

# JTA daily news bulletin

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc. 660 First Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

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Vol. XXXVI Fifty-Second Year

Thursday, March 6, 1969

No. 45

## Eban Says He Values Peace-Seeking Mission Of Jarring More Than Big 4 Talks

JERUSALEM, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Abba Eban declared today at a press conference, as he prepared to leave for Washington next week, that Israel will never return to the conditions that existed before the June, 1967 war or repeat its previous mistake of accepting a stop-gap settlement that would "explode in our face." Mr. Eban said he put much more faith in the peace-seeking mission of the United Nations envoy Gunnar V. Jarring than in four power talks on the Middle East. "The four powers have interests of their own in the area while Jarring has only one interest and that is that of the international community and its yearning for peace."

He said he would meet with Dr. Jarring probably on Sunday. He asked the UN emissary to postpone his visit to Jerusalem until next Sunday because tasks relating to the formation of a new government would keep Mr. Eban occupied until then. (Dr. Jarring arrived in Cairo for a new round of talks with Egyptian leaders today. His arrival coincided with an announcement in the semi-official newspaper Al Ahram that President Nasser would propose the highest defense budget in Egypt's history.)

Mr. Eban said that he hoped to learn more in Washington about the U.S. attitude toward the Middle East, especially in the aftermath of President Nixon's European visit and his talks with various Western leaders. He would make clear, he said, Israel's position--there must be an agreed peace settlement arising from direct negotiations with the Arabs, one that would establish agreed, secure frontiers. He said he agreed with President Nixon's press conference remark that bringing Israelis and Arabs to the peace table could be accomplished in a few days. Nevertheless, Mr. Eban said, the international atmosphere can contribute to the possibility of a meeting in which peace can be negotiated. He said he did not anticipate any change or break in Israel's foreign policy while a new government was being established because it was clear that the present national unity coalition would continue.

## Nixon Says Mideast Peace Depends Upon Soviet Sincerity In Promoting Settlement

WASHINGTON, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- President Richard M. Nixon made clear his firm belief yesterday that Mideast peace depends upon a Soviet manifestation of sincere interest in a settlement. Whether it will be forthcoming will be made clear, he indicated, in coming days. The President told a nationally-televised press conference devoted exclusively to foreign affairs that he was "cautiously hopeful" about progress toward a Mideast solution and that there had been "considerable progress" in this connection in the past week.

Mr. Nixon said that he and Secretary of State William P. Rogers had had "encouraging talks" with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin on the Mideast. These bi-lateral discussions will go on, he said, "and if they continue at their present rate of progress, it seems likely that there will be four power discussions in the United Nations on the Mideast." He declared that four power talks cannot lead to an imposed settlement. "The time has passed in which great nations can dictate to small nations their future, where their vital interests are involved," he declared.

The value of the four power talks, the President told some 200 newsmen, is that they "can indicate those areas where they believe the parties directly involved in the Mideast could have profitable discussions. At the present time, they are having no discussions at all. And second--and this is even the more important part of it--from the four power conference can come an absolute essential to any kind of a peaceful settlement...and that is a major power guarantee of the settlement." He noted, however, that Israel and the neighboring Arab nations cannot be expected to concur in a settlement unless "they think there is a better chance that it will be guaranteed in the future than has been the case in the past."

The President, noting that the Soviet rearming of the Arabs was responsible for the current "crisis," said he believed Moscow nevertheless wanted to avoid a "confrontation" with the U.S. that could occur if events in the Mideast got out of control. His "cautious conclusion" was that "the Soviet Union will play possibly a peace-making role in the Mideast" as well as in Vietnam. "I say a cautious conclusion because I base this only on talks that have taken place up to this time, but we are going to explore that road all the way that we can, because, let's face it, without the Soviet Union's cooperation, the Mideast is going to continue to be a terrible dangerous area..."

He said that "we're far away from the time when the Arabs and the Israelis can sit at a negotiating table." The President went on to say: "I believe that by the time we very carefully go down this road of bilateral consultations first--four-power consultations--and, incidentally, we're going to consult with the Israelis when they come here--Mr. (Abba) Eban is going to be here--there will be, I am sure, consultations on the other side as well. I think that when we complete our course of action and come up, if we can, with a four-power recommendation for proceeding, that then it might be possible to bring both sides to a conference table. That is our hope."

The President also said that the Mideast would be the first subject of formal talks between the U.S. and Russian Governments on the highest level, if they took place. He said that the U.S. is not telling Russia that there are any preconditions--such as a show of goodwill on the Mideast issue--for talks it wants on strategic arms limitations. "Our attitude toward the Soviet is not a high-handed one of trying to tell them that you do this or we won't talk. Our attitude is very conciliatory...", he said. Mr. Nixon

pointed out that as a result of his meetings in Europe with President Charles de Gaulle of France and Prime Minister Harold Wilson of Britain, the French and British positions are closer to America's than ever before.

Asked by a reporter whether he would visit Israel (as suggested by Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Robert Finch in Israel last week), the President said he had no current plans for any additional overseas junket, noting with a smile--apparently alluding to the Finch comment--that this was the case although "other travelers have committed me to various trips abroad. He apparently reinforced his opposition to any enforced Mideast settlement when he said that Europeans had expressed concern that a U.S.-USSR "condominium" would make decisions affecting their future without consulting them. This, he said, will not happen.

### Report Nixon Envisions A Plan For 'Phased' Israeli Withdrawal, Big Power Guarantee

WASHINGTON, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- The United States policy on the Mideast indicated by President Nixon's press conference remarks was defined here today by French and other diplomatic sources as involving a "phased roll-back" of Israeli occupation forces with a major power guarantee that falls short of the direct peace settlement desired by Israel.

A step-by-step process is conceived, sources said, in which the Arabs would be encouraged by the Soviet Union and France to make peace as Israeli forces withdraw from point after point to a "series of security belts" or "security points." By the time Israeli withdrawal is completed, "fully guaranteed" by the United States and other major powers, it is hoped that disengagement would be so effectively achieved that the Arabs would be willing to sign a formal peace and grant recognition to Israel.

The withdrawal system from Sinai, beginning at the canal, would also be accompanied by other withdrawal systems worked out for the West Bank, sources said.

The case for a prior, face-to-face Arab-Israeli settlement has been considered by the U.S. and reportedly found by President Nixon to be unattainable in the light of his talks with French President de Gaulle and others. This was the information gathered from a variety of reliable diplomatic quarters.

Officials said it would not be a case of an "imposed" or "dictated" settlement but that very heavy pressure would be brought upon Israel to accept what Mr. Nixon termed a "major power guarantee."

Some observers said that Mr. Nixon revised his Mideast policy after ascertaining that there was no forward motion on Vietnam peace. The Soviet Union and France have hinted that U.S. efforts to obtain the reopening of the Suez Canal might facilitate exertion of influence on Hanoi by Moscow and Paris. The first step in the so-called "phased withdrawal" is said to involve that very point--the Suez Canal.

President Nixon is said to see peace in Vietnam as the top priority of his Administration and an accommodation in the Mideast as a means of not only achieving this aim but also reducing chances of a dangerous confrontation with the Russians over Israel. Big Four talks on the "phased roll-back" plan are expected within two weeks, a French source said. Some elements of the envisaged plan were reportedly conveyed by Mr. Nixon yesterday to some 20 Congressional leaders at a White House briefing. They were not mentioned in the President's press conference.

### Mrs. Meir Says Her Policy On Peace As Premier Would Be As 'Tough' As Eshkol's

WASHINGTON, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- Mrs. Golda Meir's policy, if she becomes Premier of Israel, will be "fully as tough and unbending as that of the late Levi Eshkol" and will be based on the thesis that "the only possible road to peace is by direct negotiations with the Arab States," the Washington Post reported today from Jerusalem. Correspondent Alfred Friendly, writing of an interview with Mrs. Meir, also declared that she "ruled out today any chance of an acceptable solution to the Middle East conflict emerging from discussions by the big powers." Mrs. Meir was asked about the possibility of the Soviet Union agreeing on terms acceptable to Israel and inducing Egypt to take them as well. She was quoted in reply: "It will never happen. If Russia were capable of preparing a peace plan acceptable to us, and had enough influence on President Nasser to get him to agree, then it has enough influence on him to say, 'for God's sake, sit down with the Israelis and make peace directly'"

Mrs. Meir said that she did not see any new or different approaches Israel might take at this time, but she rejected the contention that for Israel to cling to its present set of demands would inevitably lead to war. "I could," she pointed out, "lead to continuation of the status quo, or to peace." She stressed that the Arabs had not yet concluded that "they were prepared to live in peace with Israel and accept Israel as a state with a right to exist. Until they do so, she told the interviewer, Israel had no alternative to its present course. Mrs. Meir returned repeatedly to the theme that there could be no peace until the Arabs were ready for it. She reminded Mr. Friendly that "for 20 years now, we've been asking one question: Are the Arabs prepared to live with us? We've received no answer. You say Jordan is? Well, if so, let the Jordanians say it publicly. We don't expect them to agree with all our proposals or say 'yes' to everything we put before them. But let them meet us, sit down at a table with us."

She asserted that neither King Hussein nor Col. Nasser had prepared their people to hear them say that they had concluded to meet with the Israelis to negotiate an honorable peace. She remarked that "you can't make peace underground. How else can there be peace than by direct talks?" Mrs. Meir stressed again that "as long as the Arabs won't sit down with us, that means they can't accept our existence." If she becomes Prime Minister, Mrs. Meir said, she would make one condition "absolutely essential: Nasser must conclude that peace is not something he can give to Israel as a luxury or fulfillment of its needs, but as something at least as necessary for his people as for the Israelis. It's not a present for him to give us. It's something that his children, the children of the Nile Valley, need as much as we."

## Coalition Formed By Eshkol Appears Certain To Continue As Gahal Gives Assent

JERUSALEM, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- The continuity of the national unity government put together by the late Prime Minister Levi Eshkol on the eve of the Six-Day War appeared assured today as its second largest faction, Gahal, announced that it favored preservation of the present coalition line-up. But Gahal (Herut-Liberal alignment) insisted on and won Israel Labor Party agreement to a formalization of the Knesset (Parliament) decision of Nov. 13, 1967 that the present cease-fire situation will be preserved until a permanent peace is achieved.

The Gahal ministers, in conferences with their Labor Party colleagues, demanded that a cabinet committee be set up to write a new basic platform reflecting the cease-fire situation and stressing that permanent peace can emerge only from direct negotiations between the parties concerned.

Such a peace, the document will state, must include a formal treaty and secure and agreed borders. The Gahal leadership exacted this move as a guarantee that the will of the Knesset will be observed. They pointed out that the previous platform of the Eshkol Government had reflected the pre-June, 1967 situation. The Labor Party ministers agreed and none of the other coalition partners raised objections.

The Gahal move in effect also endorsed the candidacy of Mrs. Meir who was nominated by the Labor Party leaders to serve as interim Prime Minister, at least until the Oct. 28 national election. Mrs. Meir was expected to accept the nomination at Friday's meeting of the Labor Party's central committee and to have a government ready for Knesset approval within two weeks.

## Thant Asked To Find Out If States Harboring Terrorists Will Protect Aviation

JERUSALEM, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Abba Eban disclosed today that he has asked United Nations Secretary-General U Thant to find out from the Arab countries that permit terrorist organizations to operate from their soil what measures they were taking to prevent violations of international civil aviation rights such as last month's attack on an El Al airliner at Zurich.

The request was contained in Mr. Eban's second letter to Mr. Thant on the subject of terrorist assaults on Israeli civilian aviation. The first letter, sent right after the Zurich incident, brought an admonition from Mr. Thant that Israel should announce its readiness to implement the Security Council's Nov. 22, 1967 resolution because the "only sure way" to end terrorism was to make "some substantial movement" toward peace.

Mr. Eban, in his reply, told the Secretary-General that it was unrealistic to ignore the responsibility of the states--members of the UN--which supported and maintained the terrorist organizations responsible for the Zurich attack and other acts against Israel. Speaking at a press conference here today, Mr. Eban deplored the image of Arab terrorists as "freedom fighters" which has appeared in many Western publications. They are terrorists, he said, "continuing the massacre started by Hitler; their motto is the same as the Nazi SS--to kill as many Jews as possible." He accused the terrorists of having precipitated three wars in the Middle East--in 1948, 1956 and 1967. He said that Russia's support of the terrorists, as evidenced in a recent Pravda article, proved that the Soviets have not changed their attitude toward the Middle East.

## Another Israeli Soldier--The Eighth--Is Wounded By Egyptian Sniper At Canal

TEL AVIV, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- An Israeli soldier was wounded by an Egyptian sniper today along the Suez Canal about 30 miles north of Port Tewfik, a military spokesman announced. He was the eighth Israeli soldier to be hit by a sniper's bullet along the canal in recent weeks.

The growing incidence of sniping on the waterway drew a warning to Egypt yesterday from Maj. Gen. Chaim Bar-Lev, Chief of Staff of Israel's armed forces. Speaking at a press luncheon, Gen. Bar-Lev said Cairo was mistaken if it thought that Israel would react only to artillery barrages but not to other forms of cease-fire violations such as sniping. He said if the Egyptians did not soon decide to discontinue sniping, "we will have to help them reach such a decision."

Only yesterday United Nations Secretary-General U Thant expressed alarm that sniping along the Suez Canal cease-fire line could escalate into serious fighting between Israel and Egyptian forces. Mr. Thant's warning was in response to a report by the chief of the UN's cease-fire observation corps, Lt. Gen. Odd Bull of Norway. Gen. Bull warned of the seriousness of the sniping and said that in most cases it was initiated by the Egyptians.

## Eban Voices Appreciation For Dutch Stand On Israel's Bid For Market Associate Status

JERUSALEM, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Eban expressed appreciation today for the insistence by the Netherlands Government that associate status with the European Common Market not be granted to Morocco and Tunisia unless the same status is accorded Israel. Mr. Eban said he had approached the West German Ambassador to Israel with the hope that other members of the Common Market would follow the Dutch example.

(The Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community met in Brussels this week for an exchange of views on relations between the Community and Israel. It instructed a committee to examine the various proposals put forward and to report back as soon as possible. The Council noted, on the initiative of Netherlands Foreign Minister Dr. Joseph Luns, that five delegations had expressed a wish that the commission submit a draft mandate for opening negotiations with Israel.)

## French Defense Minister Hints Israel Can Have Money Back For Embargoed Mirages

PARIS, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- France's Defense Minister Pierre Messmer hinted yesterday that Israel can have its money back any time for the 50 Mirage V jet fighter bombers embargoed by President Charles de Gaulle. M. Messmer referred to the aircraft during a reception given him by the Foreign Press Association.

## Sirhan Curses Zionists, Says He Could Have Killed LBJ, Goldberg For Backing Israel

LOS ANGELES, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- Sirhan B. Sirhan, the 24-year-old Jordanian immigrant who has admitted the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, cursed the "God-damned Zionists" of America from the witness stand yesterday. He accused them of having sent "\$370 million to Israel tax-free" while there was unemployment and hunger in this country and at a time when President Johnson was bringing home soldiers and urging Americans to stay home in order to save dollars. He said that when provoked he could kill Lyndon Johnson, Arthur J. Goldberg or anyone else supporting the Israeli cause.

The outburst came during young Sirhan's second day on the witness stand in his own defense. Chief Defense Counsel Grant B. Cooper permitted him to vent his rage to substantiate the defense claim that Sirhan's passion about the occupation of his homeland by Israel led to the fatal shooting of Sen. Kennedy in the Ambassador Hotel kitchen last June 5.

Sirhan, who began by answering counsel Cooper's questions quietly, launched into an emotional tirade when asked about his reaction to events in the Middle East. "I wanted a place of my own where the people spoke my own language, where they ate my own food, where they shared my own politics, where I could have something I could identify with as a Palestinian and as an Arab," he said. He claimed he had admired the late Sen. Kennedy until he saw him on television helping the Israelis celebrate their independence and became so enraged he wanted to kill him. "You must remember, sir," he said to his attorney, "Zionism is more inimical to me than Communism is to you." He said he heard a radio announcement that Sen. Kennedy had formally committed himself to sending 50 Phantom jet fighter-bombers to Israel. "I recognized that Robert F. Kennedy was not the good guy he was made out to be," Sirhan said.

The young Arab also testified that he was enraged by a magazine photograph of jubilant Israeli troops on the banks of the Suez Canal in June, 1967. "If I saw those guys (the soldiers) in person I would have killed them," he said, "because they were the winners, they could tell Nasser what to do." Sirhan said that he read "everything I could get my hands on" pertaining to the Middle East conflict, mainly material put out by the Arab Information Center, a propaganda agency supported by the Arab League, as well as the B'nai B'rith Messenger, a Jewish weekly published in Los Angeles. "I figured the best way to know what the Zionists are up to is to read what they say," he told Mr. Cooper. He accused American Zionists of "brainwashing" the American public into believing that the Arabs were about to push Israel into the sea when the opposite was true. "Where is the justice involved sir?" he asked his defense counsel, "where is the love of the underdog. Israel is not the underdog in the Middle East, the Palestinians are. That burned the hell out of me."

## Charges Hickel Does Not Support Federal Budget Item For Desalination Plant In Israel

WASHINGTON, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- Secretary of the Interior, Walter J. Hickel, does not support a Federal budget item that would provide \$40 million for a nuclear desalination plant in Israel, Rep. William Fitts Ryan, (D., N.Y.), charged today. Rep. Ryan disclosed that Secretary Hickel appeared before the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, on which the Congressman serves, and "did not express support for the project." Pursuing the matter, Rep. Ryan was later told by Mr. Hickel that the matter "would have to be decided by President Nixon."

Last Jan. 17, then President Johnson included a provision for a desalination plant in Israel in the budget submitted for fiscal year 1970. On Jan. 19, the late Premier Levi Eshkol publicized this action in Israel upon advice from the White House. The Interior Department of the outgoing Democratic Administration told Congress that new sources of water for Israel were vital if Israel was to maintain its industrial and economic growth.

Rep. Ryan submitted a bill Jan. 23 to provide assistance to Israel for a dual purpose electrical power and desalination plant, citing the recommendations of the Johnson Administration. During February the matter was considered by the House Interior Committee in a way which led Rep. Ryan and some other members to conclude that "this Administration may not fulfill the commitment which President Johnson made to Premier Eshkol."

Reps. Ryan and Hugh Carey (D., N.Y.) have now written President Nixon that "we are very concerned that your Administration may intend to back away from the commitment which President Johnson made to Israeli Premier Eshkol to participate in the construction of this vitally needed facility." They pointed out that research benefits would be gained by the U.S. and that the cause of peace would be served in the area by it. President Nixon was reminded that "during the course of your campaign for the presidency, you made reference on several occasions to the need to maintain America's commitment to Israel (on desalting)." He was urged to reaffirm Presidential support for the undertaking.

## David Leibowitz Dead At 65; Devised 'Davidka' Mortar Used In War Of Independence

TEL AVIV, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- David Leibowitz, who founded Israel's home-made arms industry in 1948 with a three-inch mortar that had more bark than bite, died here yesterday at the age of 65. Mr. Leibowitz devised a mortar, popularly called "Davidka," which had low explosive power but detonated with a report so loud that it created panic among Arab troops who were sure that Israel was using an atomic bomb. The weapon was used with great effectiveness during the War of Independence. The mortar is now a museum piece and is on display in public squares in Jerusalem and Safad.

## World Union Will Publish History Of European Liturgical Changes, Reform Innovations

NEW YORK, Mar. 5 (JTA) -- A history of the liturgical changes and innovations in the Reform movement in Europe will be published here March 12 by the World Union for Progressive Judaism, the international organization of liberal Judaism. Titled "Prayerbook Reform in Europe," the history is the work of Dr. Jakob J. Petuchowski, a professor of rabbinical and Jewish theology at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. It traces the shifts of mood in theology and esthetics in Reform Judaism during the last 150 years.