

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## White House Denies Any Change In President's Stand On Phantom Sale

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15 (JTA)--A White House spokesman, commenting on contradictory press and television reports on President Johnson's plans concerning the sale of F-4 Phantom jets to Israel, said today that the "status quo" on the Israeli request remained unchanged and that no decision or announcements on the request was expected today.

This was the reaction from spokesman Lloyd Hackler to a report in the New York Times that President Johnson had decided not to sell the supersonic warplanes to Israel in the near future and a mysterious report that the National Broadcasting Corporation's television network had carried a report today that Mr. Johnson had decided to go ahead with the sale of the jets, which Israel requested more than six months ago. The status quo referred to President Johnson's continued silence on the request and his failure to refer to it during an unscheduled appearance at the B'nai B'rith triennial convention here last week after both Democratic Presidential nominee Hubert H. Humphrey and Republican nominee Richard Nixon — in separate appearances at the same convention — called for prompt sale of the Phantoms to Israel.

(Officials in Jerusalem denied today any knowledge of the decision of the President, as reported by the Times. The officials told the JTA that, to the best of their knowledge, the President had reserved freedom of action on the Israeli request and that there had been no change in that position.)

The mystery of the purported NBC report was compounded by a statement by the NBC to the JTA that it had not carried any such report on either its radio or television networks. Mr. Hackler said he had heard of the NBC television report but not that he himself had heard it.

The first Jewish reaction to the Times story was a telegram sent to the President by the Mizrahi Women's Organization, the American religious Zionist women's group, which expressed "profound dismay" over the reported "decision." The telegram said that in "the still volatile Middle East," the President's "reported action" might be mistaken "as a signal of approval of Arab intransigence." The appeal urged the President "to correct or clarify these reports" and to "sustain the stated intention of both Democratic and Republican parties" whose 1968 platforms urge the sale of the planes to Israel without delay.

The Times report quoted "Administration sources" on the President's purported decision and said also that "international events" and "pressures from Zionist groups in the midst of a Presidential campaign" might "bring a reversal of Mr. Johnson decision." According to the Times' sources, the main reason for the alleged Presidential decision against acting on the Israeli request was that the President wanted to discuss prospects for an Arab-Israeli settlement and a limitation on arms deliveries to the Middle East with Soviet leaders if a much-discussed summit conference should develop before Mr. Johnson leaves office on Jan. 20. The sources were quoted as saying that an immediate Phantom jet sale to Israel would reduce chances of such a summit meeting and for arms limitations. Another cited reason was that the Johnson Administration did not want to increase tensions in the Middle East while there was a chance that Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring, the special United Nations envoy, might manage to arrange talks between Israel and the Arab states. The President also was reported as allegedly unwilling to give up the diplomatic leverage inherent in the Israeli request as long as he could use it to bring about Israel-Arab talks.

## Nixon, Humphrey Reaffirm Calls For Prompt Sale Of Phantom Jets To Israel

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15 (JTA)--The two major Presidential candidates — Republican Richard M. Nixon and Democrat Hubert H. Humphrey — reiterated today their call for American military support of Israel, including the delivery of F-4 Phantom jet supersonic fighter-bombers that Israel said it needs. Both candidates, in messages to the 71st annual convention of the Zionist Organization of America, stressed America's commitments to Israel's independent existence.

Mr. Humphrey spoke of military aid to Israel "to maintain a balance of power in the area." Mr. Nixon, repeating a statement he made before the triennial convention of B'nai B'rith here last week, said that he would "give Israel a technological military margin to more than offset her hostile neighbors' numerical superiority." Vice President Humphrey said in his message that "as a friend of Israel from its inception...I support active U.S. diplomatic efforts for Arab-Israeli negotiation. In the meantime, I have supported and will continue to support U.S. military aid to Israel, including Phantom jet aircraft, to maintain a balance of power in the area." Mr. Nixon declared that Israel, "faced with the direct threat to her security...must have the strength to deter any attempts on her freedom and sovereignty." Thus, he said, "I support a policy that would give Israel a technological military margin to more than offset her hostile neighbors' numerical superiority and if maintaining that margin should require that the U.S. supply Israel with supersonic Phantom jets, we should supply those jets." Mr. Nixon said that "the U.S. has a firm and unwavering commitment to the national existence of Israel, repeated by four Presidents — and after inauguration day next year, it will be repeated by another President." He hailed Israel as the nation that introduced democracy to the Middle East, "a full-fledged exponent of the Western way of life" and a "bulwark of strength in the paths of Soviet ambitions" in the Middle East.

Dr. Emanuel Neumann, chairman of the American section of the Jewish Agency and a former ZOA president, told the convention that while Mr. Humphrey and Mr. Nixon had "spoken well and clearly" about arms for Israel, they have "not ventured to awaken America to the extent of the dangers in the Middle East and the increasing influence of the Soviet Union in that region." Both Dr. Neumann and Jacques Torczyner, who was re-elected today to a fourth term as ZOA president, stressed Israel's need for Western immigration. Dr. Neumann urged every American Jewish family to send at least one of its members to settle in Israel. He predicted that "thousands of American Jews" would settle in Israel. Mr. Torczyner said Israel needed Western immigrants to maintain a Western orientation and culture.

### Eban Likens Increasing Middle East Tension To Situation Before Six-Day War

TEL AVIV, Sept. 15 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Abba Eban of Israel yesterday likened the increasingly tense situation in the Middle East to that which prevailed prior to the outbreak of the June, 1967 Six-Day War and appealed to Egypt not to be dragged into "war hysteria" by erroneous rumors that Israel is preparing for a new offensive. He said that Israel will bend every effort to maintain the cease-fire agreements as a basis for ultimate peace talks and will continue to support the peace-seeking mission of United Nations envoy Gunnar V. Jarring.

Mr. Eban said that the Jarring mission cannot claim any success so far and is deadlocked at the present time. (United Nations headquarters in New York reported that Dr. Jarring completed his current round of discussions in the Middle East and was scheduled to leave his Cyprus headquarters yesterday. After brief stopovers in Paris and Sweden, he was to proceed to New York to continue discussions with representatives of both sides during the coming General Assembly session, the announcement said.)

Mr. Eban spoke at the Foreign Press Association dinner here against a background of rising fears in Middle East capitals and abroad that a new Arab-Israeli war is imminent. The fears stemmed from increasingly bellicose statements by official spokesmen in Cairo at the opening of the congress of the Arab Socialist Union, Egypt's only legal political party. These statements, following the Egyptian-Israeli artillery duel along the full length of the Suez Canal Sept. 8, indicated to some observers that Egypt has regained confidence in its military forces, re-equipped by Russia, and may be preparing a strike to recapture the east bank of the canal from Israeli occupying forces. While some observers said the new bellicosity was primarily for morale building purposes at home, they noted a similarity with the situation before the June, 1967 war when Egyptian propaganda reached a point that made a military confrontation with Israel inevitable. These circles noted further that, as at present, rumors of an impending Israeli offensive, reportedly started by the Soviets, heightened tensions before June, 1967. Mr. Eban apparently had this in mind when he warned that "such false counsel has had grave results in the past." He added, however, that while the situation is "grave enough for us to be vigilant, we have not reached the conclusion that the collapse of the cease-fire is inevitable." This view was not shared by Mohamed Hassanein Heykal, editor of the semi-official Cairo newspaper, Al Ahram, who wrote yesterday that a political settlement of the Middle East crisis was remote and another round of fighting is in the offing. Mr. Heykal said that the battlefield offered almost the only possible solution.

(In Cairo yesterday, President Nasser made his first public address since returning from medical treatment in Moscow, at the Arab Socialist Union congress. Some observers called it "relatively mild, less a call for action than many had expected," though he did not mention a political solution and stressed the increased strength of Egypt's armed forces. Mr. Nasser said that the first stage of rebuilding Egypt's military strength has ended. The next two stages, he said, will be to "stand firm" and then "to liberate our occupied land."

(In London today, the London Times said that Mr. Nasser appears to have decided that Egypt was now strong enough for a new war with Israel but was trying to decide whether to attack first. His military commanders were pressing for a first strike to build their troops' morale and give the best chance for victory, the Times said. But Mr. Nasser was keenly aware of the political repercussions of such action and was thought to be more inclined to wait for an Israeli provocation and the launch a retaliatory attack across the Suez Canal. An Israeli attack on Jordan could be the "detonator," the Times said.

(The Sunday Observer said it did not believe Nasser was ready for or wants to start a full scale war now "but cannot afford politically or psychologically not to hit back at Israeli actions." The paper said that Egypt's defenses are now claimed to be excellent and the country's military leaders appear to be confident that they can begin to exert military pressure on Israel, not by direct attack but by harassment in the occupied territories.")

### Hussein Raps U.S. As Being Pro-Israel, Announces Jordan Will Get Hawk Missiles

LONDON, Sept. 15 (JTA)--King Hussein of Jordan yesterday sharply attacked the United States for its allegedly pro-Israel policy and warned that the U.S. would have to bear a large share of the responsibility should a new war break out in the Middle East "and no one in this area would ever forgive her." But the Jordanian ruler's statement, included in a directive to his Prime Minister Bahjat al-Talhouni and read on Amman radio by Information Minister Salah Abu Zaid, disclosed that Jordan had concluded a \$100 million arms deal with the U.S. King Hussein said that Jordan would soon receive U.S. ground-to-air Hawk missiles which would be used to protect Jordanian air bases. He proposed an early warning air raid system and shelters for the protection of civilians. King Hussein also said that Jordan will soon have replaced all of the armor it lost in the June, 1967 war with Israel but warned that this would not give Jordan military superiority over Israel.

King Hussein's warning to the U.S. came amid mounting Arab resentment of recent statements by both major American Presidential candidates, Richard M. Nixon and Hubert H. Humphrey. Both stressed the U.S. commitment to Israel and Mr. Nixon, in particular, advocated supplying Israel with the means to maintain a substantial military technological superiority over its Arab neighbors.

In the political sphere, Jordan's Foreign Minister Abdel Monim Rifai, flatly rejected the possibility of a bilateral agreement between his country and Israel even if Israel were to abide by the letter of the UN Security Council's Nov. 22, 1967 resolution, as interpreted by the Arabs. Jordan's stand was outlined by Mr. Rifai in an interview with Peter Jenkins, published in the Guardian yesterday. Mr. Rifai said that Israel's failure to commit itself to implementing the resolution which, the Arabs insist, required unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories, has blocked any progress toward a Middle East solution. He said that Jordan's acceptance of the resolution "does imply that we shall be ready to make formal commitments in the Security Council, witnessed and guaranteed by the Council." But, he added, he did not see why it would be necessary for such a commitment to be signed jointly by both parties. "There is no such requirement in the resolution," he said. The Foreign Minister said that the United Nations peace envoy, Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, had tried, without success, to find out where Israel stood on withdrawal and what its concept of secure boundaries was. He said he had been expecting to receive clarification on those points but Dr. Jarring's latest visit to Amman brought none.

### Israel Places Civilian Matters In Occupied Territories Under Ministries

JERUSALEM, Sept. 15 (JTA)--The Israel Cabinet today moved to shift the administration of the occupied Arab territories from military to civilian control. According to an announcement following today's Cabinet meeting, all civilian matters in the occupied territories will in the future be handled by the ministries concerned, just as inside Israel proper. A ministerial committee headed by Prime Minister Levi Eshkol will coordinate overall policies. Security matters will remain the responsibility of the military government, the announcement said. But future contacts with the heads of local Arab communities will be made directly through the ministries rather than through the military government as heretofore. All public announcements concerning residents of the occupied areas will also be made by the ministries concerned. In dealing with the occupied territories, each ministry will act within the framework of its budget and parliamentary responsibility but will coordinate its activities with the military government, the announcement said.

### Arabs Report Popular Front, El Fatah Merge And Plan Tactics Change

JERUSALEM, Sept. 15 (JTA)--Arab radio stations reported today that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine has merged with El Fatah, bringing the two major terrorist organizations under a single command. The Popular Front claimed credit for hijacking the El Al airliner last July 23 and forcing it to fly to Algeria. El Fatah, until recently directed by Syria, is now being run by Egypt although its main bases are in Jordan.

It was reported here that the Palestinian guerrilla organizations are changing their tactics which will result in greater emphasis on terrorist activities inside Israel and fewer clashes across the cease-fire lines with Israeli forces. Their aim will be to infiltrate deep into Israeli territory, and to this end more use may be made of the Lebanese frontier. Sources said that the new plans call for withdrawing the commando bases from the east valley of the Jordan to positions in the hinterland that are not within easy reach of Israeli strikes. King Hussein was reported by West Bank residents to have told El Fatah leaders that they must coordinate their activities with the Jordanian Army or else the Army would fight them. Observers here discounted the latter possibility because of El Fatah's popularity with the Palestinians who are now a majority of Jordan's population.

Two Israeli border policemen were killed and nine soldiers and border policemen and three civilians were injured in renewed outbreaks of shooting during the past two days along the Israel-Jordan demarcation line and in the Sinai. One of the border policemen was killed and three of his companions were injured during a Jordanian attack on their armored car in the northern Beisan Valley Friday morning. The other policeman was killed and six soldiers were wounded in a 45-minute artillery duel that erupted Saturday near the confluence of the Jordan and Yarmuk rivers in the Beisan area, a military spokesman reported. Fire was also exchanged with Syrian forces.

### Mayor Of Nablus, 10 Councillors Resign Offices, Rescind Decisions

JERUSALEM, Sept. 15 (JTA)--Mayor Hamdi Kanaan of Nablus and 10 town councillors who resigned yesterday in protest against the Israeli policy of blowing up terrorists' houses withdrew their resignations today. The mayor, who called an unsuccessful general strike in Nablus last Wednesday, was visited yesterday by Israel's Defense Minister Moshe Dayan who explained the Israeli policy and made some promises. The Nablus mayor was also apparently responding to popular petitions for his return to office that were inspired by Gen. Dayan.

The Defense Minister reportedly made it clear that the Army will continue to demolish houses owned or used by terrorists. But he promised that in the future the mayor would be informed in advance of such action. He also warned Mr. Kanaan that the military government would not take over municipal services and activities in Nablus should the mayor and councillors resign. He promised the mayor, however, that an unrestricted policy of travel to and from Jordan would be adopted toward Nablus residents if they avoid involvement with terrorists. Gen. Dayan suggested that the mayor's resignation be put to a popular vote. The result was hundreds of petitions received in the town hall today urging him to retract his resignation.

## Rabin Says Israel Will Defend Itself By All Means, Despite UN Criticism

NEW YORK, Sept. 15 (JTA)--Maj. Gen. Itzhak Rabin, Israel's Ambassador to the United States, declared here yesterday that Israel will continue to fight terrorism with all the means at her disposal, including reprisals "which will continue despite the condemnation in the United Nations." The Israeli envoy, formerly Chief of Staff of his country's armed forces, spoke before 500 delegates at the first national young leadership conference sponsored jointly by the United Jewish Appeal and the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. He described terrorist attacks as "a nuisance which interferes with the development of our nation."

He linked the recent escalation of terrorist assaults and clashes along the Suez Canal and along the Israel-Jordan demarcation line directly to the Soviet take-over of Czechoslovakia. He said the Soviet move heightened tensions in the Middle East because "the Arabs are admirers of force." The Czech situation, he said, "gives the Arabs confidence. Since Czechoslovakia there have been more penetrations and clashes along the Suez Canal. The Arabs are more trigger-happy. One can say this is a coincidence; I don't believe it is a coincidence."

Ambassador Rabin said that since the June, 1967 war there has been no change on the part of the Arabs that would eliminate stalemate and lead to peace. He put the blame primarily on Russia; which he accused of playing a key role in the actions of the United Nations against Israel. "Since 1954, when the Russians started their efforts to penetrate the Middle East by making their first arms deal with Egypt, the Russians have exercised their veto against Israel many times." The Soviet-Arab alliance, he continued, has led the UN "away from its basic ideals when it comes to Israel." He said the Soviets have rearmed the Arabs with more and better equipment than before the war and have trained Arab pilots in the USSR.

Gen. Rabin's address was the highlight of a two-day conference on domestic and overseas concerns which heard from several authorities on international Jewish needs, among them Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman, executive vice chairman of the UJA; Samuel L. Haber, executive vice chairman of the Joint Distribution Committee; Gottlieb Hammer, executive vice chairman of the United Israel Appeal; and I. L. Kenen, executive director of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee. The 500 young Jewish leaders were urged to champion social change through support of massive programs by both government and the private sector to assure justice, dignity and decent standards of living to impoverished and deprived Americans. The appeal was made at the opening session of the conference by Philip Bernstein, CJFWF executive vice-president. He also told the participants from 50 cities that America's urban problems, the development of a strong American Jewish community and the critical needs of Jews overseas were the top priorities in Jewish communal commitments. He reported that in the voluntary sector, the organized Jewish communities represented in the CJFWF had been "heavily involved in designing programs to combat the ills of our inner cities."

Isaac Toubin, executive vice-president of the American Association for Jewish Education, urged greater Jewish educational services for the more than 350,000 Jews attending college. He said Jewish educators understood that vast sums "must be made available to deal with secondary Jewish education and young adult education, and that these frontiers of action will be decisive in determining the quality of Jewish continuity -- even more than our previous preoccupation with elementary Hebrew schools."

## Muskie Says There 'May Be' Anti-Semitic Aspects In Fight Against Fortas

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15 (JTA)--Sen. Edmund Muskie, Democratic Vice Presidential nominee, said today on ABC's television program "Issues and Answers" that "there may be" anti-Semitic overtones in the Senate opposition to confirmation of Abe Fortas as Chief Justice of the United States. The Senator spoke in reply to a question that sought to elicit his view on whether anti-Semitism was a factor in the fight against Mr. Fortas' confirmation. Sen. Muskie said that he "never suspected" Sen. Robert Griffin, of Michigan, leader of the anti-Fortas forces, of anti-Semitism. He added that some who oppose Mr. Fortas were not so motivated but that he was not sure about others.

## Sen. Robert Kennedy Memorialized At Mizrahi Women's Ceremony

NEW YORK, Sept. 15 (JTA)--The late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy was memorialized here today in a posthumous presentation of the 1968 "Annual America-Israel Friendship Award" of the Mizrahi Women's Organization of America. In a ceremony approved by the Kennedy family, the citation was accepted by the late Senator's colleague, Senator Jacob K. Javits, at the America-Israel Friendship dinner of the organization's 43rd annual national convention.

In addresses, Yosef Tekoah, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, said the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia has strengthened Arab intransigence, and Sen. Javits said the Russians' preoccupation with problems in Czechoslovakia may induce the Kremlin "leadership to scale down its provocative activities in the Middle East."

## Negroes Comprise 60 Percent Of Merchants In Harlem, AJCongress Finds

NEW YORK, Sept. 15 (JTA)--A survey of business ownership in a 20-block area in the heart of Harlem shows that Negroes comprise nearly 60 percent of all merchants in the area and that their share of the total is rising, the American Jewish Congress reported today. The findings were offered as a rebuttal to charges that Jews own most of the stores in the ghetto and are piling up profits at the expense of black residents. Prof. Naomi Levine of Long Island University, who directed the survey, said in disclosing the results of the study.