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Washington And Moscow In Contact As Middle East Tension, Fighting Increase

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4 (JTA)--Soviet and United States sources against a background of heightened tension in the Middle East, disclosed today that diplomatic contacts have taken place between the two countries with a view to finding a peace formula. The U.S. has also held discussions with Britain and France. (France today proposed a meeting of the Big Powers to work for an international solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute, Information Minister Joel Le Theule announced in Paris.) Soviet sources indicated that the U.S. had advanced certain ideas to Moscow on a peace formula. But, it was conceded, such proposals had limited value unless agreement could be obtained from both Israel and the Arabs. The Russians have voiced apprehension that Israel is trying to provoke a new round of fighting as a pretext for striking at the Egyptian military establishment before the latter is ready for a new war.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk reported to the Cabinet today on Mideast developments and the new outbreak of fighting. His report was described as "comprehensive." State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey insisted to a press conference that there was no specific "blueprint" advanced by the U.S. for peace beyond the plan enunciated by President Johnson, embodying the five points of June, 1967. Mr. McCloskey said it would be "misleading" to assume that a detailed formula has been proposed by the State Department beyond the policy expressed after the Six-Day War. He conceded that the U.S. has held discussions on Mideast peace with Russia, France and Britain, and said Washington continues to support the mission of United Nations envoy Gunnar V. Jarring.

(Reports from Cairo indicated that Egypt expressed fear that Israel was going to attack. Egyptian officials were quoted as stating that Egypt would not strike at Israel's convenience but would enter battle when fully prepared. In Paris, Foreign Minister Michel Debre today reiterated France's stand that only a Four Power conference can stop the escalation of violence in the Mideast that could lead to war.)

State Department Expresses Concern Over Iraqi Military Action

U.S. officials yesterday condemned both sides in the latest Israel-Arab eruptions along the Jordanian cease-fire line. Special concern was voiced by State Department sources over Israel's use of jets. Officials also voiced concern over the injection of Iraqi artillery units into the Jordan-Israeli issue, pointing out that no cease-fire agreement exists between Iraq and Israel. It was also noted that the Soviet Union has worsened the situation by supplying the Iraqis with the same type of artillery and rockets used against U.S. forces by North Vietnam in the vicinity of the demilitarized zone. It was also noted that Arab guerrillas in Jordan are using weapons of the type supplied to North Vietnam and the Viet Cong by the USSR.

The State Department termed as untrue a press association Paris report that the U.S. was seeking support of key Western nations for a new seven-point peace plan. The Associated Press reported that the Johnson Administration was said to have initiated the plan which was seen as having gained momentum after the election. The points were reported as: Israel withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and settlement of the status of Jerusalem and other occupied areas at a later date; Egyptian termination of the state of war; resettlement of Arab refugees in Israel-occupied territory; Egyptian acceptance of the principle of free navigation by Israel in the Strait of Tiran and Suez Canal; Israel withdrawal from Sharm el Sheikh, which controls the Strait of Tiran, and their replacement by United Nations forces in an arrangement similar to the one existing before June, 1967; an East-West agreement on limiting arms shipments to the Middle East; and signature of the Arabs and Israel to a peace treaty.

Israel Jets Blast Iraqi Military Position In Jordan; Artillery Exchange Continues

TEL AVIV, Dec. 4 (JTA)--Israeli jets struck positions in Jordan Wednesday as artillery battles raged along the cease-fire demarcation line. The jets' target was the Iraqi force, estimated at 10,000 strong, stationed in northwest Jordan, whose heavy artillery and rockets have been bombarding Israeli settlements in the Jordan and Beisan Valleys for the past four days. Jordanian radio reported six "military deaths" and 14 injuries.

Israel announced that one of its planes -- a French-built Super Mystere jet -- crashed in Jordan but its pilot bailed out over Israeli territory and was hospitalized for his injuries. An Israeli spokesman said all other planes returned safely to their bases. He listed their targets as Iraqi troop concentrations and concentrations of armored and other vehicles, radar stations and other installations west of Irbid and in the vicinity of Mafraq. Irbid is Jordan's second largest city. Mafraq is a major road junction 30 miles northeast of Amman, the capital. An Israeli General Staff officer defined the strike as a "strong air attack" intended to "teach the Iraqis a lesson that their attacks on Israeli settlements will not go unpunished." Jordan claimed that these other towns were hit Wednesday: Sahar, about seven miles northwest of Irbid; Zamaliya, eight miles west of Irbid; Taiyba, two miles from Zamaliya and Mafraq. Jordanian military reports heard here on Amman Radio claimed that three Israeli planes

were shot down by anti-aircraft fire. Amman had a 30-minute air raid alert as Israeli planes reportedly buzzed the capital. Amman reports said the Israeli planes inflicted little damage in their attacks because of heavy ground fire and a low cloud cover. An Israeli communique said today that the jet attacks were ordered because "Iraqi forces have taken into their hands an increasing role in the offensive against Israel." It said that "Iraqi artillery, without any valid cause, has been carrying the weight of attacks against Israeli settlements in the Beisan and Jordan Valleys, particularly on the night of Dec. 2-3."

According to Israeli intelligence reports, half the 10,000-man Iraqi force, based in Jordan since the Six-Day War was equipped with heavy Soviet-supplied rockets and long-range artillery. The Iraqis and Palestinian commando groups were reportedly operating independently of the Jordanian Government. On the ground today, according to an Israeli spokesman, Jordanians used 81-millimeter mortars to bombard an Israeli tractor station south of the Damiya Bridge. No casualties were reported. Small arms fire was reported yesterday near the Allenby Bridge. Saboteurs from Jordan blew up a civilian tractor near the Dead Sea potash works.

According to Israeli eye-witness accounts, panic-stricken residents of Irbid, a town of nearly 100,000, started evacuating it yesterday despite appeals from Amman to stay. Irbid was heavily damaged by Israeli long range artillery Sunday and Monday in retaliation for heavy Jordanian attacks on Israeli settlements. Some 50 houses were reportedly damaged. Long lines of cars, horses, donkeys and carts were seen leaving the city. The Jordanian village of Kfar Assad on the slopes of the Gilead Mountains was also reportedly wrecked by Israeli fire, with 14 dead and 18 wounded. Assad was a Jordanian Army base and was also used as a base by El Fatah marauders.

The battles since Sunday along the Israel-Jordan front, the worst and most serious since the June, 1967 Arab-Israel war, followed an Israeli commando raid Sunday that destroyed two key bridges 37 miles inside Jordanian territory. According to Israel's announcement of the action, it was intended as a warning following King Hussein's Nov. 16 agreement with the terrorists that apparently gave Palestinian commando groups a free hand for raids and sabotage against Israel. Israel reported 51 incidents since then along the cease-fire line and inside Israel-held territory. Israeli sources said the current fighting has not changed the military balance in the region which they consider heavily in their favor.

(In Cairo, Egyptian Government spokesman Mohammed H. el-Zayyat said President Gamal Abdel Nasser hoped that the forthcoming visit of William W. Scranton, President-elect Richard M. Nixon's fact-finding envoy, will prompt the new Administration to seek a "peaceful solution with justice" to the Middle East dispute.)

(In Washington, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee made public a letter to President-elect Richard M. Nixon urging the incoming Administration to reaffirm and reinforce the U.S. commitment to Israel. It called on Mr. Nixon to "make it clear beyond any doubt to the Soviet Union and to the Arab States that the U.S. will take firm action to resist any aggression against Israel." In New York, Rep. Jonathan B. Bingham, New York Democrat, said today in a letter to The New York Times that Israel should be proposed as a member of NATO by the United States.)

Israel Tells UN Council It Acted In Self-Defense Against Iraqi Units

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Dec. 4 (JTA)--Israel notified the United Nations Security Council today that it had acted in self-defense in attacking positions in the Irbid area of Jordan manned by Iraqi units because of the Iraqis' "persistent and mounting aggression" against Israeli settlements. In a letter to the president of the Security Council, Ambassador Yosef Tekoah reported that the Israel action had followed the shelling of 11 settlements earlier today by Iraqis based on Jordanian territory. He described today's mortar assault as the eighth and largest artillery attack on Israeli settlements since Oct. 17.

The envoy said that the Iraqis had been actively supporting the terrorists and that officers and men of Iraqi Battalion 421 had participated in terrorist sabotage raids and some of them had been taken prisoner. He noted that Iraq had still not accepted the cease-fire established by the Security Council following the Six-Day War in which it had been a belligerent.

Jordan complained to the Council today that "waves of Israeli aircraft" flew over wide areas of Jordan today and bombed Iraqi and Jordanian positions while the east bank of the Jordan was subjected to heavy Israeli artillery fire. The Jordanian letter warned that "the situation has deteriorated further as a result of continuous Israeli attacks on Jordan for the last four days."

Pravda Editorial On Middle East Seen As Evidence That Area Is Regarded As Danger Spot

LONDON, Dec. 4 (JTA)--The Soviet Union's proclamation in a Pravda editorial yesterday that its duty was "to prevent a new explosion" in the Middle East was seen by Western diplomatic observers here as evidence that the Kremlin considers the Middle East one of the most serious international danger spots. The editorial in the Soviet Communist Party organ said the USSR "is deeply convinced that despite all difficulties the Middle East crisis can and must be settled by political means. This is in the interests of all nations. The USSR will do everything necessary to facilitate a political settlement...and will not permit a new dangerous flare-up in that area which directly adjoins our southern borders." The editorial reassured the Arabs that "from the first day of the Middle East crisis our country has been coming out on the side of the Arab people." It assailed Israel as the chief obstacle to a peace settlement. But the London Daily Telegraph, in a dispatch from Moscow, said that some observers viewed the editorial as "a clear warning to the Arabs that they could not necessarily rely on Soviet support in a new war with Israel." Pravda also warned the U.S. that it was contributing to Israeli "expansionist policies" and "reckless adventurism" by supplying Israel with Phantom jets. The Telegraph

said there was growing evidence that Russia has given itself the role of "policeman" in the Middle East in a sustained effort to reduce American influence there.

(The ambiguous aspects of the Pravda editorial were noted by U.S. analysts today, according to the Washington Post. "The Soviet Union plays on both themes simultaneously...keeping its options open on which course it will ultimately take. With a major expansion of Soviet naval penetration of the Mediterranean under way, U.S. experts pointed out, Soviet commitments in the Middle East are expanding," the Post wrote. "At the same time, Soviet interest in gaining the reopening of the Suez Canal and other benefits of an abatement of Middle East tensions has also increased." Some U.S. observers, according to the Post, saw in the Soviet line "a possible deliberate attempt to magnify the Israeli threat to the Arabs to help convince the Arab nations that now is the time to make substantive moves toward resolving the lingering crisis.")

(In Washington, State Department officials gave no credence to published speculation about a possible Moscow-Washington summit conference on the Middle East in the final days of the Johnson Administration. Sources said that the U.S. Government had studied the Pravda editorial but had looked in vain for concrete evidence of Russian peaceful actions in that region that might make the Moscow appeal credible. Department officials deplored the outbreak of fighting between Jordan and Israel as serving to undermine the peace mission of UN envoy Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring.)

Lester Pearson Says There Is No Current Need For New United Nations Mideast Force

TEL AVIV, Dec. 4 (JTA)--Former Canadian Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, who won the Nobel Prize for initiating the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East (UNEF) after the 1956 Sinai war, said yesterday that he saw no need for a UN force in the present Middle East situation. He added, however, that he favored creation of a permanent UN force to be ready whenever needed. Mr. Pearson spoke at a press conference following ceremonies at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovoth during which he was made an honorary fellow and a chair in protein research was established in his name. The former Prime Minister and Mrs. Pearson were visiting Israel as guests of the Weizmann Institute. He was greeted by Foreign Minister Abba Eban at a luncheon tendered by Meyer Weisgal, president of the Institute. Among those present at the Rehovoth ceremony was Dewey D. Stone, chairman of the Institute's board of governors.

Mr. Pearson said he believed a solution of the Middle East problem depended on three basic points: Israel's right to exist must be recognized by its neighbors; Arab fears of Israel must be allayed; and the refugee problem must be solved. He said there was no instant solution to the refugee problem but very little had been done to liquidate it. "If fear could be removed from this region, we could convert neighborhood, which is a geographical fact, into neighborliness, which is a state of mind and heart." Mr. Pearson said that the withdrawal of UNEF from the Sinai and Gaza Strip in May, 1967 was an unfortunate step that precipitated the Six-Day War. He said, however, that it could not have been prevented as the Egyptian Government was completely within its rights to demand UNEF's withdrawal.

Comay Raps Poland For Charging Israeli Aggression, Citing Its Role In Czech Invasion

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Dec. 4 (JTA)--Ambassador Michael Comay of Israel told the General Assembly's Special Political Committee today that Poland, whose troops had joined in the invasion of Czechoslovakia, had no right to accuse Israel of aggression and rejected as "intemperate and unprovoked" a statement before the committee yesterday by Ryszard Frackiewicz, the Polish delegate, critical of Israel. The Israeli delegate said his remarks applied equally to the "stereotyped anti-Israel remarks" made by the Bulgarian representative in the committee's debate.

Mr. Comay also said that the proof of Poland's anti-Semitism was in its Government's acts and deeds that could not be disclaimed by statements in the committee. Revival of anti-Semitism in Poland "for internal purposes," was, he said, "a shameful act." He expressed sorrow that Poland had sided with the Soviet Union last year during the Arab-Israel dispute and said there was no enmity between the people of Poland and Israel.

The committee, which is debating the report of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees and an American resolution to extend the life of UNRWA for three years from next June 30, heard a series of attacks on Israel by representatives of the Communist bloc and the Arab states and a demand by Iraq that the refugee problem be given priority over all other Middle East questions. The Hungarian representative, who said the Arab refugees should return to Israel territory, by implication criticized President-elect Richard M. Nixon in asserting that the call by some Western leaders for military superiority for Israel did not contribute to solution of the refugee problem.

The Arab attack on Israel was pressed again today in the General Assembly's Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee in the course of debate on the international year for human rights. Mrs. Tamar Eshel, the Israeli representative fought back in heated exchanges with the Iraqi and Syrian delegates who were supported by the Egyptian and Polish delegates and representatives of some of the African states.

Polish Anti-Semitism Triggers Crisis Among French Jewish Communists

NEW YORK, Dec. 4 (JTA)--The American Jewish Committee reported today that a "severe crisis" had shaken the Jewish Communist movement in France as a result of the anti-Semitic campaign in Poland. The information, contained in a report from the AJCommittee's European office in Paris, said that for the first time, Jewish Communists in France are putting themselves "in open and unequivocal opposition to official Communist policies and actions in Eastern European countries." The report said the crisis among French-Jewish Communists began as a result of Russia's anti-Israel policies following the June, 1967 Six-Day War.

Raps Nomination Of Ukrainian For UN Rights Award, Terms Him Anti-Semitic Apologist

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4 (JTA)--B'nai B'rith charged today that a Ukrainian representative at the United Nations, named this week as one of the recipients of the UN's human rights award, had been "an unblushing apologist" for a much-publicized anti-Semitic book published with state approval in the Soviet Union.

Dr. William A. Wexler, B'nai B'rith president, deplored the United Nations' selection of Prof. Peter Nedballo among this year's award winners, citing the Ukrainian delegate's defense of "Judaism Without Embellishment," a bitterly anti-Jewish diatribe written by Trofim Kichko, another Ukrainian and published in 1964 under the auspices of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. Dr. Wexler noted that on March 15, 1964, Prof. Nedballo defended the book and its cartoons at a session of the UN Commission on Human Rights. Three weeks later, the Soviet Communist Party ideological commission itself criticized the book as "likely to offend" for its anti-Semitism and the book was then withdrawn by Soviet authorities. Dr. Wexler said "it is particularly anomalous that Nedballo's name is included on a list with such eminent world citizens as the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Prof. Rene Cassin." He said this could only "debase the award's significance and impeach the award significance." Prof. Cassin is president of the Alliance Israelite Universelle.

Jewish Conciliation Board Reports Increase Of Cases Reflecting Urban Problems

NEW YORK, Dec. 4 (JTA)--The Jewish Conciliation Board of America heard more cases involving intermarriage, desertion, drug addiction and marital difficulties during the past year than in any other year since its founding in 1920, according to the board's annual report for 1968. The Jewish Conciliation board adjusts and conciliates disputes involving Jewish individuals and organizations through a panel of judges and experts who hold sessions regularly. It also maintains a social service department that settles family problems privately. The report said the upsurge of cases of types that in previous years were rare among persons seeking the board's help "mirror the conflicts and stresses of the city." There were also many more referrals from the civil courts and from attorneys. The board held 20 sessions and adjudicated 96 cases in the past year. It also settled many other cases and conducted 937 interviews. Some cases were referred to other agencies better suited to handle them, the report said.

It cited two cases which were considered unusual. One involved a dispute between a fraternal society and a widowed member who was remarried and to a non-Jew. The society refused to continue his membership and sought to deprive him of the burial plot he had purchased. The Conciliation Board panel agreed unanimously that the society could not deny the man membership or his plot under its own by-laws. Both sides accepted the terms of a settlement proposed by the panel. The other case involved a woman whose husband had become a chronic alcoholic and gambler and whose family was in danger of breaking up. One teenage daughter ran off with hippies and another was keeping company with a Catholic boy whom the family did not approve. Although the husband could not be cured of his alcoholism, arrangements made through the Conciliation Board gave the woman financial security and enabled her to solve some of her family problems. The report was prepared by Ruth Richman, executive director.

Defines Differences Between Rabbis, Social Workers In Roles Of Counsellor

NEW YORK, Dec. 4 (JTA)--The differences between rabbis, in their role as counsellors in human problems, and social case workers, were delineated at a conference here today by Rabbi Richard J. Israel, director and chaplain to Jewish students for the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at Yale University. Rabbi Israel addressed the 11th annual conference of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies' commission on synagogue relations.

"For many rabbis," he said, "insofar as they view themselves as counsellors with a distinct function, different from that of the caseworker, that difference derives from their claim that they have some unique insights which they take from the tradition, and which can and should be applied to everyday life situations. Both liberal and traditional rabbis hold this attitude," Rabbi Israel said.

"The social worker, on the other hand, usually contends that when at work he is a neutral technician of the soul. He works from an assumption about human nature which says that the sound psyche will itself be able to choose that which is appropriate." Rabbi Israel said there was only "partial truth" in each of these claims. "We do not get our values handed to us whole from books, and neither do we form them altogether existentially out of our own inner lives that are in contact with the past," he said.

Schedule Services For Harris Berlack, Active For AJCommittee On Latin America

NEW YORK, Dec. 4 (JTA)--Services will be held Friday for Harris Berlack, member of the American Jewish Committee's board of governors and chairman for many years of its foreign affairs committee, who died Tuesday at the age of 70. He frequently represented the AJCommittee in its meetings with foreign officials overseas and in the United States. As a result of a mission to Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru in 1965, the AJCommittee expanded its community services program in South America. He also recommended the establishment of an AJCommittee program in Mexico and Central Committee which were subsequently established.

Gregorio Faigon Is Elected Head Of Argentine Jewish Representative Organization

BUENOS AIRES, Dec. 4 (JTA)--Gregorio Faigon, an engineer, has been elected president of the DAIA, the central Jewish representative organization of Argentina. He succeeds Dr. Isaac Goldenberg, who headed the organization for more than six years. Dr. Jose Kestelman, is new secretary-general, replacing Herzl Gesang. His first official act was to send a letter to United Nations Secretary-General U Thant expressing concern for the plight of Jews in Arab lands.