

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## Foreign Ministry's Director-General Denies Jordan, Israel Are Talking Peace

JERUSALEM, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Ambassador Gideon Rafael, director-general of Israel's Foreign Ministry, denied today that peace talks have been taking place between Israel and Jordan anywhere or on any level. Such reports were widely circulated in the press here and abroad yesterday. Mr. Rafael's mention of "peace feelers" between Israel and Jordan in a radio interview yesterday made headlines in Israeli newspapers which hailed his remark as "the first official confirmation" of such contacts.

Mr. Rafael told the JTA that his reference had been solely to the current round of talks being conducted in New York by the United Nations special emissary, Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, and was therefore "nothing new." He specifically denied reports emanating from Cairo and widely published yesterday that direct talks between Israeli officials and emissaries of the Jordanian Government had already begun in Israel-occupied territory. The Cairo report indicated that the Jordanian emissaries were prominent West Bank Arabs who had held public office in Jordan prior to the June, 1967 war, and that the Israelis involved were officials below Cabinet minister rank. Mr. Rafael told the JTA that a few months ago West Bank leaders had conveyed Israeli views to Amman and vice versa, but in recent weeks the focus of diplomatic activity had shifted to New York and no West Bank personalities were involved.

Mr. Rafael said in his radio interview that the Jordanian Government may have come to recognize that unless it makes direct approaches to Israel, the cease-fire situation and the cease-fire lines will not change. "If the consequences are drawn from this conclusion and Jordan agrees to negotiate, this will be welcomed here," he said. Asked if Israel would be willing to negotiate with Jordan separately, even if Egypt stayed aloof, Mr. Rafael replied that Israel has always been ready to negotiate and conclude a peace treaty with any Arab state that chooses to do so.

Cairo radio today broke its week-long silence on the rumors of Israeli-Jordanian peace talks which had emanated mainly from the Egyptian capital. It broadcast a denunciation of the nine-point peace program presented by Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban to the UN General Assembly on Oct. 8 and featured a statement by El Fatah, the Jordan-based Arab guerrilla organization, that it would not rest until all Palestine is liberated. Israeli observers said the broadcasts were a sign that Egypt may have become alarmed at the prospects of a Jordan-Israel peace settlement and was trying to forestall that possibility. They believed that the Egyptian move was coordinated with the Soviet Union and that Cairo radio was silent last week because Soviet-Egyptian consultations were still in progress.

(According to New York Times correspondent Eric Pace reporting from Cairo yesterday, the alleged Israeli-Jordanian talks were being carried out "at least with the tacit approval of the Egyptian Government." He said that was viewed by some pro-Arab observers as an indication of "Arab eagerness for a peaceful solution to the Middle East impasse." Mr. Pace said that neither the Arab nor Israeli spokesmen had mentioned the reported exchanges in public in order not to jeopardize prospects of a peace settlement. But, he said, "informants characterized the Jordanian-Israeli talks as merely presentations of the two Governments' views" and that since no real bargaining was involved, the talks did not amount to direct negotiations with Israel. Both sides were said to have adhered to the positions taken by their governments in separate discussions with Dr. Jarring, Mr. Pace reported.)

(The Israeli daily Maariv has reported that King Hussein vetoed a plan said to be favored by a majority of the Israeli Cabinet for the return of some territory to Jordan in exchange for guarantees of security. A full scale report on peace contacts and prospects will be made when Foreign Minister Abba Eban returns from New York this week. Mr. Eban and Israel's Ambassador to the United States, Gen. Itzhak Rabin, are returning to Jerusalem for "consultations." A New York Times report attributed their return to increased "confusion" within the Israel Cabinet which, the Times said, appeared to be seriously split over the prospects of separate negotiations with Jordan.)

## Reports Of Peace Progress Stirs Waves In Political Waters

JERUSALEM, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Reports of possible progress in Middle East peace moves involving Israel, Jordan and Egypt at the United Nations generated repercussions among Israel's political parties and led to a clarification of an earlier report that Prime Minister Eshkol planned to reply in the Knesset to a speech by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan which expressed deep skepticism about prospects for a Middle East peace.

Gen. Dayan addressing the National Union of Israeli students last Tuesday, said Israel should consider annexing the occupied Arab territories, prepare for a renewed onslaught by Arab countries massively rearmied by the Soviet Union, and seek to come closer to the Arab populations in the occupied sectors. It had been reported that Mr. Eshkol would reply in the Knesset on Monday but it was learned that he would not offer any peace prospects evaluation and that his policy statement originally scheduled for Monday had been postponed until after Mr. Eban returned.

Several ministers had pressed Mr. Eshkol to dissociate himself publicly from Gen. Dayan's address. Some political parties, particularly the Free Center, have decided to seek a vote of non-confidence in the Government when the Knesset reconvenes next week after the summer recess.

## Forecast Expanding Economy, Increased Employment, And Larger Trade Deficit

JERUSALEM, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Forecasts of an expanding economy, increased employment and more exports were presented to the Cabinet today in a report by Finance Minister Zeev Sharef. But it was disclosed at the same time that Israel's trade deficit for the current fiscal year will amount to an estimated \$600 million compared to \$424 million in fiscal 1967. The occasion for the report was the Cabinet's debate on the national budget for fiscal 1969, which begins April 1. Next year's overall budget was expected to exceed \$2 billion compared to \$1.57 billion approved by the Knesset (Parliament) for the current fiscal year.

The projected larger trade deficit, despite increasing exports, is attributed in part to an increase in investment goods, to defense needs and increased private consumption. Ephraim Dovrat, financial adviser to the Treasury said the projected deficit did not include the 50 Phantom jet planes that Israel is seeking to buy from the United States. Today's Cabinet meeting was presided over by Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon. Prime Minister Levi Eshkol was ill with a virus. Another Cabinet meeting is slated for tomorrow at which time political matters not taken up today may be discussed.

According to Mr. Sharef's report, Israel's gross national product grew by 12-13 percent in 1968. The number of employed persons rose by nine percent of 75,000 workers. Investments grew by 40 percent and exports by 16 percent. The circulation of currency and negotiable paper rose considerably but prices remained stable on the whole owing to a large increase in private savings. Despite an internal demand for goods, industrial exports rose by 23 percent. The forecast for 1969 saw a seven percent rise in employment and a four percent increase in productivity per person owing to increased efficiency and the introduction of automation. The report predicted an 11 percent increase in the gross national product and a 12 percent increase in exports in 1969 but did not say how large the expected trade deficit would be. It predicted a 12 percent increase in investments.

The Israel Government is trying to force certain local manufacturers to lower production costs by reducing tariff protection so that competitive foreign merchandise will sell in Israel at the same or even lower prices than the home-made product. A step in that direction was announced today with the publication of a list of 600 imported items on which customs duties will be lowered by five to 30 percent. They include a wide range of imports from electronics to leather goods and textiles. The reductions will go into effect on Jan. 1, 1969. According to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the reductions will force Israeli manufacturers to adopt more efficient methods which will enable them eventually to compete on the international market.

## Israeli, Pole Clash On Issue Of Soviet Anti-Semitism At UN Session In Geneva

GENEVA, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Judge Zeev Zeltner of Israel and Slavomir Dabrowa of Poland clashed on the issue of Soviet anti-Semitism at a meeting here of the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, a subsidiary body of the UN Commission on Human Rights. In discussing a special report made to the subcommission on discrimination in the political and other spheres, compiled by Hernan Santa Cruz, of Chile, Judge Zeltner told the subcommission that, while there was no real anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, "there was a clear case of policy of discrimination against Jews." He cited the publication in 1963 of the book "Judaism Without Embellishment," and noted that, while the book was criticized by the Soviet Government and the Soviet press, "its author has never been brought to trial." Commenting on Judge Zeltner's remarks, Mr. Dabrowa said, "the so-called Jewish question in the Soviet Union does not exist and never existed." He added, "Everybody knows who invented it and for what purpose."

## Predict Heated Debate When Labor Party Committee Votes On Alignment With Mapam

TEL AVIV, Oct. 20 (JTA)--A heated debate is expected Wednesday when the Israel Labor Party's Central Committee votes on an alignment with Israel's left-wing labor party, Mapam. Alignment was approved by a six-three vote a week ago in a special negotiating committee of Labor Party leaders and Mapam representatives. If ratified by the Central Committee, Labor will have an absolute majority in the Knesset (Parliament) for the first time in Israel's history. Alignment is supported by Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, former Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir, who is secretary-general of the Labor Party, and Mrs. Golda Meir, the former secretary-general. It was opposed in the negotiating committee by Shimon Peres, leader of the Rafi faction within the Labor Party. The voting on Wednesday will determine whether the alignment is implemented now or deferred until after next year's national elections. But the main issue is Mapam's insistence that it include its Arab members on its election lists as heretofore. The Labor Party has no Arabs on its lists although it is affiliated with Arab labor factions. Opponents say that Mapam should follow the Labor Party practice but the negotiating committee apparently yielded to the Mapam position.

## Israeli Athletes Have Poor Week At Olympic Games, Some Other Jews Do Well

MEXICO CITY, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Israeli athletes had a poor week at the Olympic games here. Track and swimming stars failed to qualify for final events in trial heats. A long distance walker finished 24th in a field of 36 starters. Israeli marksmen did poorly in shooting events in which they were expected to excel and Israel's soccer team, in which high hopes were placed, lost by a 2-0 score to the world champion Hungarian team in the first round of a qualifying tournament.

The athletes engaged in events that require physical stamina generally attributed their poor form to the high altitude. This was particularly true of the swimmers who complained of breathing difficulties because of the lack of oxygen. But Jewish athletes from other countries have turned in top performances in many strenuous events, including swimming.

## Dassault Says Israel Will Get 50 Embargoed Mirages If It Faces Danger

PARIS, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Marcel Dassault, whose company produces the Mirage jet fighter plane which is the backbone of Israel's Air Force, told a press conference here that the sale of 50 Mirage-V jets to Israel was barred last June by President Charles deGaulle because "they are offensive attack planes." Israel ordered and paid for the planes which now are housed — complete with Israeli Air Force markings — at airports in southern France. The manufacturer also said that if Israel was ever in danger it would get the 50 planes and he added that Israel had obtained from France since the June, 1967 war "all the necessary defensive weapons" it needed. The manufacturer, a confidante of Gen. de Gaulle, enumerated the defensive weapons as "helicopters and certain other planes, electronic equipment and probably even tanks.

Meanwhile two deputies belonging to the usually-well disciplined Gaullist majority submitted questions to the Government in the Chamber of Deputies asking the Government to end the embargo on the jets in order "to reestablish a balance of force" between Israel and the Arab states. The deputies stressed that the recent heavy arms deliveries to Egypt had tipped the balance of power which France has sought to maintain in the Middle East and that Israel was now in a position of inferiority in air strength.

Observers here emphasized that it was unusual for Gaullist representatives to question the President's policies and they suggested that the deputies' actions might be an indication of general unrest on the embargo among Gaullist rank and file members. Dassault rejected reports that France might sell Mirages to Iraq, declaring that Iraq could get much cheaper Soviet-made MIGs and that such a sale "would be unsuitable, as Israel has a priority," on such planes.

## Officials Display Relief Over NPD's Voluntary Liquidation Of Berlin Branch

BONN, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Relief was evident in official circles today over the right-wing National Democratic Party's (NPD) voluntary liquidation of its West Berlin branch, a move that averted a potentially embarrassing situation for Federal authorities and deprived East Germany of a strong propaganda point.

Political observers, however, were carefully watching today's local elections in Baden-Wurttemberg, Hesse and Saarland for evidence of further erosion of the NPD's political strength. The extreme nationalist, reputedly neo-Nazi party polled a poor 5.2 percent of the vote in the Lower Saxony local elections last month compared to 9.8 percent which it won in the Baden-Wurttemberg state elections in April. But observers here do not think the results of today's local elections will necessarily indicate the NPD's standing in next year's national elections. The consensus is that the rightists will win 40-50 seats in the Bundestag, West Germany's lower house.

The NPD's growing political strength in state elections this past year has been a cause for alarm inside Germany and abroad. This has resulted in calls for a ban on the party on the grounds that it is anti-democratic. Under West German law, political parties "which by reason of their aims or the behavior of their adherents seek to impair or destroy the free democratic basic order and to endanger the existence of the Federal Republic of Germany" are to be deemed unconstitutional. To have the NPD banned, the Government would have to prove that the party's activities and aims are those proscribed by the law. But the NPD has been careful to stay within the law and Government legal experts are reluctant to argue for a ban before the Constitutional High Court in Karlsruhe for lack of sufficient evidence. Should the court rule in favor of the NPD, that party would gain respectability and, its opponents fear, many new adherents.

## N.Y. State Agency Refuses Welfare Allowance Request For Purchase Of Kosher Food

NEW YORK, Oct. 20 (JTA)--A request for an increased allowance in welfare aid by an Orthodox Jewish woman to buy kosher food was rejected by the New York State Department of Social Services, the lawyer who represented the plaintiff reported. The attorney, Harvey Schwartz, is chairman of the social service committee of the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA), which represented the woman in the action. COLPA is an Orthodox organization formed to protect the rights of Orthodox Jews in matters of law.

The woman, whose name is being withheld, applied for the increase to her city caseworker, arguing that the cost of such foods, particularly for meats and fowl, was higher than that of non-kosher foods. The caseworker rejected the request. The woman was referred by community workers to COLPA which applied for a "fair hearing" — the equivalent of an appeal — to the state agency. The hearing was held here last July 5 and the ruling was handed down last week, Mr. Schwartz said.

The attorney reported that, in the ruling, the state found that it was a fact that kosher food, particularly in the meat and fowl category, was more expensive than non-kosher food and that the present city welfare food allowance was not adequate to purchase kosher food. The denial, the lawyer said, was based on grounds there is no state law or state social services department ruling which authorizes an allowance supplementing the regular food grant for religious purposes. He said that COLPA would probably appeal the ruling to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of New York. He also reported that he had been informed by the United Jewish Organization of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, a central agency for Orthodox Jewish groups in that area, that a "fair hearing" would be held tomorrow by the state agency on the same request from another Orthodox Jewish woman.

## Eshkol To Visit U.S. In December, Expects To See LBJ And President-Elect

JERUSALEM, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Prime Minister Levi Eshkol will visit the United States in December for anticipated meetings with President Johnson and the President-elect, Mr. Eshkol's visit will be in connection with a tour of three Latin American countries, Argentina, Brazil and Chile

## Jewish National Fund Announces 4-Year Plan To Reclaim Nearly 30,000 Israel Acres

NEW YORK, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Jewish National Fund world chairman Jacob Tsur announced a four-year plan yesterday to reclaim nearly 30,000 acres of soil in northern Israel, plant 25 million trees in new forests and open 500 miles of roads.

JNF president Herman L. Weisman said that the American Jewish community will be asked to contribute \$54 million needed to complete the project. Mr. Weisman told 1,500 delegates attending the plenary session of the JNF National Assembly here that the region earmarked for development extends from the northern tip of Israel near the sources of the Jordan River to the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee, a distance of 100 miles. He called the project "imperative for Israel's economic and physical future."

Dr. Milton Aron, JNF executive vice president, said that since it began activities 68 years ago, it had provided more than \$300 million for afforestation and reclamation of the land of Israel.

## Fisher Announces Organization Of 'Jewish Leaders' Supporting Nixon Candidacy

NEW YORK, Oct. 20 (JTA)--Max M. Fisher of Detroit, national Jewish communal leader and special adviser on urban and community affairs to Richard M. Nixon, the Republican Presidential candidate, announced here formation of a new national organization, "Concerned Citizens for Nixon," which he described as a group of "outstanding Jewish leaders."

Mr. Fisher, who is chairman of the new group, made the announcement at a press conference at which he said that there was a "good chance" that the greatest number of American Jewish citizens ever to support a Republican Presidential candidate would vote for Mr. Nixon next month. Mr. Fisher, a former national chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, said he felt that one reason for the anticipated shifting of Jewish votes from the usual majority for Democratic candidates this year was that many American Jews were "becoming increasingly concerned about the Administration's policy toward Israel, citing the delay in selling Israel Phantom jet fighter-bombers.

At the same time, he added, American Jews had become increasingly "attracted to Mr. Nixon's forthright statement of Sept. 8 in which he declared that the balance of military strength in the Middle East must be tipped in Israel's favor." Mr. Fisher also said that, as an American and as a Jew, he was concerned with the campaign of former Alabama Governor George Wallace for the Presidency. He said he saw in that campaign the same potential dangers which existed at the start of Hitler's march to power and he declared that Mr. Nixon was the only candidate who could stave off the Wallace "threat" and provide an effective antidote to it. He also asserted that the so-called Jewish vote should not be taken for granted by any party and said public opinion polls indicated that 31 percent of Jewish voters favored Mr. Nixon's candidacy.

## Proxy Vote Effort To Return Elmer Berger To American Council For Judaism Fails

NEW YORK, Oct. 20 (JTA)--An effort by American Council for Judaism members friendly to resigned executive vice president, Rabbi Elmer Berger, to have him reinstated failed this weekend at the organization's 25th anniversary conference. A proxy battle waged by pro-Berger forces against a group backing the present administration, led by president Richard Korn, of New York, turned out to be a lopsided loss. The present administration netted 750 votes, according to Mr. Korn, and the opposition about 150, in a canvass of the anti-Zionist organization's membership of some 5,000.

Rabbi Berger's official resignation was accepted by the Council's National Executive Committee on June 30, 1968. His position has not been filled since then. The present composition of the Council's governing authorities, heavily weighted with his opponents, will continue for another year, having been re-elected this weekend. Asked if the Council envisions any future working relationship with Rabbi Berger, its chief ideologist and driving force since its founding, Mr. Korn said that "conversations will be held later in the winter in an attempt to reach a working arrangement that is acceptable to all parties concerned." Rabbi Berger could not be reached for comment. He reportedly rejected a recent attempt to reach a compromise.

Rabbi Berger contends that he was forced out of office as a result of differences with the Council leadership over policy. His enemies maintain that he damaged the Council by turning it into a "pro-Arab and anti-Israel foreign policy association" and that he dominated its policy and program direction. The rabbi, on the other hand, holds that the leadership has adopted an "arbitrary" policy line that rules out "Middle East problems" and leaves the Council with a "kind of American Jewish Committee 'non-Zionism.'"

## 94 Japanese To Demonstrate In New York On Behalf Of Israel Retention Of Jerusalem

NEW YORK, Oct. 20 (JTA)--A group of 94 members of the Japanese Original Gospel movement will stage a demonstration tomorrow at the Dag Hammarskjöld Square near the United Nations on behalf of Israel's retention of the Old City of Jerusalem in any Middle East peace settlement. The 94 Christian Japanese citizens will be led by Prof. Ikuro Teshima, leader of the pro-Israel movement, and his son, Yasuov Teshima, a graduate of the Hebrew University. Mrs. Anna Weinreb, New York spokesman for the group, said that the 94 Japanese originally planned one of their regular visits to Israel and then decided on a New York stopover to make the demonstration. They will remain in New York for two days before embarking Tuesday evening on a Japan Airlines flight to complete their trip to Israel. Men and women are in the group. Mrs. Weinreb said many of them will stay at Kibbutz Hefzibah, with which the movement has close ties.