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Spanish Government Formally Rescinds 1492 Decree Ordering Expulsion Of Jews

MADRID, Dec. 16 (JTA)--The Government of Spain has finally publicly rescinded the 476-year-old edict of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella that expelled Jews from Spain in 1492. A document to that effect was presented by the Ministry of Justice on Friday to Samuel Toledano, vice president of the Madrid Jewish community, who is a direct descendant of Rabbi Daniel Toledano, the Rabbi of Toledo at the time of the expulsion. It was formally read today from the pulpit of Madrid's new synagogue, the first Jewish house of worship to be built in the Spanish capital since the 14th century. The synagogue, which will serve Madrid's 2,500 Jews, was consecrated today in colorful ceremonies attended by more than 600 leaders of the local community and rabbis and Jewish dignitaries from London, New York and Buenos Aires. They were joined by representatives of the Government, the Madrid municipality and by Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Protestant churchmen.

The document acknowledged the legal entity of the Madrid Jewish community and placed on record the fact that the expulsion edict was abrogated by the Constitution of 1859 and by subsequent laws. But until now it was not publicly endorsed by a Spanish Government. It repeals the long-standing regulation that required Jews to obtain official permission to hold religious services.

The new synagogue opened its doors officially when Rabbi Benito Gershon of Madrid affixed a mezuzah to the doorpost. Seventeen Torah scrolls were carried into the synagogue by elders of the community. The edifice contains a main sanctuary seating 550 persons, classrooms, recreation rooms and a smaller chapel. It cost \$250,000, part of which was raised by the local community over the past four years and the balance of \$150,000 provided by the Joint Distribution Committee and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany which allocates funds for the restoration of European Jewish communities destroyed during the Hitler era.

Present at the ceremonies were Max Mazin, president of the Madrid Jewish community; Theodore Feder, associate director-general of the Joint Distribution Committee; Dr. Salomon Gaon, of London; Claude Kelman, chairman of the European Council of Jewish Community Services; Rabbi Kohana of Argentina; William Nahmias, president of the World Sephardic Federation, and representatives of the New York Board of Rabbis, the American Jewish Committee and the World Jewish Congress.

Speaking on behalf of the Jewish community, Mr. Mazin noted that the Jewish population of Spain has grown over the past ten years from 3,000 to 8,000 and in Madrid from 300 in 1959 to more than 2,500 today. He attributed the growth in part to the immigration of Jews from former Spanish Morocco, descendants of Spanish Jews who fled from Spain to North Africa in the 15th Century. They have developed a whole range of community services, including synagogues, day schools, vacation camps, two youth clubs and Talmud Torah classes. Mr. Mazin said these developments had to be viewed in the context of the gradual liberalization of the Spanish Government's policy toward religious minorities which has developed from "a climate of tolerance" that began after the first World War and culminated in the granting of religious freedom to all minorities by the Constitution of 1966.

Prime Minister Indira Ghandi Greets Cochin Jews At Anniversary With 'Mazel Tov'

NEW DELHI, Dec. 16 (JTA)--Prime Minister Indira Ghandi of India, greeted the Jewish community of Cochin on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of its synagogue yesterday. "May I offer my good wishes and say mazel tov to our good Jewish friends," she said.

Mrs. Ghandi flew from the capital to Cochin especially for the occasion which was celebrated by the dwindling community of India's "white Jews" who now number only 78. The white Jews have never intermarried with the so-called black Jews of Cochin or with India's largest Jewish community, the 12,000 Marathi-speaking Bene Israel who live mostly in Bombay and Poona. All of India's Jewish communities have been greatly reduced in recent years, chiefly by emigration to Israel. Mrs. Ghandi, who spoke in the Nehru Memorial Town Hall, named for her father, praised the Jewish community as part of the "rich mosaic" of Indian civilization and pleaded for just treatment of all of India's minorities. "It is the great pride of India that we can claim all of the great religions of the world," she said.

The "white Jews" date their history in India back to the Second Temple in Jerusalem, in 70 A.D. S.S. Koder, the leader of the "white Jews," said "India has an unbroken record of 1900 years of hospitality to the Jews."

Eshkol Says President Johnson Promised Phantom Deliveries Would Begin In 1970

JERUSALEM, Dec. 16 (JTA)--Prime Minister Levi Eshkol said in a radio interview Sunday night that he was fully confident that Israel would receive its supersonic F-4 Phantom jet fighter-bombers from the United States in 1970, if not before. Mr. Eshkol said, "On this matter I rely on the promise of the U.S. President -- he is still President -- and what he told me at our last meeting which was that deliveries would begin in 1970." Mr. Eshkol was referring to his meeting with President Johnson at the latter's ranch in Texas last January. He said, "The assumption is -- and I want to be careful -- that it (the deliveries) will be concluded then and there is a chance, or a hope, that it might be advanced."

The Prime Minister referred to delivery of the Phantoms in his Kol Israel interview in order to allay fears rising from a statement by William W. Scranton, President-elect Nixon's fact-finding envoy to the Middle East, that the 1,800 mph war planes would not reach Israel before 1971. Mr. Scranton re-

portedly made that prediction when he was here last week. Negotiations for Israel's purchase of a reported 58 Phantoms costing about \$5 million apiece, are presently going on in Washington. Government sources said the negotiations are in the final stages and all that remains to be worked out are financing and credit arrangements.

(Gov. Scranton appeared on the NBC's "Today" show this morning and called for American efforts to improve relations with the Arab countries. The controversial special fact-finder for President-elect Nixon said there were three compelling reasons why the United States should better its relations with the Arabs. First, he said, there were the American economic interests. Secondly, an increased American influence in the Arab countries could strengthen the pressures for peace between the Arabs and Israel. Thirdly, he said, the United States must avoid "a complete polarization" in which the Arabs would be lined up with the Soviet Union and the Israelis with the United States.)

Mr. Eshkol reported to the Cabinet yesterday on the status of the Phantom negotiations and on Defense Minister Dayan's meeting in New York Saturday with Mr. Nixon. The Prime Minister also briefed Cabinet members on his talks here last week with Mr. Scranton. He said that Mr. Nixon's emissary stressed that he came to the Middle East "to listen" and report back to the President-elect. He said he carried no messages from Mr. Nixon and that he did not know what Mr. Nixon's Middle East policy would be.

Mr. Scranton aroused considerable concern here by his assertion that the U.S. should pursue "a more even-handed policy" in the Middle East. Some observers thought that it presaged a change in U.S. policy in the region which might be detrimental to Israel. In New York, however, a spokesman for Mr. Nixon promptly dissociated the President-elect from Mr. Scranton's statement, saying it was "a Scranton remark, not a Nixon remark." But Mr. Scranton repeated it again in New York following his briefing of Mr. Nixon last Friday.

Defense Minister Dayan returned today from his three-day visit to the United States and told newsmen at the airport that he sensed no change in America's attitude toward Israel in his brief meeting in New York Saturday with President-elect Nixon. He described it as "a pleasant courtesy visit" and said, "In any case, the talk was in general terms. He asked questions and I replied as well as I could." Gen. Dayan met with Prime Minister Eshkol immediately after his arrival, presumably to give him a fuller report on his visit to the U.S. He declined to comment for newsmen on the question of the Phantom jets.

Battered Valley Settlers Want Boundary Pushed Eastward From River To Gilead Mountains

TEL AVIV, Dec. 16 (JTA)--Settlers of the Beisan and Jordan Valleys which are the prime target of artillery and rocket attacks from Jordanian soil, have petitioned the Knesset (Parliament) to authorize Israeli occupation of a zone east of the Jordan River demarcation line in order to put them out of range of enemy fire.

Representatives of the settlers appeared before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee today to argue for the creation of a demilitarized "buffer zone" reaching into the Gilead Mountains which lie within Jordanian territory. They said such a move would relive the Beisan and Jordan Valley settlements from constant harassment by long-range artillery employed by Jordanian and Iraqi forces and by the Czech-made 130mm. Katyusha rocket launchers, a favorite weapon of the El Fatah terrorists. They were heard by the full committee under the chairmanship of David Hacohen. The committee hearing was attended by Gen. David Elazar, commander of the northern front.

Ten shells were fired from Jordanian soil last night at Neot Hakikar, a settlement at the southern end of the Dead Sea, a military spokesman reported. He said the fire was returned and that an investigation was under way to determine whether the shells came from mortars or from Katyusha rocket launchers. No casualties or damage were reported.

(Iraq may send squadrons of Soviet-built MIG-17 and MIG-21 jets to Jordan to bolster that nation's defenses against Israeli air attacks, according to reports from Amman to London today. The report also said that Iraq may send additional troops to Jordan, although their number would be limited owing to Baghdad's continuing war against the Kurds in northern Iraq. The report placed the number of Iraqi troops presently in Jordan at 17,000. Other sources have estimated that 10-12,000 Iraqi troops have been stationed in Jordan since the June, 1967 war.)

Jordan Crossing Restrictions To Be Eased Today Permitting Renewal Of Some Trade

JERUSALEM, Dec. 16 (JTA)--Truck traffic between Jordan and the West Bank will resume Tuesday via the Allenby and Damiya Bridges but will be limited to trucks carrying perishable cargoes. The arrangement was worked out between West Bank farmers and Brig. Gen. Raphael Vardi, military governor of the Judeaea and Samaria regions. Vehicular traffic between the West Bank and Jordan was banned recently as a security measure. As a result commerce came to a standstill.

Senior Israeli and Jordanian officers met in the middle of Allenby Bridge Friday to discuss resumption of traffic and other "humanitarian" matters. The meeting was arranged by the International Red Cross. The Jordanian representative was Col. Mohammed Daoud, former chief Jordanian delegate to the Israel-Jordan mixed armistice commission. No details of the talks were disclosed.

Moves to relax the ban which has created hardships for West Bank merchants and farmers got underway last week. Defense Minister Moshe Dayan met with heads of the chambers of commerce of various West Bank towns. He said afterwards that commercial traffic might be resumed if those

responsible for it pledged not to violate Israeli security regulations. The immediate cause of the ban was the explosion in Jerusalem's Machane Yehuda market place Nov. 22 which took 12 lives. Israeli authorities believe the explosives were smuggled from Jordan concealed in a produce truck. As a result, all trucks have been required to unload their cargoes for inspection on each bank of the river. The freight is then transferred by porter to the opposite bank for reloading. The cumbersome and costly system led to a complete halt to trade. Resumption of the traffic will be limited to a few dozen trucks compared to the 300-400 that crossed both spans daily before the ban.

The Agriculture Ministry, meanwhile, announced plans to make West Bank farmers independent of exports to Jordan. Ariel Amiad, the director-general, told West Bank Arab farmers that arrangements could be made for their products to be exported to Europe, particularly in the Jericho region where vegetables and fruits are grown during the winter season. He said there was a large demand for such farm products in northern European countries and that Israel itself might use some of that production, mainly for its canning industries.

A curfew imposed on Hebron after a terrorist attack there Saturday was lifted today. An investigation of the incident in which a Druze border policeman was killed ended but no results were announced. The policeman was attacked with small arms while riding in a jeep near the Hebron post office.

Cabinet Acts To Ease Divorce In Mixed Marriages, Establish 'Ombudsman'

JERUSALEM, Dec. 16 (JTA)--The Cabinet approved draft legislation yesterday that would enable partners in a mixed marriage to obtain a divorce from a civil court if a religious court refuses to exercise jurisdiction in the case. Under present Israeli law, divorce, like marriage, comes under the jurisdiction of religious courts. Some mixed couples have found it impossible to obtain a divorce because the religious courts concerned ruled themselves incompetent to deal with the matter. The legislation introduced yesterday by Minister of Justice Yacov Shapiro would empower the President of the Supreme Court to determine the specific religious or district court having jurisdiction in each individual case. The Attorney-General would be asked to inquire if a religious court agrees to litigate. A Cabinet majority rejected a proposal from Religious bloc ministers to exclude Israeli Jews from the terms of the bill.

The Cabinet also decided to create the office of "Ombudsman" to investigate complaints by citizens against the State or other public bodies which do not fall into categories normally adjudicated by the courts. The ombudsman will be appointed by the Knesset (Parliament) and will act within the State Controller's office. The institution originated in the Scandinavian countries and has since been adopted by several other European countries.

The Cabinet agreed to re-route a new speedway planned to link Tel Aviv with Lydda Airport because the original route passed close to Kfar Chabad, a village of an ultra-Orthodox Hassidic sect. Residents of the village petitioned for a change in route because they claimed the heavy traffic on Saturdays would interfere with their Sabbath observance.

Raise \$3.3 Million At Opening Dinner Of Britain's Joint Palestine Appeal

LONDON, Dec. 16 (JTA)--British Jewry was urged to rally behind Israel during the coming year to keep that nation's vital humanitarian and social programs from collapsing under the burden of unprecedented security needs. Michael M. Sachar, newly elected chairman of the Joint Palestine Appeal, stressed the urgency of maintaining Israel's social services, medical aid, education and welfare while the country spent 20 percent of its gross national product on defense. That compares to only 10 percent spent by the United States and much less by Britain, he said. Mr. Sachar presided at the JPA's dinner opening the 1969 campaign. Pledges totalling \$3.3 million were made at the dinner which was addressed by Israel's Foreign Minister Abba S. Eban.

Archbishop Orders Passages Offensive To Jews Eliminated From Liturgy

TEL AVIV, Dec. 16 (JTA)--The newly consecrated head of the Greek Catholic community in Israel, Archbishop Joseph Raya, has ordered the deletion from liturgical texts of all passages offensive to Jews including any linking Jews with the Crucifixion of Christ. Archbishop Raya formerly served in Birmingham, Ala. His order followed the text of the Vatican Council's Declaration on the Jews.

Mexican Red Cross Agrees To Intervene For Jews In Arab Countries

MEXICO CITY, Dec. 16 (JTA)--The head of the Mexican Red Cross assured a Jewish delegation today that his organization would officially intervene to secure amelioration of the conditions under which the Jewish minorities live in the Arab countries. The assurances were given by Jose Barroso Chavez, the president of the Red Cross, to a delegation composed of representatives of the Comité Central Israelita and of the organization of Jews from Arab countries. The delegation gave him detailed reports on the treatment of Jews in Egypt, Iraq and Syria.

West German Government Defers Decision On Statute Of Limitations For War Crimes

BONN, Dec. 16 (JTA)--A Government spokesman said at a press conference here today that the Cabinet would not deal this year with the question of postponing or abolishing the statute of limitations on Nazi war crimes prosecutions and that no date has been set for future discussions of the matter. The statute is scheduled to go into effect at the end of 1969. The spokesman also expressed doubt that the Cabinet would decide Wednesday whether or not to apply to the Constitutional High Court for a ban on the extreme right-wing National Democratic Party (NPD).

American Jewish Congress Bids Jews Intensify Role In Meeting Urban Crisis

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 16 (JTA)--The American Jewish Congress voted Sunday to launch a nationwide drive aimed at "a re-ordering of national priorities to end the intolerable burdens of poverty and urban ghetto life." In a resolution adopted at the final session of a weekend meeting marking its 50th anniversary, the organization called upon the Jews of America "to make the greatest contribution possible toward meeting the challenge of the Negro community in its demand for full justice and equality."

The statement acknowledged that the "urgent demands of Negroes today pose a particular challenge for American Jews who for the most part live and work in cities. For Jews, the challenge is not one of abstract justice but one that has immediate bearing on the schools to which our children go, the neighborhoods in which we live, our places of work, our employment, and our professional careers. The inherent difficulties created by this challenge have been intensified by the injection of Negro anti-Semitism by some Negro militants as a means of arousing hatred," the resolution noted. "In turn, this self-defeating hate tactic has been exploited by some whites to arouse fear and resistance to change among Jews, for whom the living memory of Hitlerism is still tragically alive. Neither Jew nor Negro can be helped to achieve freedom by the use and exploitation of anti-Semitism or anti-Negroism which only serve to strengthen those who oppose freedom and equality for all America."

The delegates adopted a four-point program to involve the membership more closely in anti-poverty and community action projects. It will be headed by Prof. Leonard Fein of Boston, associate director of the Harvard-MIT joint center for urban studies, who has just been appointed chairman of the Congress committee on community inter-relations.

Jewish Groups Participate In Interfaith Effort To Aid Starving Biafrans

NEW YORK, Dec. 16 (JTA)--A plane carrying 40 tons of food and machines, dispatched from New York Sunday by the Catholic Relief Services, Protestant Church World Service and the American Jewish Emergency Effort for Biafran Relief, was to arrive at the island of San Tome today. The supplies will be flown into Biafra on the nighttime air-shuttles operated by Joint Church Aid, a composite group of Catholic and Protestant relief agencies. The Jewish group represents 21 major national Jewish organizations. It paid the \$40,000 cost of the charter flight. It previously contributed \$38,000 to Catholic emergency programs for Biafra and sponsored a series of newspaper ads throughout the country.

Abie Nathan, the Israeli "peace flyer," is coordinating the dispatch of a Norwegian freighter from New York carrying 3,000 tons of food and medical supplies to relieve starvation in Biafra. The dispatch of the ship is a combined operation of groups in Holland, England, Canada and the United States. About 1,000 tons of food from Israel, Holland, Sweden and Israel will be loaded aboard in Amsterdam. The ship will leave there on Dec. 19 for New York and will sail from New York for San Tome in January. Shuttle flights from that island will convey the cargo to Biafra. Total cost of the project, which is sponsored here by the Biafra Relief Services Foundation, is estimated at \$460,000.

Prof. Salo Baron To Receive B'nai B'rith Jewish Heritage Literary Award

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16 (JTA)--Prof. Salo W. Baron, noted Jewish historian, has been named to receive the 1969 Jewish Heritage Award given by B'nai B'rith for "excellence in Jewish literature." The \$1,000 award will be presented at the annual meeting of the B'nai B'rith Commission on Adult Jewish Education in New York on Jan. 19. Dr. Baron, 73, professor emeritus at Columbia University, is best-known for his monumental 12-volume, "Social and Religious History of the Jews."

Madison Square Garden Is Filled For Chanukah Festival For Israel Bonds

NEW YORK, Dec. 16 (JTA)--More than 20,000 people filled Madison Square Garden tonight for the first performance of the annual Chanukah Festival for Israel Bonds. The festival celebrated the 75th birthday of Edward G. Robinson, the actor, who appeared on the program. A message of greeting from Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, read to the gathering praised Mr. Robinson for his participation in the bond drive for more than 15 years. In his message, Mr. Eshkol said: "We in Israel are certain that with the continued support and participation of Jews everywhere, our small nation shall be a beacon of freedom and hope in a troubled world." The festival will be repeated Jan. 1.

Services Held For Joseph Baratz, A Founder Of First Collective In Israel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 16 (JTA)--Burial services were held at Deganya yesterday for Joseph Baratz, one of the founders of that settlement, the first Jewish agricultural collective, who died Saturday at the age of 79. Mr. Baratz was born in Bessarabia and settled in Palestine at the age of 16. He worked as a farmer and was a member of the group that founded Juma, near the south shore of the Sea of Galilee, which became Deganya, known in Israel as "the mother of kibbutzim." Mr. Baratz held the honorary title of "General" as head of the soldiers' welfare fund, a project to which he devoted the latter part of his life. He visited the United States several times on behalf of the fund and Histadrut, Israel's labor federation.

Louis Gelber, Canadian Jewish Pioneer, Dies In Toronto At Age Of 90

TORONTO, Dec. 16 (JTA)--Funeral services were held here for Louis Gelber, a prominent member of the Canadian Jewish community for many decades, whose death came four weeks after Toronto Jewry had celebrated his 90th birthday. He was the father of Lionel Gelber, the author and historian; Marvin, a member of the Canadian delegation to the United Nations; Arthur, former president of the Arts Council; Dr. Sholome Michael, a lecturer in religion at New York University, and Sylvia, a senior civil servant in Ottawa. A native of Austria, he settled in Canada in 1896.