

# 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

Friday, September 27, 1968

No. 185

## Israel Sees Nothing New, Threat To Peaceful Solution, In Soviet Mid-East Plan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 26 (JTA)--Israel's first reaction to a new Soviet peace plan for the Middle East, reportedly presented to the United States State Department for study two weeks ago, was that it contains nothing new and that the proposals would perpetuate the conflict and not solve the problem. This reaction was expressed by Ambassador Gideon Rafael, director-general of the Foreign Ministry, in a television interview today and by other Foreign Ministry officials in later appraisals. According to Mr. Rafael, the reported Soviet compromise plan "is more important for what has been left out than for what it contains." He said it called for "normalization" rather than for peace and that "Israel has learned of late what 'normalization' means in Soviet terminology. Czechoslovakia is an example of it." He found the plan reminiscent of the "normalization" imposed by the Big Powers in 1957, after the Sinai campaign.

The Soviet proposals, as reported by the New York Times today, called for: Israeli withdrawal to the pre-June, 1967 boundaries; a strong United Nations presence in the area evacuated; a declaration of non-belligerence by the Arab states and a four-power guarantee of peace in the region by the U.S., the Soviet Union, Britain and France. According to the Times, the Soviet proposal left to subsequent negotiation the questions of Israel's rights to free passage through the Suez Canal, the status of the Arab refugees and the status of Jerusalem.

Foreign Ministry officials commented that since there is nothing new in the reported proposals, they may be genuine. They pointed out that all of the elements have been mentioned before by Soviet or Arab spokesmen. They said that the plan purports to see the United Nations Security Council resolution of Nov. 22, 1967 implemented and the same desire had generated various plans in the past, all of them invariably starting with Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories as a first step.

### State Department Has Soviet Proposal Under Close Study

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26 (JTA)--White House press secretary George Christian today refused to comment on the report that the USSR has approached the United States with a Middle East peace plan, but State Department officials indicated that the Soviet approach was under careful study. These sources said the initial response of President Johnson and Secretary of State Dean Rusk was favorable.

The State Department would make no formal comment on the proposal. But State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey said that "several countries including the Soviet Union have been in touch with us in regard to ways in which the (Dr. Gunnar V.) Jarring mission can be helped to evolve an acceptable solution to the Middle East problem." He would neither confirm nor deny receipt of the Soviet Union proposal or comment on the reported details.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk will go to New York on Sunday where he is expected to confer on the Middle East question with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. He will also see Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban and the Foreign Ministers of Egypt and Jordan. It was reliably reported at the UN that before these meetings, he will confer with special UN peace envoy in the Middle East Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring. The initial Congressional response to the Soviet plan, especially in Republican leadership circles, was that the Soviet proposals might constitute a dangerous trap for Israel.

Israeli diplomats today reiterated to the State Department Israel's basic policy requiring direct talks with the Arabs as a prior condition to any withdrawal, in response to the peace plan advanced by the Soviet Union. The Israelis were also seeking clarification of the State Department's stand on Mid-East peace in light of the reported contact between Moscow and Washington.

Diplomatic sources close to the State Department believe the U.S. sees the new Soviet Middle East peace proposal as a basis for discussions between Washington and Moscow on the Arab-Israel deadlock. The U.S. reportedly likes one of the four points submitted privately to Washington by the Russians — the four-power guarantee of Middle East peace. Apparently the U.S. sees the Soviet plan as a basis for discussions because neither the Arabs nor Israel have been budged on the peace question and as a result of the lack of results of the peace mission of United Nations envoy Dr. Jarring.

Well-qualified observers believe that the U.S., which is displeased over Jerusalem's unwillingness to relent in her insistence on direct talks and to discuss disposition of the occupied territories without those talks, may attempt to apply new pressure on Israel, as a result of the Soviet overture. They see the U.S. possibly using the Soviet proposal as a tactical measure to apply such pressure to Israel to relax her insistence on direct negotiations. They do not believe however that President Johnson will shift diplomatic emphasis away from his five-point Middle East peace plan enunciated June 19, 1967 to an imposed settlement.

## See Johnson Preparing For Summit; Some Fear Deal On Vietnam That Could Hurt Israel

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26 (JTA)--President Johnson is believed by authoritative Congressional sources to be preparing for a summit meeting with Kremlin leaders — a meeting which some Congressmen fear may involved United States concessions in the Middle East in exchange for Communist concessions on Vietnam.

This view was advanced following announcement today of the resignation of George Ball as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Mr. Ball resigned with a controversial statement. He said, "We tend to think of Vietnam as the center of the cosmos." He stressed that the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia revealed that there are "very big ferments close to the heart of power and danger." (See related story on Page 4.)

Congressional leaders said it was probable that Mr. Ball did not like the outline of a possible summit deal with the USSR now reportedly sought by President Johnson. It appeared to them that Russia has diverted attention from the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia by presenting a new "peace" plan attacking the Israeli occupation of Arab territory.

In the opinion of informed men on Capitol Hill, the President has withheld the Phantom jets to retain maximum leverage in controlling Israel and seeking a deal with Moscow on Vietnam that could be at Israel's expense. Mr. Ball, who reportedly hopes to become Secretary of State if Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey becomes President, was said to have grave misgivings over any such deal and wanted to dissociate himself from the emerging diplomatic activity.

Rep. Edward Derwinski, Illinois Republican, warned today that the Soviet Union "on the eve of the new United Nations session is trying to divert attention from the brutal Russian seizure of Czechoslovakia by shifting the focus to Israel." He is a House Foreign Affairs Committee member.

Rep. Derwinski said he saw nothing new in the Soviet proposals but did see "a very dangerous tendency in the apparent readiness of some Western leaders to fall into the Russian trap." He said American support of Israel against Communist pressures should remain firm and that "our policymakers in these crucial next three months must be alert to any illusory detente with the Kremlin at the expense of America's true friends."

### Israelis Critical Of Soviet Warning That Jewish State Endangers Peace

ROME, Sept. 26 (JTA)--Israeli officials were critical today of yesterday's warning from Moscow that Israeli policies are endangering peace in the Middle East. Foreign Minister Abba Eban, who stopped here on his way to the 23rd United Nations General Assembly, termed it another "in a series of sterile warnings, always unilaterally supporting the Arab position and threats." He charged that Soviet rearmament and support of the Arab states were responsible for the increased tension in the area.

(Israel's Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon, addressing the Foreign Press Association in London, said "This is but another contribution to the tension in the Middle East and is irrelevant to the actual situation," because Israel plans no crossings of the cease-fire lines.)

(An official statement issued by the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem today denounced the Soviet warning as "slander" and "the clarion call with which the Soviet propaganda machine heralds its 'fall offensive' on the occasion of the opening of the 23rd General Assembly." The statement accused the Soviet Union of issuing its warning to Israel to divert world opinion to the Middle East as a "smokescreen" to cover its invasion of the territory of Czechoslovakia.)

Italian newspapers, with the exception of the Communist press, endorsed Mr. Eban's assertion yesterday that it was necessary for Israel to maintain her deterrent power against aggression. Most papers saw confirmation of Mr. Eban's press conference remarks in reports of increased Soviet naval power in the eastern Mediterranean, especially the presence of the aircraft carrier Moskva with its fleet of troop-carrying helicopters. The Rome daily Tempo said that "for Italy, the Soviet naval deployment in the Mediterranean is the equivalent of the threat against Germany posed by the occupation of Czechoslovakia."

### Travellers In Jordan Report King Hussein Taking Tough Line On El Fatah

TEL AVIV, Sept. 26 (JTA)--Travellers returning to Israel territory from Jordan report that King Hussein has decided once again to take a tough line toward the terrorist gangs using Jordanian territory as a base for incursions against Israel. According to some reports, Hussein is establishing loyal Bedouin units to fight the terrorists from within and has expelled the El Fatah commander, Abu Arm-Yassir Arafat, from Jordan. Reports attributed to well-informed circles said that the King intends to replace his pro-Egyptian Premier Bahjat al-Talhouni, who supports El Fatah activities.

The reasons for the get-tough policy, according to travellers, are the economic calamity and chaos brought on Jordan by the terrorist activities and Israeli reprisals. Jordan, they said, had been deprived of crops from its best developed agricultural region -- the Jordan Valley facing Israel's Beisan Valley -- which is the main base for terrorist incursions. The Israeli Army is able to protect settlements on the Israel side of the demarcation line, but Jordanian farmers are not protected and have pulled out. The travellers said that there is considerable unrest in terrorist ranks because of the heavy toll taken by Israeli forces. Desertions are said to be on the increase and recruitment has almost ceased.

### 2 Israeli Soldiers Wounded In Border Incidents; Israel Complains To UN

TEL AVIV, Sept. 26 (JTA)--Two Israeli soldiers were injured, one seriously, in mining and shooting incidents on the east bank of the Suez Canal and in the Jordan Valley yesterday, a military spokesman reported. Jordanians fired on Israeli forces today near Tirat Zvi in the southern Beisan

Valley and opened fire yesterday near Ashdod Yaacov and near the Damiya Bridge. There were no Israeli casualties in those incidents, the spokesman said.

United Nations observers were notified yesterday after an Army vehicle struck a mine east of the Suez Canal near the Small Bitter Lake, seriously injuring a soldier. Tracks and other evidence indicated that an Egyptian band of about nine commandos crossed the canal by boat and planted mines in the area. The other soldier was injured in a fierce exchange of fire yesterday between Israeli and Jordanian positions at Umm Shurt north of the Allenby Bridge.

(Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, Yosef Tekoah, yesterday sent a letter to Security Council president George Ignatieff of Canada accusing Egypt of aggression at the canal and saying that "there can no longer be any doubt that United Arab Republic authorities are suppressing the truth when they pretend they have no knowledge of these military actions.")

### Foreign Ministry Hits Cease-Fire Officials For Bearing Arab Protest To Thant

JERUSALEM, Sept. 26 (JTA)--The Foreign Ministry announced today that Israel has protested to Secretary General U Thant that United Nations cease-fire officials in Jerusalem have exceeded the scope of their mission by transmitting to the Secretary-General a petition signed by several hundred West Bank Arabs. A ministry spokesman said that the cease-fire observers have no standing except on the demarcation lines between the sides and "there is no need for them to act as postmen." The petition to Mr. Thant purported to describe conditions on the West Bank and in Jerusalem and alleged oppression and threats by Israeli authorities.

### Israelis Rap Thant On Peace Talks, Say He Is Misinformed On 1949 Rhodes Parley

NEW YORK, Sept. 26 (JTA)--Israeli circles today criticized Secretary General U Thant for his apparent support of the Arab position against direct negotiations with Israel. The basis of their criticism was Mr. Thant's introduction to his report to the 23rd General Assembly on United Nations activities between June 16, 1967 and June 15, 1968. In that document, the Secretary-General implicitly chided Israel for its insistence on direct negotiations. The Israelis also took issue with Mr. Thant's version of the 1949 armistice talks between Israel and the Arab states which he cited as an example of indirect negotiations leading to substantive results.

Mr. Thant said in the introduction to his report that "Ambassador (Gunnar V.) Jarring's efforts to promote agreement among the parties to the Middle East dispute have been impeded by the disagreement among them thus far on the procedure to be employed in taking up substantive questions." He said one side (Israel) insists on a face-to-face confrontation while the other side (Arabs) has rejected direct approach "but has been willing to carry on substantive talks concerning the implementation of the (Nov. 22, 1967) resolution with Ambassador Jarring as the intermediary." Mr. Thant said that "such a dialogue cannot be fruitful if it is substantive on one side but only procedural on the other." He added that "It would seem to me that as a general rule the emphasis should be on the results rather than on the procedure." The Israeli circles agreed with Mr. Thant's assertion that Dr. Jarring's efforts "must be discreet and confidential." They added, in an apparent allusion to the Thant report, that "this of course should apply to all forms of publicity and official reports."

Mr. Thant said that in 1949 "at the Rhodes negotiations...the respective parties" were "brought together in meetings under the chairmanship of the acting mediator (Dr. Ralph Bunche) to formalize agreements reached by indirect talks through him." The Israeli circles said that Mr. Thant had been "misinformed." "The 1949 negotiations took place not only at Rhodes," they said. "The agreement with Syria was negotiated in Switzerland and the agreement with Lebanon at Rosh Hanikrah (Israel). In all these cases, the negotiations were held in formal conferences and official protocols were kept. As in any other conference, understandings were sometimes reached informally but at all times this was done in joint meetings between official representatives of the parties. In any case, the refusal of the Arab states to negotiate with Israel is by no means a matter of procedure but reflects their negative position of substance."

### Report Jewish Journalist Received Threat Before Terrorist Destruction Of Pavilion

BUENOS AIRES, Sept. 26 (JTA)--A leading Jewish journalist received a telephone threat a few hours before terrorists' incendiary bombs touched off an explosion and fire which destroyed a \$2 million Israeli commercial exhibit in downtown Buenos Aires yesterday. The caller said that such an attack was being planned, the DAIA, central representative body of Argentine Jewry, disclosed today.

In reporting that Juan Rodolfo Rosenberg had been the victim of a telephone threat, the DAIA also said that the attack on the exhibit and the bombing of the Nachman Gesang Zionist Center in Rosario City, 160 miles northwest of here, last Monday night were new "criminal episodes" in a "long series of provocations." The statement reiterated an appeal "for energetic public action against the provoking elements."

Firemen brought the exhibit fire under control after seven hours. Among the exhibits lost in the blaze were agricultural machines, medical supplies, electronic parts, computers, and 100 irreplaceable oil paintings by Israel artists, as well as Jewish, Christian and Moslem religious articles. The exhibit was to have opened in several weeks. The sponsors say it cannot be rebuilt.

## Ball Resigns As U.S. Envoy To UN; J. Russell Wiggins Named To Post

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26 (JTA)--United States Ambassador to the United Nations George Ball, who took office June 26, resigned today, and President Johnson named in his place J. Russell Wiggins, editor of the Washington Post, a newspaper which recently has mounted a campaign opposing Phantom jets for Israel and urging Israeli concessions for peace.

Mr. Ball gave as his reason his desire to support the election of Hubert H. Humphrey. Mr. Johnson described Mr. Wiggins as "an advocate of peace." White House sources said the selection of Mr. Wiggins was based on his appreciation of the President's desire for detente with the Soviet Union. Mr. Wiggins, as editor of the Post, was in charge of the newspaper's editorial policy.

## Rockefeller Urges Maximum U.S. Backing For UN Middle East Efforts

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 26 (JTA)--Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, of New York, proposed today a three-point program by which, he said, the United States could assist the United Nations in finding a solution to the Middle East conflict. He listed the Middle East crisis, along with the Vietnam war and the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia, as instances where the UN has been thwarted by the "superpowers."

"The United States," Gov. Rockefeller said, "should steadfastly support the United Nations' effort to keep the cease-fire between Israel and her neighbors. It should seek to persuade the parties to refrain from clashes, infiltration and provocations along the cease-fire line. It should also support the strengthening of the UN Truce Supervision Organization and seek to persuade Jordan and Israel to accept UN observers along the Jordan River line."

In addition, Gov. Rockefeller said, "The United States should unceasingly urge all parties to support Ambassador Jarring's efforts to find the basis of a reasonable settlement, and to accept the Security Council Resolution (of Nov. 22, 1967) as a basis for these efforts." Finally, the New York Republican said, "it must be recognized...that the antagonisms between the Arabs and Israel are too deep-seated to yield to settlement unless pressure is exerted by both of the superpowers." Mr. Rockefeller also proposed that the United States urge Israel to extend fair and liberal treatment to the Arabs in the occupied territories and to Arab refugees. "Assistance in providing compensation to those who have lost their property would in the long run be less expensive than the consequences of protracted guerrilla warfare," he said.

## Renewed Soviet Anti-Semitism Seen Wrecking Hopes For Russian Jews

NEW YORK, Sept. 26 (JTA)--An American rabbi said today that hopes for more liberal treatment of Soviet Jews, raised by last spring's visit here of Moscow's Chief Rabbi Yehuda Leib Levin, have been "blotted out" by renewed Soviet anti-Semitism. According to Rabbi Israel Miller, chairman of the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, official anti-Semitism in the USSR manifested itself recently in charges of "Zionist conspiracy" in Czechoslovakia and the beatings of Soviet citizens protesting the Czech invasion by police "howling 'Zhid (Jews), beat them.'" Rabbi Miller announced that demonstrations would be held in 20 cities on Oct. 13 to protest the Soviet anti-Semitism.

Other signs of officially inspired anti-Semitic incitement, according to Rabbi Miller, were an article in the Soviet Army daily Red Star which accused Soviet Jews of dual loyalty and charges of "Zionist conspiracy" in Komsomolskaya Pravda, the Communist youth newspaper. Rabbi Miller said that a new anti-Semitic tract appeared last week by the former Nazi collaborator Trofim Kitchko, whose anti-Semitic volume, "Judaism Without Embellishment," was banned several years ago by Soviet authorities.

## Wexler Calls Senate Filibuster On Fortas 'Legislative Lynching'

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26 (JTA)--Dr. William A. Wexler, the president of B'nai B'rith, condemned today as "legislative lynching" the filibuster to block a Senate vote on the nomination of Justice Abe Fortas to be Chief Justice.

The campaign to postpone a vote "distorts the American system of governmental checks and balances and places partisan politics rather than judicial merit as a priority concern before the Senate," Dr. Wexler said. The objections raised by "a handful of Senators" to Justice Fortas' qualifications "should be weighed against their silence when Mr. Fortas was confirmed to the Supreme Court in 1965," Dr. Wexler said. "Their silence then speaks volumes now. Have three years on the nation's highest bench diminished Justice Fortas' ability?" Dr. Wexler added. "Or has the portent of a national election diminished the integrity of those who would block Justice Fortas that they stoop to appeals to prurience to prevent a vote on the merits?"

Parliamentary tactics to evade a vote "also evade the Senate's Constitutional responsibility to maintain continuity in Government," Dr. Wexler declared. He decried the campaign against Mr. Fortas' nomination as "tawdry in so much of its content." He added that "in all of American history, no nominee for Chief Justice had to submit to the abuse and vituperation to which Justice Fortas has been subjected," Dr. Wexler said.

## Rep. Podell Introduces Resolution On Balfour Declaration Anniversary

WASHINGTON, Sept. 26 (JTA)--Rep. Bertram L. Podell, a New York Democrat, announced today that he has introduced a concurrent resolution in the House congratulating the people of Israel on the 51st anniversary of the Balfour Declaration.