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Eshkol Sees Johnson Instructions On Jet Talks As Step Toward 'Deterring Aggression'

JERUSALEM, Oct. 10 (JTA)--Prime Minister Levi Eshkol today expressed his "deep appreciation" of President Johnson's "activities in the cause of peace" in the Middle East and said that the President's directive to Secretary of State Dean Rusk to begin negotiations for the sale of supersonic jet planes to Israel was "a step in the direction of deterring aggression."

Mr. Eshkol said that in his conversations with President Johnson, when they met at the LBJ Ranch in Texas last January, he had found the President to be "well acquainted with Israel's security problems and aware of her needs." He said that "a balance of armaments in the Middle East is the best guarantee of avoiding wars and referred to the large influx of Soviet arms into the region which, he said, had upset the balance and created new dangers. He noted that Israel's goal is the establishment of permanent peace.

While the President's directive to Mr. Rusk did not specify which supersonic jet would be sold to Israel, there was little doubt here that he meant the F-4 Phantom jet fighter-bomber, a twin-engined aircraft capable of speeds twice the speed of sound. Apart from the newer F-111 which is having technical troubles, the Phantom is regarded as the best plane of its kind in the United States arsenal and is the plane that Mr. Eshkol had requested at his Jan. 8 meeting with President Johnson.

Military experts here said the Phantoms could be absorbed into the Israel Air Force within a relatively short time but pointed out that their delivery date depended entirely on the U.S. Even if negotiations were to begin immediately, it would take several months before the first plane arrived in Israel, one source said. He added that past experience with the U.S. indicated that the delivery of the planes would be gradual, inasmuch as the Phantoms are still needed for the Vietnam war.

Israelis were elated at the news that the U.S. would sell supersonic jets to Israel. Three of the country's leading newspapers — Haaretz, Davar and the Jerusalem Post — noted that the aircraft have political as well as military significance and serve notice on the Soviet Union that the U.S. will continue to supply arms to Israel and regards Israel's security as in the American interest. The Jerusalem Post linked President Johnson's announcement to Foreign Minister Abba Eban's Tuesday speech before the United Nations General Assembly which appeared to have been generally well received by the U.S. State Department.

Negotiations For Sale Of Supersonic Aircraft To Begin 'Reasonably Soon'

WASHINGTON, Oct. 10 (JTA)--Negotiations for the sale of supersonic jet aircraft to Israel, directed by President Johnson yesterday, will be initiated "reasonably soon," the State Department said today. The Israel Embassy disclosed at the same time that it is "already in touch" with the Department relative to the Israel Government's application to buy 50 Phantom jet fighter-bombers. But a question appeared to hover over the whole transaction as State Department officials who have opposed the sale of Phantoms to Israel indicated that they did not consider the President's directive to Secretary of State Dean Rusk to open negotiations for the planes a final commitment to sell them.

These officials pointed out that the President's wording was cautiously phrased and left options open. Mr. Johnson said he was asking the Secretary of State "to initiate negotiations and report back to me." The President would then retain the option of further action based on the negotiations, the situation then existing, and other factors. They pointed out further that the White House has very carefully declined to elaborate the President's language which could not be taken as a final decision confirming the sale and leading to the issuance of export licenses. The officials said that in any case the Department would probably be unable to negotiate in detail and report back to the President before next month's elections.

Observers here, noting that Mr. Rusk is known to have led the opposition to the sale of Phantoms to Israel at this time, wondered why Mr. Johnson failed simply to direct the State Department to sell the aircraft. They pointed out that the Administration has known for over a year exactly the type of plane Israel wants and that Israel is well aware of the price and other data.

Mr. Rusk was questioned at a press conference today by reporters attempting to clarify whether Mr. Johnson's announcement on "negotiations" was actually a commitment to sell the planes. Mr. Rusk declined to make the matter clear. Despite Mr. Rusk's evasive answer and the guarded and cautious wording of the President's remarks, Israeli authorities here and most Administration officials believe that Mr. Johnson in effect gave a green light to the transaction.

Rep. Seymour Halpern, New York Republican, a co-sponsor of the amendment to the Foreign Aid Bill calling on the President to sell Phantom jets to Israel, said today that he is not satisfied that the White House announcement on "negotiations" actually represents a final decision on the long-pending sale. He said he has asked President Johnson for a clarification.

"The decision on the jets may turn out to be nothing more than a gimmick to evade the great concentration of public opinion for another month or so," he said. Rep. Halpern said "I want an explanation of why Secretary Rusk avoided a yes or no answer when asked by reporters if a decision had been made to sell the jets."

Egyptians Angry, Regard Decision As An 'Encouragement Of Aggression'

LONDON, Oct. 10 (JTA)--Anger was expressed in Cairo today over the U.S. decision to start negotiations on the sale of supersonic jets to Israel, it was reported here. The League of Arab States denounced the U.S. as unfair. Arab spokesmen accused President Johnson of "pushing us into the embrace of the Russians."

The Government-owned newspaper Al Gumhuriy branded the negotiations as "encouragement of aggression." Arab diplomats told the press in Cairo that the development dimmed peace hopes and "sealed the fate of the United Nations' efforts to achieve an honorable settlement of the crisis."

Hebron Youth Admits Throwing Grenade Which Injured 47 Jews

TEL AVIV, Oct. 10 (JTA)--Police reported today that a 17-year-old Hebron high school student has confessed to throwing the hand grenade that injured 47 Israeli civilians visiting the Patriarchs' Tomb in Hebron yesterday. The youth, identified as Addin Rashid Geit, was apprehended within 12 hours after the incident. Defense Minister Gen. Moshe Dayan told newsmen today that punitive measures were likely to be taken against several other Hebron residents known to have cooperated with young Geit.

Police said the student was arrested in the course of an investigation that began immediately after the blast and which resulted in the arrest and questioning of many Hebron residents. After his confession he cooperated with police and reconstructed the episode, police sources said. The grenade attack was denounced by Prime Minister Levi Eshkol in an address to Israeli war veterans last night. He called it an outrage. His sentiments were echoed by Shiekh Mohammad Ali Jaabari, the mayor of Hebron, who declared that it was as much an assault on Arabs as it was on Jews.

The grenade was tossed over a six-foot wall and exploded on steps leading to the tomb which is located within the compound of the Ibrahim mosque. Twenty-one of the injured were still in hospitals today. Eight of them underwent emergency surgery. Doctors at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem said all were off the danger list. Twenty-one of the victims were members of a tour group organized by the Israel Nautical College in Acre and one was a non-Israeli tourist identified as Esther Cohen, 32, of Panama.

In a radio interview yesterday, Gen. Dayan urged Jews to continue to visit the shrine which was reportedly filled with worshippers today. Gen. Dayan, who visited the site of the explosion, told newsmen today that stricter security measures would be taken to safeguard tourists and worshippers in Hebron. He said that guards would be posted on the roofs around the tomb site. But Gen. Dayan declined to comment on reports that the key to the mosque and the tomb would hereafter be entrusted to the border police and not to the aged Moslem guard who held it during the Jordanian rule of the city and was permitted by the Israelis to retain it.

Several Israeli newspapers warned today against acts of reprisal by Israeli youth for the Hebron grenade incident. The newspaper Hatzofe, organ of the National Religious Party, claimed that part of the blame must be assigned to the Moslem leadership in Hebron which has objected to Jewish religious services in the mosque area.

Czech-Made Rocket Launcher Used Again In Saboteur Attack

TEL AVIV, Oct. 10 (JTA)--Israeli Army circles revealed today that a Czechoslovakian-made rocket launcher known as "Katushya" was used by Arab saboteurs in an attack on the Dead Sea Potash Works on the southern shores of the Dead Sea yesterday. The rockets were fired from Jordanian territory and landed harmlessly in evaporation ponds. According to an Army spokesman, fragments of the exploded rockets were identified as the type that is fired by the 130mm "Katushya." The same weapon was used in an attack on settlements in the Beisan Valley last month. A military spokesman reported that a bazooka shell was fired at an Israeli armored patrol car near Shaar Hagolan in the Beisan Valley today. The bazooka was silenced by return fire. There were no Israeli casualties.

A 22-year-old Israeli Arab from Galilee convicted of espionage was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by a district court yesterday. He is Fuad Asad, a former Hebrew teacher in East Jerusalem, who was found guilty of providing military information to the Palestinian Liberation Organization, an Arab group that supports terrorist activities. Asad was said to have translated maps and charts from Hebrew into Arabic. He was reported to have been recruited for espionage by one of his students, a young man from Hebron. Asad was a graduate of an Israeli high school.

Israel Plans To Set Up First Civilian Settlement In Northern Sinai

TEL AVIV, Oct. 10 (JTA)--Israel will establish its first civilian settlement in northern Sinai. It will be affiliated with the moshav cooperative movement and will be closer to the Suez Canal than the two Nahal, paramilitary settlements previously established in the Sinai. A new Nahal settlement soon to be established in the Jordan Valley will be called Argaman in memory of Lt. Col. Aryeh Regev and a Capt. Manellah of the Israel Army who were killed shortly before Rosh Hashanah in an engagement with saboteurs in the Jordan Valley.

See Moslem Call For 'Holy War' Against Israel Unlikely To Stir Up Arabs

LONDON, Oct. 10 (JTA)--The call for a "jihad" — holy war — against Israel issued by Islamic religious leaders from 34 countries in Cairo last week is not likely to draw the response that similar calls in past eras elicited from the Moslem faithful, the London Times reported from Cairo today. "In theory, such a call should set the devout ablaze," the Times said. "It should be emphasized, however, that in modern declarations of 'jihad,' there is a spacious gap between wish and fulfillment."

Riad Tells Assembly Israel Must Withdraw, Avoids Mentioning Eban Peace Plan

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 10 (JTA)--Mahmoud Riad, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, told the General Assembly today "the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from every inch of the Arab territories they have occupied, as a result of the aggression of June 5, 1967, is an obligation that belongs to the highest and most sacred category of international obligations."

Without a single explicit mention of Israel's nine-point program for Middle East peace given before the Assembly last Tuesday by Abba Eban, Israel's Foreign Minister, Mr. Riad rejected the Israeli plan in toto. He delivered a lengthy address, summarizing the Middle East situation as follows:

"Israel has launched its aggression against the Arab states on the fifth of June, 1967 for the purpose of territorial expansion; the Security Council resolution of Nov. 22, 1967 affirmed that Israel must withdraw its forces from the territories it occupied. It also laid down a settlement of the various questions in the area for the realization of peace. We have declared our acceptance and readiness to implement that resolution as well as our support of the mission of the special representative of the Secretary-General, Dr. Gunnar Jarring. Israel refuses to implement that resolution for it (the resolution) frustrates its ambition for territorial expansion and annexation of Arab territory.

"Israel continues to follow a policy aimed at undermining the mission of Dr. Jarring while it cloaks this policy by semantic maneuvers and deceptive statements. Israel, which had threatened world peace, when it committed its aggression in 1967, continues to insist on its aggression and its refusal to achieve peace."

Thus the Egyptian diplomat ignored Mr. Eban's statement before the Assembly to the effect that Israel had accepted the Nov. 22 resolution which set up the Jarring mission. Mr. Riad also ignored all the other points in the Nov. 22 resolution which, in addition to calling for Israel withdrawal, also called for freedom of Israeli navigation in international waterways and aimed at a just and lasting peace in the region.

Mr. Riad also compared Israel several times to Nazi Germany, insisting that Israel's "expansionism" was exactly like the actions of the Hitler regime. He also declared that Egypt had proposed to Dr. Jarring that he set up a "timetable for the implementation of the Nov. 22 resolution. We had indicated to him that the setting up of such a timetable would provide the framework of time within which all provisions of the Council Resolution would be implemented."

The Egyptian's proposal for a timetable was seen here as an indication that Egypt would be willing to discuss all the other issues in the Nov. 22 resolution but only after Israeli troop withdrawal. Mr. Riad concluded by telling the Assembly that after "every inch of the territory occupied today by the aggressive Israeli forces" had been recovered by Egypt, the Egyptian people were confident "that the forces of goodness and justice, throughout the world, will stand by us for the realization of peace based on justice."

Israelis Express Disappointment With Speech Given By Riad

Israeli circles here today expressed disappointment with the speech given in the General Assembly today by Egyptian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Riad. "The General Assembly had hoped for an opening toward peace. Instead it was treated to another slamming of the door," a source said. "We had looked forward with expectation to Mr. Riad's speech hoping to find in it encouragement for efforts toward peace. Instead he rejected peace calling it 'surrender.'" "It is clear that what Egypt suggests is a simple restoration of the conditions of hostility and vulnerability that prevailed before June, 1967 in exchange for a declaration that she accepts the Nov. 22, 1967 Security Council resolution," a source said. "It is significant that in speaking of that resolution, Mr. Riad omitted all reference to its central provisions."

Arab Press Cold To Eban's Nine-Point Peace Program

LONDON, Oct. 10 (JTA)--The Arab press responded coldly to the nine-point peace program offered by Foreign Minister Abba Eban of Israel before the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday. In Cairo the plan was seen as deviating only in tone from previous Israeli proposals. Cairo radio said it contained nothing new. Papers in Damascus said it "reaffirmed Zionist expansionist intentions." Baghdad radio ignored the speech. According to a Beirut dispatch in the London Times, an Egyptian Government spokesman referred to the Eban speech as "proposals for surrender" and said that Egypt would negotiate only through the UN.

Brandt Sees 'Misunderstanding' About Statute Of Limitations, Says Some Trials To Go On

NEW YORK, Oct. 10 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Willy Brandt, of West Germany, said at a press conference here today that there is a "misunderstanding" in the world that the statute of limitations on the prosecution of Nazi war criminals meant there would be no more war crimes trials after it goes into effect on Dec. 31, 1969. Mr. Brandt said that if the present law is not changed, 12,000-15,000 cases would nevertheless be dealt with since they have already been brought before courts. He said that enactment of the statute meant that no new investigations or cases could be brought up but added that there was a proposal before the Cabinet on the issue. Mr. Brandt did not elaborate on the proposal. There is, however, a considerable body of opinion inside and out of Germany that the statute of limitations, which concerns only Nazis charged with crimes involving murder, should be postponed if not abolished altogether.

Rabbi Teitz Differs With Conference On Soviet Jewry On Simhat Torah Demonstrations

NEW YORK, Oct. 10 (JTA)--An Orthodox rabbinical friend of Rabbi Yehuda Leib Levin of Moscow disclosed today that the latter wrote to him requesting him to send a large quantity of religious and ritual items for use in Moscow's Choral Synagogue. Rabbi Pinchas Teitz, of Elizabeth, N.J., a member of the presidium of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada, said that the request from Rabbi Levin is a "symptom" of the "beginning" of a closer relationship between Soviet and American Jewry — one to which the Soviet Government lends its approval.

Rabbi Teitz's view of developing relations has involved him in a dispute with the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, an "umbrella" body whose membership consists of 25 major American Jewish organizations representing virtually every facet of this country's Jewish community. Rabbi Teitz approached Rabbi Israel Miller, outgoing chairman of the Conference, to register his personal opposition and, he claims, the opposition of others to the Simhat Torah demonstrations of solidarity with Russian Jewry which the Conference has planned in 27 cities in the U.S. and Canada. Rabbi Teitz argued that the demonstrations could cause the Soviet Government to consider Simhat Torah gatherings by Russian Jewish youth as a show of solidarity with the American groups. On that basis, he maintained, the Kremlin could "nullify such gatherings, thereby denying Soviet Jews the opportunity to express their Jewish identity."

Rabbi Teitz said he had been in close contact with Rabbi Levin since the latter's return to Moscow from a visit to the U.S. last spring and that there had been several signs of a "warming up" of official treatment of Jews. He cited the "warmth" which, he said, a rabbinical mission to Russia headed by Rabbi Wolfe Kelman found in official circles last summer. Rabbi Kelman is executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly of America, the organization of Conservative rabbis.

Rabbi Miller disagreed with Rabbi Teitz's thesis. He said that "If the Soviet Government wants to build bridges they will do so whether or not demonstrations of solidarity will be held." He cited developments in Russia since Rabbi Levin's American visit last summer which, he said, "blotted out" the hopes raised that Russian Jews might be accorded a measure of the rights and freedoms enjoyed by other minorities in the Soviet Union. The Conference has asked the sponsors of the Oct. 13 demonstrations to emphasize their religious character and omit any political motifs.

Ouster Of Hatchett Urged By Jewish Groups In New Controversy

NEW YORK, Oct. 10 (JTA)--The ouster of John F. Hatchett, a Negro educator, as director of the New York University's new Afro-American Student Center was urged today by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Labor Committee. A Reform rabbinical leader meanwhile called Mr. Hatchett "a contemptuous, irresponsible and base rabble-rouser" who was "obviously unfit" for the university post.

Mr. Hatchett has been under fire from Jewish and Christian groups since publication of an article by him in a Negro teachers publication in which he charged that Negro pupils in New York City public schools were being "mentally poisoned" by "anti-black" Jewish teachers and "black Anglo-Saxons." The issue was revived when Dr. James Hester, NYU president, announced Mr. Hatchett's appointment to the new center. Dr. Hester decided last August to keep the teacher in that post after former Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg so recommended.

The controversy was reopened on Tuesday when Mr. Hatchett told a student meeting at the NYU Bronx campus that Richard M. Nixon, Vice President Hubert Humphrey and Albert Shanker, president of the United Federation of Teachers were "racist bastards." Dore Schary, ADL chairman, and David I. Asche, chairman of the New York Jewish Labor Committee, sent messages to Dr. Hester, urging that he rescind the Hatchett appointment.

Mr. Schary said that the Hatchett statement "once again demonstrates the kind of irresponsible, intemperate, indeed inflammatory remarks Mr. Hatchett showed earlier in anti-Semitic statements and writings. We fail to understand how a university of NYU's stature can continue to tolerate — or apologize for — the unbridled bigoted mouthings of a staff member who holds an ostensibly responsible position in a sensitive area." He urged Dr. Hester to "reconsider" the appointment. Mr. Asche said that the teacher's remarks Tuesday "once again demonstrates his gross unfitness" for the university post and "confirms our earlier condemnation of NYU" for the appointment. He said the problems for the university stemming from a man of "ungovernable fanaticism" would inevitably increase if Mr. Hatchett remained in his NYU post. He said the JLC was once again urging that "a dreadful error be rectified" and the appointment be rescinded.

Rabbi Maurice M. Eisendrath, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, also warned, in a speech here, that it was essential that the teacher's remarks "not be equated with the total black community and thereby provide a pretext for white withdrawal from the civil rights struggle and the urban crisis." A NYU spokesman said Dr. Hester was studying a transcript of Mr. Hatchett's latest remarks and that after completing the study, he would confer with other university officials. The spokesman said that otherwise, there was "no comment" on the Jewish criticisms.

Israel's Ambassador To Canada, Arye Eshel, Dies At 56 In Ottawa

OTTAWA, Oct. 10 (JTA)--Ambassador Arye Eshel, Israel's envoy to Canada, died of a heart attack here yesterday at the age of 56. His body was flown to New York today by a Canadian Royal Air Force plane and was placed aboard another plane bound for Israel where he will be buried. Ambassador Eshel assumed his post in Canada about a year ago. Immediately prior to that, he was assistant director of the Foreign Ministry in charge of Latin American Affairs. A graduate of Berlin University, Mr. Eshel settled in Palestine in 1934. He is survived by his wife, Tamar, and three children.