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Labor Parties Gain First Parliamentary Majority With Mapam-Labor Party Merger

TEL AVIV, Oct. 24 (JTA)--The secretariat of the Israel Labor Party voted 242 to 146 yesterday to approve an alignment with Mapam, the left-wing labor party, creating for labor the first parliamentary majority in Israel's history. The alignment gives the combined labor factions 67 seats in the 120-seat Knesset (Parliament). It is not a merger, but it provides for a common list of candidates in national and local elections and in the councils of Histadrut, Israel's powerful labor federation.

The results of the vote were hailed today by Pinhas Sapir, secretary-general of the Israel Labor Party and Israel's former Minister of Finance who called it "very encouraging." But Shimon Peres, leader of the former Rafi faction in the Labor Party, called the alignment a "mistake." Rafi members were strongly opposed to the alignment, at least at this time, only a year before Israel's next general elections. But there seemed little chance that any of them would leave the Labor Party as a result of yesterday's vote. Gen Moshe Dayan, Israel's Defense Minister and a Rafi leader, indicated that he did not intend to resign. Mapam leaders welcomed the decision as paving the way for a labor Government in Israel and said it would be ratified by the party next month.

The vote by the Labor Party secretariat ratified an agreement reached after months of negotiation by a specially appointed committee of the Labor Party and Mapam. The committee included Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, Mr. Sapir and Mrs. Golda Meir, former secretary-general of the Labor Party, who was once Israel's Foreign Minister. Despite the powerful political support of these veteran Labor leaders, ratification came only after hours of heated debate. The main point at issue was Mapam's insistence on including its Arab members on the joint electoral lists as it has always done on its own lists in the past. The Labor Party has no Arab members but is affiliated with Arab parties that present separate lists to the voters. The Labor Party negotiators agreed to the Mapam demand but a faction in the secretariat demanded that Mapam adhere to the Labor Party practice. Abba Khoushi, the veteran mayor of Haifa and a power in Israeli politics for 20 years, said the Mapam Arab members should appear on the lists of the Labor Party's Arab affiliates. His proposal was defeated however as was a proposal to postpone the effective date of the alignment until after the next general elections which are scheduled to take place in the fall of 1969.

The issue was brought up in the Knesset yesterday by Elias Nakhleh, an Arab member whose party is a Labor affiliate. He said he could not accept the idea that Arab members of Mapam would appear on the combined election lists while Arab affiliates of the Labor Party remained on separate lists.

Mapam also won points in the agreement pertaining to the Histadrut elections. It reserved the right to vote there as a separate faction on questions concerning wage policy and workers' conditions. With an absolute majority in the Knesset, the allied labor parties could theoretically establish a labor Government, thus eliminating the coalition that has prevailed since Israel achieved independence in 1948.

Fire Destroys Passenger Terminal At Lydda, Damage In Millions, Flights Continue

TEL AVIV, Oct. 24 (JTA)--A huge fire, said to have been caused by a short circuit, destroyed the main passenger terminal at Lydda Airport today but disrupted flights only briefly. No injuries were reported but damage was estimated at millions of dollars. Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon, who visited the airport in his capacity as acting Minister of Transport, said the damage could be repaired. Other reports said however that the building, which is fully insured, might not be useable anymore.

Airport authorities stressed that there was no evidence of sabotage and said the fire was started when a short circuit caused electric cables to overheat. They ignited ornamental plywood decorations in the terminal which in turn set fire to barrels of asphalt used for repairs to the building. Flames spread swiftly and the terminal was engulfed by black smoke. Passengers and employees in the building were escorted to safety and no one was hurt.

An El Al plane about to take off was delayed for an hour but airline officials said all flights would continue on schedule. (A British European Airways flight to Lydda with Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban aboard turned back to London Airport when the fire was reported. The plane resumed its flight two hours later. El Al officials in London said none of their flights were affected.)

The blaze was confined to the terminal building. An emergency communications center was quickly put into operations to receive incoming traffic and contact was maintained with all aircraft arriving or departing Lydda. Customs and other administrative procedures were transferred to another building. Passengers were received but non-passengers accompanying them were told to stay away from the airport.

The Lydda terminal building was built in the 1930s and enlarged many times to keep pace with increasing air traffic. It was recently renovated to handle large crowds of travellers and visitors. Plans to construct a new terminal were held in abeyance for lack of funds but may have to proceed now as a result of the fire.

U.S. Says It Would Act Quickly To Fill West German Order For 88 Phantom Jets

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24 (JTA)--Government officials said today that the United States would immediately accept and fill a West German order for 88 F-4 Phantom jet fighter-bombers, the supersonic plane that Israel asked to buy more than a year ago and for which sales negotiations have just begun.

The officials' reference was to an announcement in Bonn that West Germany had decided to buy the Phantom jets to counter the build-up of Soviet jets in Czechoslovakia since the occupation by Soviet-led forces last August. They said implementation of the sale rested only on approval by the Bonn Government's budgetary committee which controls the purse-strings. The purchase has already been approved by the military committee of the Bundestag, West Germany's lower house.

The United States officials said the sale of Phantoms to West Germany was "much less complicated" than sale of the same aircraft to Israel. An Administration source said "the Germans are in a different category than the Israelis. We are solidly committed to German security, but Israel represents another situation altogether. We are mindful of various ramifications of selling jets to Israel and it is much less complicated to honor the German order." Officials pointed out further that the U.S. considers West Germany "the cornerstone of NATO" but has no treaty commitments to Israel which is a "free agent." They said arms sales to Israel are negotiated on a case-by-case basis and various diplomatic factors are taken into account.

American officials said that they "welcomed" the West German decision to purchase the Phantoms which would strengthen Bonn's Air Force and take some of the burden off the U.S. Air Force. Officials said the West German order for the Phantom jets would be handled routinely and export licenses would be issued as soon as the order is transmitted to the U.S. Government.

The Washington Evening Star said today that "American officials are not as certain as Foreign Minister Abba Eban that negotiations over the Phantom jets would go quickly and routinely." According to the paper "these sources say the talks may be prolonged." The Star learned that "one problem to be ironed out — although not in direct connection with the negotiations — is the Israeli attitude toward the treaty limiting the spread of nuclear weapons."

Ministerial Committee Defines Powers And Authority Of Military Governors

JERUSALEM, Oct. 24 (JTA)--The powers and authority of the military governors of the occupied Arab territories were defined today by a ministerial committee which gave them virtually total authority, answerable only to the Minister of Defense or the Prime Minister.

The newly established guidelines state that the military governors remain the sole legal authority in their respective areas with the powers to act as legislators when necessary and to appoint local officials and judges. Civilian functions in the occupied territories will be carried out by civilian officials representing the particular ministry concerned, but measures initiated by the ministries within their spheres will be subject to the military governors' approval, the ministerial committee decreed. The ministerial committee on occupied territories will lay down Government policy for them but the sole address for residents of the areas is the military governor.

Find Parachute On East Bank Of Canal, Seen As Indication Of Air Space Violation

TEL AVIV, Oct. 24 (JTA)--The rear brake parachute of an Egyptian MIG jet fighter was found by Israeli forces on the East Bank of the Suez Canal today. It was believed to have come from one of the Egyptian MIGs that Israeli jets chased out of Israel-held air space in an encounter over the Suez Canal yesterday. Military authorities said it was proof that the Egyptian aircraft had tried to penetrate the skies over Sinai, probably on a reconnaissance mission. They conceded that the Israeli jets might have violated Egyptian air space in pursuit. The Israeli pilots jettisoned their reserve fuel tanks to increase their speed and the tanks apparently fell on Egyptian territory.

Cairo charged yesterday that Israeli jets had violated Egyptian air space and claimed that two planes were shot down and a third hit by Egyptian fighters. Israeli authorities said the Egyptian claim was "sheer nonsense." They said the Israeli aircraft had blocked an intrusion by the Egyptian jets and returned safely to their bases.

Lt. Gen. Odd Bull, chief of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, said today that air-to-air missiles were fired in the encounter. Apparently no losses were sustained by either side. He said truce observers had established that three Egyptian MIGs and three Israeli Mirage fighters were involved.

Military sources said that the brake parachute may have dropped from the Egyptian plane because of a pilot's error or because the plane was hit by Israeli fire. They said the encounter did not amount to an air battle but that the Israeli pilots fired short bursts at the Egyptians who turned and fled.

4 Arab Saboteurs Killed, 1 Wounded, In Clash With Israel Patrol At Jordan River

TEL AVIV, Oct. 24 (JTA)--Four Arab saboteurs were killed yesterday and a fifth was wounded and surrendered following a clash with an Israeli patrol near Umm Sidra, a crossing-point of the Jordan River. A heavy artillery barrage from the Jordanian side of the river was believed intended to cover the crossing of the saboteurs whose bodies were found today along with a large quantity of

weapons. Two Israeli soldiers were injured yesterday when an Army halftrack was attacked by bazooka fire, machineguns and hand grenades near a southern suburb of Gaza. A military spokesman said a curfew was imposed on parts of Gaza while an investigation was conducted.

Israeli mortars hit Jordanian positions hard near the village of Bakoura on the East Bank following a mortar attack on Israeli forces near Ashdod Yaacov in the Beisan Valley. The exchange lasted a half hour, a military spokesman reported. Two Israeli cars were attacked on a road near Al Jamma in the southern Golan Heights. The firing came from the Jordanian side of the demarcation line. There were no casualties.

The encounter near Umm Sidra indicated an increase in sabotage activities. Security circles believe they are connected with rumors of possible peace contacts between Israel and Jordan. The saboteurs are trying to show that no arrangements can be made without their consent, it is believed.

A 30-year prison sentence was imposed by a military tribunal today on Abdoul Kamia Moustafa, sole survivor of a band of Arab saboteurs from Jordan. He was wounded and captured in an encounter with an Israeli patrol in which his five companions were killed. According to testimony, his group planned to mine roads and attack vehicles and settlements with bazooka fire.

A military tribunal yesterday imposed life sentences on three members of an Arab version of Murder, Inc. which had been operating in Nablus against West Bank Arabs suspected of collaborating with Israel. Two other gang members received 15 year and five year sentences. The group was convicted of the murder of a Nablus taxi-driver who had been "sentenced" by El Fatah as an alleged collaborator. It had a list of other Arabs marked for "elimination."

Curfew Imposed In Nablus And Jenin Following Demonstrations, Lifted Elsewhere

JERUSALEM, Oct. 24 (JTA)--Curfews were lifted in the twin towns of Ramallah and El Byrah today but were imposed in Nablus and Jenin where anti-Israel demonstrations by high school students and adults broke out anew. In Jenin, high school boys and girls staged two separate rallies. Cries were heard denouncing King Hussein of Jordan as a "traitor" and supporting El Fatah, terrorist organization based in Jordan. In Nablus, adults led some 3,000 school boys and girls through the streets shouting slogans until they were dispersed.

The Ramallah-El Byrah curfews were lifted following a visit there yesterday by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan who met with the mayor and local civic leaders. They reportedly promised to work harder to keep public order and control unruly elements.

Rabin Leads Members Of Harel Brigade Into Jerusalem -- Second Time In 20 Years

JERUSALEM, Oct. 24 (JTA)--Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Rabin led his former troops into Jerusalem today to celebrate a reunion of the old Harel Brigade, the Haganah force that battled its way into a besieged Jerusalem under Gen. Rabin's command during Israel's War for Independence in 1948.

Gen. Rabin, former Chief of Staff of Israel's armed forces and now Israel's Ambassador to the United States, flew in from Washington yesterday to attend the reunion which marked the 20th anniversary of the lifting of the Jerusalem siege. He and his men entered the city in jeeps and buses to the cheers of a festive crowd, a sharp contrast to the scene two decades ago when they arrived in tanks and armored cars to relieve a city that had been cut off and under enemy barrage for 100 days. Speaking at the reunion gathering, Minister of Information Israel Galili said the siege of Jerusalem in 1948 proved that Israel must have secure frontiers. Gen Rabin will return to Washington next week.

Goldmann Sees Latin American Jewry's Problems Stemming From General Instability

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, Oct. 24 (JTA)--Dr. Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress, said here today that the problems of Latin American Jewry stem not so much from an overt anti-Semitic movement as from tensions and instability on the continent. "When tensions of a revolutionary nature are present, we Jews, as a minority, always become its first victims," Dr. Goldmann said.

The Jewish leader arrived here yesterday to attend the forthcoming fifth conference of Latin American Jewish Communities. At a press conference today he discussed a wide range of subjects covering the status of Jews in various countries. He said that, in Latin America, Jews should not ignore anti-Semitic manifestations. But he indicated that he did not see them as a major threat. He noted that the anti-Jewish Tacuara movement existed in Buenos Aires a few years ago, remarking "those who burned the Israeli pavilion at the Buenos Aires trade fair a few weeks ago were not friends of the Jews."

Dr. Goldmann said today's biggest threat to Jews does not come from traditional anti-Semites of the extreme right but from the "new phenomenon" of anti-Zionism of the extreme left. He noted that anti-Zionism reached spectacular proportions in the Soviet Union right after the Arab-Israel war of June, 1967. He said it was "violent and nasty" in Poland where "surely 20,000 Jews are in danger. This mental perversion has shown itself among leftist groups in Western countries which have developed anti-Israel feelings of such violence it is difficult to say where anti-Zionism ends and anti-Semitism begins," he said.

Projected Conservative-Reform Program Would Offer New 'Option' To Israeli Jews

NEW YORK, Oct. 24 (JTA)--An effort to provide a "third option" to Israeli Jews whose choice now is limited to Orthodox Judaism and secularism was described by a Conservative rabbinical leader today as one of the goals of a projected Conservative-Reform rabbinical cooperative program.

Rabbi Ralph Simon of Chicago, president of the Rabbinical Assembly, said that the principle of such a cooperative effort was endorsed yesterday at an unprecedented all-day study meeting of the executive board of the (Reform) Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Rabbinical Assembly, held at the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Conservative institution. The gathering, attended by 65 Reform and Conservative rabbinical leaders, was the first joint meeting since the CCAR was founded in 1889 and the RA in 1899.

Rabbi Simon said that this general objective had been sought separately by the two branches through their Committees on Israel and that both would hereafter "communicate with each other and cooperate in endeavors in which they have mutual concerns." The conference yesterday was convened, in the words of the CCAR president, Rabbi Levi Olan of Dallas, as a representation of "what is happening in the world at large — the growing movement of secularism which has brought the religious forces closer together." Rabbi Simon added that the two Committees on Israel would set a date soon for their first joint meeting to consider steps toward the basic objective.

Rabbi Simon cited as an example of the program to be advanced by cooperative Reform-Conservative action wider dissemination of a journal of religious thought "Petahim" (Gateways), which he called a journal not bound by the "rigidity of the fundamentalist position." The bi-monthly publication is published in Jerusalem under the editorship of Joseph Bentwich, the Anglo-Jewish editor. Rabbi Simon said that the publication had been struggling with problems of financing and support and that the Committees on Judaism hoped to give it more financial aid and help in stimulating its circulation which he described as "several thousand."

Another cooperative goal, Rabbi Simon explained, would be efforts to grapple with "the whole philosophical concept of a Jewish State." New efforts also are planned to encourage American rabbis to go to Israel and carry on programs of liberal religious thought and education among Israeli Jews.

There are at present seven Reform congregations and five Conservative congregations in Israel. Each congregational group in Israel will continue to receive support from its American counterpart but it was stressed by Rabbi Simon that the cooperative Reform-Conservative plans would seek to avoid confrontations with the Israeli Government and the Orthodox rabbinate, the sole Jewish religious movement recognized in Israel.

An example of the separate efforts cited was a program approved at the November, 1967 convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in Montreal, calling on each member congregation to seek contributions of one dollar per member family to be used in aiding the Reform congregations in Israel. Under the direction of Nathaniel Hess, chairman of the UAHC Committee on Israel, more than \$100,000 has been raised in that campaign. It was also reported that there are 39 RA rabbis now resident in Israel, working in synagogues, youth villages and other institutions and agencies.

N.Y. AJCommittee Seeking To Ease Negro-Jewish Tensions Stemming From School Strike

NEW YORK, Oct. 24 (JTA)--A spokesman for the New York chapter of the American Jewish Committee said today that chapter representatives had been engaged in intensive conversations with Jewish and Negro leaders in an effort to ease the Negro-Jewish tensions developing from the teachers strike against the city's schools. The spokesman said the conversations had been going on for several weeks and that there was general agreement in both groups that the situation was serious and that action was essential to avoid a severe Negro-Jewish confrontation. He said that the chapter was planning to sponsor an advertisement in the New York press, to be signed by a wide representation of Negro and Jewish leadership, the theme of which will be a "call to reason" to all parties in the dispute. The New York City school system has been shut down three times since the opening of the school year, amid charges that black extremists were using anti-Semitism in their battle against the United Federation of Teachers.

At the same time, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, an AJCommittee official who is president of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, said in a radio interview that "we have begun a series of conversations with black religious and educational personalities focusing on the problems of working out an effective decentralization program, the resolution of which must concern all serious people who have the best interests of the children of our city at heart, as well as the legitimate interests of the teachers, and the black and Jewish peoples of this city."

Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is director of interreligious affairs for the AJCommittee, said also that during the past week he had spoken with teachers and several Negro churchmen and community leaders in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville area, the controversial experimental section in decentralization, which has been the focus of the teachers union strike struggle. Rabbi Tanenbaum said those Negro leaders and teachers were "deeply disturbed" by the "prevalence of anti-Semitism and the role of black extremists from outside the community" and by "the polarization which this has led to between the black and Jewish communities."

Conference Of Christians And Jews Concerned About Campaign Appeals To Bigotry

NEW YORK, Oct. 24 (JTA)--The National Conference of Christians and Jews said today that it had expressed concern in telegrams to the three major Presidential candidates that some candidates for office are making "blatant and subtle appeals to racial and religious prejudice" in their campaigns. Dr. Sterling W. Brown, president, called on all candidates from the local to the Presidential level to "make a pledge of no appeal" to bias.