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U.S. Reported Rejecting New Soviet Bid For Imposed Solution In Mideast

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- New Soviet approaches to the United States, apparently aimed at reaching agreement on an imposed solution for the Middle East deadlock, have been made in the past few weeks, it was learned authoritatively here today. It was learned on equal authority that the United States had been steadfast in its refusal to agree to anything other than a peace agreement arrived at directly between Israel and an Arab country.

The Soviet goal, as seen by Foreign Ministry sources here, seemed to be that of striving to reach points of agreement with the United States on settlement proposals which the two powers would then seek to impose on Israel and the Arab states. However, it was also indicated, the first Soviet demand remains that Israel should withdraw to the pre-Six-Day war lines of 1967.

Prime Minister Levi Eshkol meanwhile reiterated Israel's determination to remain on the existing demarcation lines for the next 20 years if that would be needed to assure a lasting Middle East peace. Speaking at a youth meeting last night, the Premier echoed a criticism by Foreign Minister Abba Eban of a joint Soviet-Egyptian communique urging Israel's prompt withdrawal from the occupied areas.

The communique was issued in Cairo following the departure yesterday of a Soviet delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, who spent four days in Cairo in conferences with President Nasser and other Egyptian leaders. The communique declared that Israel's "regional expansionist policy, as indicated in statements of Israel leaders, prevents the establishment of peace in the area." The communique also charged that "the Israeli refusal to implement the Security Council resolution of Nov. 22 1967, and its continuation in occupying lands of three Arab countries, ensures its expansionist policy and forms continued aggression against the sovereignty and security of these Arab states." In the communique, Egypt expressed its "deep consideration of steps already taken by the Soviet Union toward erasing the consequences of the Israeli aggression." The communique also said that Russia and Egypt would continue talks on "matters of concern to both sides."

(The Soviet News Agency, Tass, reported today, after Gromyko's return to Moscow, that Egypt had declared its readiness to cooperate fully with Dr. Gunnar Jarring, the United Nations special Mideast peace emissary, who received his mandate from the Nov. 1967 Security Council resolution. The Tass statement added that the Soviet Union had again pledged full support to Egypt and asserted that continued Israeli occupation of the Arab territories was the main cause of tension in the Middle East.)

Mr. Eban said last night at a press conference here that the communique showed there had been no change in the ideas of the Soviet Foreign Minister and President Nasser or even in their formulations on a possible Middle East solution. Mr. Eban charged that the communique had taken out of its context in the Security Council resolution the proposal on Israeli withdrawals. Mr. Eban said that the joint statement had even failed to mention peace, or secure boundaries or the demand for mutual recognition and renunciation of belligerence -- all of which are part of the Security Council resolution. Mr. Eban said that the Soviet Union had identified itself, in the communique, with Egyptian aggression in the past and intransigence in the present and had thus become an active partner in the developments leading to the present deadlock which have prevented establishment of peace.

The possibility of a triangular discussion involving the United States, Russia and Egypt which might be at Israel's expense was raised previously by an Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman, who added that Israel was following the developments with "prudent vigilance but not with pessimism."

Mr. Eshkol told the students that the communique indicated rigidity and that the withdrawal demand was made without any reference to a permanent peace framework. He added that the communique indicated the Soviet Union had failed to use its influence on Egypt in behalf of peace.

Imposed Mideast Peace Plan Seen Geared To Jarring Initiative

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Robert H. Estabrook, United Nations correspondent of the Washington Post, reported today that a new Mideast peace plan that may be imposed upon Israel calls for U.N. envoy Gunnar Jarring to act in concert with the Great Powers. Several western diplomats close to negotiations told Estabrook that Dr. Jarring must take the initiative in making peace proposals with prior Big Power agreement.

No formal plans have yet evolved, it was said. United States diplomats were depicted as responsive to the idea. "So far the Arabs have indicated that they want an imposed solution, and the Russians have appeared to back them", said the Post.

The newspaper said Dr. Jarring might present a substantive peace plan which the major powers thought was "fair and reasonable, using the guidelines of the Security Council resolution of Nov. 22, 1967." If a new initiative by Dr. Jarring had prior Big Power approval, "there would be strong pressure for acceptance," the Post asserted.

Dayan Reports Soviets Supplying Egypt With Amphibious War Vehicles

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Moshe Dayan disclosed in the Knesset (Parliament) yesterday that the Soviet Union has recently supplied Egypt with considerable quantities of modern amphibious armoured vehicles specially adapted for fording rivers and lakes. He said the vehicles were equipped with anti-tank guided missiles. But Gen. Dayan refused to say whether there was any imminent danger of Egyptian military action along the Suez Canal. He explained that "security grounds" prevented him from replying to questions on that subject from Uri Avneri of the Haolam Hazeh faction and Natan Peled, of Mapam.

Gen. Dayan also confirmed in the Knesset yesterday the Jewish Telegraphic Agency report published in the Israeli press that he had said in an American television interview that Israel would be prepared to pay a high territorial price in exchange for genuine peace. The JTA version of Gen. Dayan's interview on the ABC "Issues and Answers" program, had been challenged by some advocates here of retention of the occupied territories. Gen. Dayan's statement was made in reply to a motion for the agenda by Meir Wilner of the New Communists.

Israelis Indicate Doubt United States Now Seeking Renewed Ties With Egypt

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Foreign Ministry circles said here yesterday that a resumption of diplomatic ties between the United States and Egypt was not believed to be imminent but if it did occur at this time, it would constitute a diplomatic victory for Egypt. These circles noted that the timing of such a move by the U.S. would be significant, particularly if it was one of the first acts of the new administration in Washington.

They said however that Israel does not expect this to occur because Egypt, for one thing, has yet to apologize for its accusation that United States planes aided Israel during the June, 1967 Six-Day War and, for another, the U.S. will not demand Israel's withdrawal from occupied Arab territories, a condition reportedly imposed by Egypt for resumption of diplomatic relations. The Foreign Ministry circles also pointed out that it was the custom of friendly nations to consult with one another before taking a step that might affect one of them. The United States has given no indication to Israel that diplomatic relations with Egypt might be resumed, as was indicated.

Replying to questions in the Knesset (Parliament) yesterday, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan warned that it would be a "grave error" if any representative of Israel in the U.S. were to say publicly that the resumption of American ties with Egypt and America's friendship for Israel were mutually exclusive. Gen. Dayan added however that many of his colleagues in the Cabinet did not agree with him.

Eban Says Soviets Have Not Made Any Bid For Normal Diplomatic Relations

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Abba Eban said in the Knesset (Parliament) today that the Soviet Union has not made any approaches to Israel regarding a possible resumption of diplomatic relations which the Russians broke off at the end of the June 1967 Six-Day War.

Speculation that such approaches might have been made grew out of a meeting three weeks ago between Ambassador Yosef Tekoah, Israel's chief representative to the United Nations, and Soviet Second Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Semyonov. It was learned, however, that the subject of diplomatic ties was not brought up at that meeting or in any other direct or indirect contacts between Israel and the USSR.

Jewish Agency Submits Plans For Farm Settlements In Sinai Peninsula

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Plans for the establishment of agricultural settlements in the occupied Sinai peninsula based on intensive cultivation techniques were submitted to Prime Minister Levi Eshkol yesterday by the Jewish Agency. Dr. Raanan Weitz, head of the Jewish Agency's Agricultural colonization department did not specify where in the Sinai the new settlements would be established. He said in a radio interview that they would provide the settlers with a higher per capita income than farmers earn in most parts of Israel.

According to Dr. Weitz, the land is especially suitable for winter crops and by a "very conservative estimate" would yield a gross income of at least \$57,000 per annum even though desalted sea water would be required for irrigation. Dr. Weitz said the new settlements would also serve as a tourist attraction.

The Jewish National Fund reported that it had completed construction of a nine-mile road to the summit of Mt. Hermon, near the Lebanese border in the area occupied by Israel in the Six-Day war. An Israeli garrison is stationed on Mt. Hermon. The road will serve these units and Israeli sportsmen skiing on the slopes of Mt. Hermon.

Pilgrims And Tourists Mark Yule In Israel And Bethlehem Under Israeli Guard

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Scores of thousands of pilgrims and tourists celebrated Christmas in Israel and the occupied territories today without incident. Strict security measures by Israeli authorities apparently prevented Arab terrorist groups from carrying out their threats of violence and sabotage designed to frighten foreign visitors.

Security measures were especially evident in Bethlehem where Israeli soldiers stood guard and helicopters hovered overhead as some 3500 pilgrims celebrated Mass in the Church of the Nativity or watched the services on television screens in Manger Square. The pilgrims out of doors braved biting cold, as did the Israeli troops who patrolled the streets and rooftops with machine guns at the ready. If anything marred the religious devotions it was a group of hippies who set up their bongo drums around the basilica where Jesus reputedly was born and beat out an accompaniment to the choir inside.

400 Former Underground Fighters Jailed By Mandatory Regime Hold Re-Union

TEL AVIV, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- An early chapter in Israel's history was recalled yesterday at a reunion of 400 former political prisoners who were jailed by British Mandatory authorities at Latrun from 1945 to 1948. Mostly middle aged now with wives and grown up children, the former inmates recalled their adventures and exploits at a time when the struggle for Israel's independence had to be carried on underground.

Among those celebrating the 20th anniversary of their release from the Latrun detention camp were former members of Haganah, the defense force of Jewish Palestine and forerunner of Israel's Army; the Irgun Zvai Leumi and "Lehi" or Stern Gang, smaller militant groups whose commando tactics were credited by many with having hastened the British decision to give up the Palestine mandate but which brought them into conflict with the Haganah. But the political differences of the past were forgotten during the celebration that lasted through the night. The hall was decorated with old posters and placards bearing fiery slogans that the inmates once hung in the Latrun dormitories in defiance of their captors. Those relics of the prestatehood period were preserved by many of the underground members who are today scientists, industrialists, civil servants, businessmen and ordinary laborers.

Israel, France Sign Trade Pact Expected To Boost Israeli Farm Exports

PARIS, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Israel and France signed a trade agreement yesterday under which Israeli agricultural exports to France will be increased 50 per cent over last year to a total of 12 million francs (about \$2.5 million). The new agreement does not cover citrus exports to France which are governed by Israel's agreements with the European Common Market. The economic counsellor at the Israel Embassy here welcomed the new agreement as evidence of French goodwill and readiness to help redress the trade balance. Overall, Israel's imports from France run about \$44 million while Israel exports to this country about \$28 million.

Pope Paul Seen Modifying Stand On Jerusalem Future In Yule Address

ROME, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Pope Paul VI was seen today to be modifying his previous stand with regard to the future of Jerusalem. In his Christmas address to the College of Cardinals, he spoke of "an internationally guaranteed settlement" of the question of the future of Jerusalem and the holy places. Previously, he had spoken more specifically of "internationalization" of the city.

The Pope devoted a section of his speech to the Middle East situation and pledged his collaboration in finding a solution "in the measure of our possibilities" that would be inspired by "esteem and love, without distinction, for all nations of the region."

The Pope expressed his deep concern over the continuing tension. He expressed appreciation for the efforts of Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring, the United Nations special peace envoy for the Middle East, and he adjured the Great Powers not to exploit the tragic difficulties of the region to establish their own power and supremacy. He urged them to use all their influence to further peace based on the principles of justice and solidarity.

Hias Honors Brazilian Jewish Community For Aid To Jewish Newcomers

SAO PAULO, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- An award in recognition of the outstanding work of the Brazilian Jewish community in the integration and resettlement of Jewish refugees was presented yesterday to Dr. Moyses Kaufmann, president of the Confederation of Brazilian Jews by Carlos L. Israels, president of United Hias Service. Dr. Benno Milnitzky, president of the Jewish Federation of Sao Paulo, presided at the ceremony. A United Hias award was also made to the Federation Council for Social Assistance.

Zvi Kessel Prizes Awarded To New Yorker, Two Israelis, Mexican Jew

MEXICO CITY, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- A New York writer, two Israelis and a Mexican Jew were voted here today the 1968 Zvi Kessel prizes awarded annually by the Cultural Commission of the Jewish Central Committee of Mexico. Each of the awards, to be presented formally at ceremonies scheduled here for Jan. 15 is valued at \$500.

The winners were: Saul Gutman, of New York, an essayist, for his book "Tradition and Renewal"; Yitzhak Nimtzovits, a journalist, of Israel; the Israeli poet, Naftali Herz; and the Mexican musicologist, Moshe Yivker. All write Yiddish.

French Jewish Women's Group Joins International Council of Jewish Women

CLEVELAND, Dec 25 (JTA) -- Cooperation Feminine, an organization of French Jewish women, has joined the International Council of Jewish Women, it was announced here today by Mrs. Ronald Brown, of this city, president. The world-wide organization now has 26 affiliates in 22 countries around the world, representing more than 600,000 members.

The French organization, established under the aegis of Fonds Social Juif Unifie, the French Jewish central welfare organization, has as its major aim the pursuit of a more active role for Jewish women in domestic as well as international affairs. The president of Cooperation Feminine is Mrs. J.L. Treves.

PEC Announces Dividend, Appointment of Albert Levinson as President

NEW YORK, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Directors of PEC Israel Economic Corp. here announced a regular annual cash dividend of 65 cents per common share, payable February 20, 1969 to stockholders of record of January 10, 1969. At the same time, Joseph Meyerhoff, chairman of the corporation, announced the appointment of Albert Levinson as president, a post relinquished by Mr. Meyerhoff who remains as chairman of the board and of the executive committee. The board also elected Meyer H. Kupersmidt as secretary and treasurer.

Mayor Lindsay Seen Losing Jewish Voting Support For Possible Reelection Bid

NEW YORK, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- John V. Lindsay, who was elected Mayor of New York City four years ago with the help of Jewish voters who rejected Abraham Beame, his Democratic Jewish opponent, appeared today to have lost much Jewish support for a reelection bid because of his handling of such problems as those stemming from public school decentralization proposals.

The Mayor has not formally announced plans to seek another four-year term, but has made several moves toward reelection. Officials of the Liberal party, which claims its votes provided Mr. Lindsay with his margin of victory in 1965, said yesterday that disenchantment of many Jewish middle-class voters with the Mayor was a factor in the Liberal party's current stance of non-commitment to support a Lindsay second term bid.

David Dubinsky, Liberal party vice-chairman, said he had "mixed feelings" about Mr. Lindsay's record as Mayor. Dr. Donald S. Harrington, Liberal party chairman, predicted that the party would "do a lot of soul-searching" on the next mayoral election. Ben Davidson, the party's executive director, noted that no one knew yet who the Democratic candidate would be and added that his party "has no commitment." But Deputy Mayor Timothy W. Costello, former Liberal party chairman, said he expected the party to support Mr. Lindsay "if he runs in 1969."

A party official asserted that the chief concern of the party leadership was to hold its votes, which are 85 percent Jewish middle-class liberal, many of them public school teachers or voters with school teachers in their families. Jewish hostility toward the Mayor developed during the recent strike by the United Federation of Teachers, which is heavily Jewish in membership, because the Mayor has backed thorough decentralization. However, Dr. Harrington argued that the middle-class Jewish group might be "out of sympathy" with some aspects of Mayor Lindsay's policies but that it was "too early" to say that the teachers strike had permanently damaged Mr. Lindsay with Jewish voters. Mr. Lindsay in recent months, apparently concerned about his declining popularity with Jewish voters, had made a series of visits to synagogues and walking tours of Jewish neighborhoods.

The issue also was raised yesterday in the first statement of opposition by a Jewish group to community control of New York city schools. David A. Schulte, chairman of the New York Board of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, declared the ADL's support for school decentralization but said the agency was opposed to "community control that would place the whims and wishes of a locality" over the authority of the city and state. Mr. Schulte testified at a hearing of the city's Human Rights Commission that "the whole point is to try to keep the schools from being controlled by extremist groups -- white, black or Jewish."

Mr. Schulte said that "a distinction must be made between decentralization as an administrative vehicle for the improvement of the educational process and community control -- under the guise of decentralization -- as a political, economic and social action instrument." He urged retention of a city Board of Education under any decentralization program and added that the ADL favored "more meaningful participation" of parents and other citizens in the school affairs of local communities, provided "all delegations of power and authority" were subject to city and state standards and controls.

In another development, the United Parents Association urged the Board of Education to change the times it has scheduled for public hearings in the five boroughs on its decentralization proposal. The UPA gave as one reason the fact that it considered it an "affront" to the Jewish community in Brooklyn that the hearing in that borough was scheduled for after 4 p.m. on a Friday.

Leading Negro Newspaper Condemns Black Anti-Semitism As 'Irresponsible'

CHICAGO, Dec. 25 (JTA) - A leading Negro newspaper, the Chicago Daily Defender, has condemned anti-Semitic activities by some black militants and declared editorially that "the element in the black community which agitates against Jews is uninformed, irresponsible, with a following that never amounted to more than a corporal's guard." The editorial noted the "great similarity between the Jewish struggle for recognition and rightful place in American society and the black crusade for freedom and equality." It commented that "it would be a strange twist of history indeed, for the members of an oppressed black race to assume the role of oppressor. This is not only repugnant and intolerable," it said, "but is a dangerous undertaking that would threaten the security of the black folk in the long run."

Orthodox Rabbinical Leader Sends Ritual Gifts To Rabbi Levin In Moscow

NEW YORK, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- A Soviet airliner took off from Kennedy Airport yesterday with seven cartons of Jewish religious articles, said to be the first shipment of its kind allowed by the Soviet Government since 1917. The consignment was addressed to Chief Rabbi Yehudah Leib Levin of Moscow's Choral Synagogue. It was sent by his close friend, Rabbi Pinchas Teitz, of Elizabeth, N.J.

Rabbi Teitz said the cartons contained articles such as prayer shawls and mezuzahs. "This is the first time in 51 years that the Soviet Government has allowed Jewish religious articles", Rabbi Teitz said.

Jewish Teenagers Offer Prayer At Convention For Soviet Jewry

CHICAGO, Dec. 25 (JTA) -- Prayers were offered by a group of teen-agers here yesterday for the granting of full cultural and religious rights to three million Russian Jews by the Soviet Government. The youngsters were among 1600 members of the United Synagogue of America (Conservative) Youth who gathered here for the organization's 18th annual convention. They deplored Soviet anti-Semitic manifestations and declared that international coexistence depended in part on the end of discrimination against Soviet Jews.