest New Israeli Security Measures

JERUSALEM, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Israel today tightened its security measures against terrorist activities on the West Bank where residents were warned that aid to terrorist gangs and saboteurs will not be tolerated. One reaction to the Israeli countermeasures was a call for a general strike by the Mayor and town council of Nablus in protest against the demolition of houses belonging to terrorists.

The warning against support of terrorism was delivered in person by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan to Arab officials in the Hebron area today. The ringleaders of the sabotage gang that planted explosives in downtown Jerusalem and in the Tel Aviv bus terminal came from the Hebron region as did a spy ring which was apprehended this week along with illegal radio transmitters and weapons. Gen. Dayan told the Arab leaders that the Israeli Army would see to the wellbeing of the civilian population but warned that if the villagers involve themselves in acts of terrorism they will have to take the consequences. The increase in terrorist activities led to the re-establishment today of checkpoints along the highways connecting the West Bank with Jerusalem and other parts of Israel. The measure was said to be a temporary one. But meanwhile all buses and other vehicles are checked to make sure that Arabs crossing the so-called "green line" from the West Bank into Israel proper have valid permits.

Ball Warns Security Council It Must Not Ignore Dangerous Suez Developments

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Ambassador George Ball, chief United States representative to the United Nations, warned in the Security Council this afternoon that the latest incidents in the Suez Canal area may foreshadow "a new and more dangerous situation," a possibility that the Security Council "dared not ignore." Ambassador Ball spoke shortly after the 15-member body convened to resume its debate on Israel's complaints against Egypt for violation of the cease fire in the canal zone. He reiterated that it was the duty of the Security Council to insist that both sides not only abide by the cease fire but issue strict orders to local commanders against violations or unilateral actions and to improve their cooperation with the UN observers corps.

The issue now before the Security Council for the second week is Israel's charge that Egypt was responsible for the ambush killing of two soldiers and the kidnapping of a third on Aug. 26. As in the previous sessions, Ambassador Mohammed Awad El-Kony of Egypt claimed that the Israeli complaint of the Aug. 26 ambush was a "fabrication" of which Egypt knew nothing. He was supported today, as previously by the Soviet representative, Yacov Malik, who was especially vituperative in his attempt to absolve Egypt from any violation of the cease fire and to draw a distinction between violations of the cease-fire and legitimate resistance by people against an enemy occupying their territory.

Hadassah Elects Mrs. Max Schenk To Presidency, Adopts \$10 Million Budget

CHICAGO, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Gen. Uzzi Narkiss told the 54th annual convention of Hadassah, the American women's Zionist organization, here tonight that Israel did not expect a quick peace with the Arab states but warned them that Israel would survive until such a time when they "are ready to sit down with us -- even if it takes a generation."

Gen. Narkiss, who is now a member of the Jewish Agency executive, in charge of immigration, commanded the Israeli forces which liberated East Jerusalem in the Six-Day War. He said that strategically, Israel had never been in a better position in that it holds the Golan Heights of Syria, the West Bank and the Sinai Peninsula. He said "never before have we had it so good but we are paying a high price for it."

Finance Minister Zeev Sharef of Israel, agreed with Gen. Narkiss that Israel might have to live with war for many years to come. He told the delegates that "we are ready for peace and are ready to work out peace arrangements." The question he said was whether the Arabs were ready to recognize Israel's right to exist.

Mrs. Max Schenk, of New York, Hadassah treasurer, was elected president for the coming year, succeeding Mrs. Charlotte Jacobson who was named honorary president for life. In her acceptance speech Mrs. Schenk declared that "the present mood of violence and rebellion is not peculiar to America." She said the entire world is "caught up in convulsions of change."

The convention, in its concluding session, adopted a budget of approximately \$10 million for its activities in Israel and the United States during the coming year. Of this total, \$6 million is for the Hadassah medical organization in Israel, \$2.3 million for Youth Aliyah, \$700,000 for the Jewish National Fund, \$650,000 for Hadassah vocational education and \$200,000 for youth activities.

The delegates approved resolutions dealing with violence, the right to dissent, foreign aid, Polish anti-Semitism, the situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union and in Arab countries, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Israel's search for peace, and the aims of the Zionist movement, including the promotion of Aliyah. One of the resolutions upheld the right "of a free people to peaceful dissent and protest" as a "pillar of democracy." The delegates also asked that gun control laws be extended to the sale and registration of rifles and shotguns.

Orthodox Rabbi Says Draft Law Should Recognize Selective Conscientious Objection

NEW YORK, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- A leading Orthodox rabbi and educator has called for an amendment to the draft law to allow for selective conscientious objection because he considers the United States participation in the Viet Nam war immoral, a stand in contradiction with that of major American Orthodox groups. Rabbi Aaron Soloveitchik, dean of the Hebrew Theological College of Skokie, Ill., told the national convention of Yavneh, the Orthodox Jewish students association, that "it is immoral that the United States Government will recognize objections only if expressed as unqualified opposition to all wars." He told the 300 college students that while traditional Judaism teaches that participation in "just wars" -- such as wars of self-defense -- is a religious obligation, it also considers participation in "unjust wars" as "immoral and barbarous." Rabbi Soloveitchik's address was a highlight of a five-day study seminar on the Jewish position on war. The rabbinical scholar also told the students that statements of national Orthodox groups notwithstanding, American participation in the Viet Nam war was immoral.

Rabbi Soloveitchik condemned draft evasion and affirmed the right of any soldier to defend himself on the field of battle but he declared that no soldier in Viet Nam may participate in missions likely to result in injury or death to civilians, such as indiscriminate bombing of civilian areas.

Latin American Jews Discuss Issues Of Jewish Identification

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- A conference on Jewish identity and identification was held here under the joint sponsorship of the Uruguayan Jewish Institute for Human Relations and the Latin American office of the American Jewish Committee. The conference, which was extensively covered by the local press, drew 500 delegates from many Latin American communities. Addresses were given by Dr. Moises Mizraji and Gideon Tdmor, Israeli charge d'affairs.

Ascribe High Rate of Mental Disorders Among Melbourne Jews To Nazi Victims

MELBOURNE, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- A high rate of mental disorders among Jews of Melbourne was disclosed in figures published today by the Mental Hygiene Authority of Victoria. The report noted however, that a high percentage of Melbourne Jews are survivors of Nazi concentration camps who immigrated here and who are the main sufferers. The figures showed 330 Jewish mental patients for every 10,000 citizens compared to a 155 to 10,000 ratio for non-Jews. But the incidence of mental illness among Jews may be higher since the figures did not cover private patients among whom there are believed to be more Jews than non-Jews. The report showed however that the high rate of mental disease among Jews did not hold true for such disorders as alcoholism and senility.

Rabbi Jacob Kohn, Conservative Rabbi And Educator, Dies At 86

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Funeral services will be held here tomorrow at Sinai Temple for Rabbi Jacob Kohn, noted Conservative rabbi and educator, who died here Tuesday after a long illness, at the age of 86. Dr. Kohn had been rabbi of Sinai Temple for 25 years before retiring in 1957. He was the author of many books on philosophy and Judaism and had served as dean of the Graduate School of the University of Judaism here. He had lectured on Judaism at Teachers College, Columbia University and served on the faculty of the University of South Carolina. He had been vice-president of the United Synagogue of America, the association of Conservative congregations, and a member of the executive council of the Rabbinical Assembly, the association of Conservative rabbis.