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Israelis, Egyptians In Fierce Exchange At Canal; Action Seen As Nasser Pressure Tactic

TEL AVIV, Mar. 9 (JTA) -- Israeli and Egyptian heavy artillery duelled across the Suez Canal for the second consecutive day in what was described as the worst flare-up along the 70-mile waterway since Oct. 27. One Israeli soldier died of wounds, two were injured and seven slightly injured in yesterday's shelling. Today's Israeli casualties were 14 soldiers wounded, two seriously.

Heavy smoke and flames were seen rising from the Egyptian oil refineries near Suez at the southern end of the canal yesterday although an Israeli spokesman said the oil tanks were not a target but were apparently hit by chance. Three more oil tanks were set ablaze in today's artillery barrage. Yesterday and today, according to an Israeli spokesman, Israeli forces attempted to observe cease-fire calls by United Nations observers but were forced to resume shooting when the Egyptian forces failed to respond.

(In Washington, a State Department spokesman said today that the United States had no special response to the latest artillery exchanges across the Suez. But he said that as in past exchanges, the U.S. was concerned about any breach of the UN cease-fire agreement. The spokesman said the fighting made the achievement of peace more difficult, but he noted that the U.S. Government saw the latest development as just another breach of the cease-fire.)

The situation was discussed at today's Cabinet meeting. A Foreign Ministry spokesman said earlier that the artillery duel was premeditated and initiated by the Egyptian high command to attempt to create the impression that the entire region was on the verge of a new outbreak of war. It was timed, he said, to coincide with Foreign Minister Abba Eban's departure for Washington to confer with President Richard M. Nixon and was apparently Cairo's intention to prompt President Nixon to take action to force an Israeli withdrawal from the Canal as a means of averting a new all-out war. Israelis also believed the Egyptians were addressing themselves to the Big Four who were conferring at the UN on a Mideast settlement.

Today's three hour and 25 minute clash began with Egyptian machinegun fire aimed at Israeli positions near the southern end of the canal, a military spokesman said. When Israeli units returned the fire in kind, the Egyptians opened up with artillery along the canal's entire length. Israeli artillery returned the fire. Israeli spokesmen said the UN observers called for a cease-fire at 4:45 p.m. local time and again at 6 p.m. Israeli gunners complied in both instances but resumed firing when the Egyptians ignored the order. The shelling reportedly ended at 7 p.m. local time.

Firing Began Saturday; Israel Downed Egyptian MIG-21

Today's events duplicated those of yesterday when Egyptian artillery opened up at 5:30 p.m. local time along the whole canal front from Kantara in the north to Suez in the south. The attack was preceded five hours earlier by an aerial dogfight over Israel-held territory in which Israeli jets shot down one Egyptian MIG-21 and drove off three other intruding MIGs. The plane burst into flames. Its pilot, who bailed out over Israeli territory, was identified as Lt. Mouhamed Abdul Bakhi, 21. An Israeli spokesman said he was rushed to a hospital by helicopter where attempts were being made to save his life. Egyptian sources admitted that one MIG was shot down but claimed to have shot down one Israeli plane. Israeli sources said all planes returned safely to their bases.

The Egyptian MIGs were apparently on a photo-reconnaissance mission prior to the artillery barrage. The artillery attack, which was described as a massive barrage of the kind favored by the Russians, erupted simultaneously from Kantara at the canal's northern entrance to Suez in the south. Cairo claimed that Israel began the attack near Ismailia and the shooting then spread over the entire front. An Israeli spokesman said a cease-fire was called for 7:45 p.m. local time by UN observers and Israeli forces observed it. He said the Egyptians in the northern sector stopped shooting but enemy artillery along a 15-mile front on the southern flank kept up the fire. The Israelis said they resumed shelling at 8:05 p.m. but suspended fire 20 minutes later in response to another UN cease-fire call. When the Egyptians failed to do likewise the engagement was resumed at 9:05 p.m. and lasted until 10:40 p.m. when the shelling subsided on both sides. Cairo claimed that it was the Israelis who failed to obey UN cease-fire orders. The Israeli timing for the cease-fire requests did not coincide with those broadcast by Cairo Radio.

Thousands of dollars worth of fuel were reported burning today at the Suez and Nasr refineries outside Suez City. It was also reported that the town of Ismailia suffered heavy damage. Almost all of its residents had been evacuated.

The fight along the Canal followed two weeks of continuous sniping by Egyptians in which at least nine Israeli soldiers were hit. Lt. Gen. Odd Bull, chief of the UN cease-fire observation corps, has reported to Secretary-General U Thant that the sniping was initiated by the Egyptians in most cases. Mr. Thant warned last week that it could lead to a major outbreak of fighting along the Suez front. Israel's Defense Minister, Gen. Moshe Dayan, warned the Egyptians several times. In a radio interview broadcast by Kol Israel yesterday, Gen. Dayan said, "We are not as weak along the Suez Canal as the Egyptians believe and we have the capacity to hit back hard and painfully...If the Egyptians do not want to observe the cease-fire and they continue to snipe, they will get back what they need to open their eyes."

Last October an eight hour artillery duel along the Suez cost Israel 15 dead and 35 wounded. Four days later Israeli commandos penetrated deep into Egypt to blow up a transformer and two bridges. The reprisal was followed by a period of quiet until the sniping incidents escalated last month.

(Both Israel and Egypt submitted letters to the UN Security Council charging breaches of the ceasefire.)

Diplomatic Action Aimed At Peace Settlement Continues In Mideast, Europe, U.S.

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Mar. 9 (JTA) -- Dealt another blow by the weekend Israeli-Egyptian fighting at the Suez Canal, the pursuit of a Mideast settlement continued haltingly this weekend on several fronts.

Secretary-General U Thant's special Mideast representative, Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring conferred with Foreign Minister Abba Eban in Jerusalem, and Acting Premier, Yigal Allon. He was believed to have been asked to resume his efforts to bring the Arabs and Israel together for direct negotiations. Jordan Radio said Premier Bahjat al-Talhouni told Dr. Jarring on Saturday that it did not have "anything new" to offer in his pursuit of a peace formula. He had visited Cairo earlier in the week.

Diplomatic sources in London reported that American and Soviet envoys in Washington, at the UN and in Moscow were meeting to arrange a possible spring or early summer summit conference between President Richard M. Nixon and Soviet leaders. The Mideast was widely expected to be considered as part of the agenda of a projected summit.

In Washington, Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin met yesterday to re-open talks on the Mideast and other important East-West problems. Informed sources said the major topic discussed was the continuing effort to find a basis for a Four Power approach to a Mideast settlement. The U.S. has been awaiting a Moscow response to clarifications sought by Washington about a Soviet formula.

Diplomats here expressed surprise over remarks made in South Carolina on Friday by a high-ranking UN diplomat that "thus far" preliminary bilateral talks among the U.S., Soviet Union, France and Britain "have not yet developed what seemed to us enough common ground to make a Four Power meeting useful, and we are concerned that a Four Power meeting should not simply end in a conspicuous display of disunity which would do more harm than no meeting at all." Ambassador Seymour Maxwell Finger, a senior adviser to the U.S. Mission, was commenting on the bilateral talks being held here among the Four Powers during the past five weeks. His remarks contrasted with those of President Nixon who told a press conference last Tuesday that "we think we have made considerable progress during the past week. We are cautiously hopeful that we can make more progress and move to the Four Power talks very soon."

The Arab League office in Cairo said that its foreign ministers would meet tomorrow to review the entire Mideast situation and might consider a Kuwait request for an Arab summit parley. Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's personal envoy, began four days of talks in London with Prime Minister Harold Wilson and other leaders. Earlier, he had conferred in Paris with President Charles de Gaulle and Henry Cabot Lodge, chief U.S. negotiator at the Vietnam peace talks.

In Washington, the State Department denied a report in the semi-official Cairo newspaper Al Ahram that the U.S. was shipping 150 Patton M-48 tanks to Israel from West German U.S. army camps via Rotterdam. Al Ahram said Israel was trying to strengthen its armored forces with British Centurion and Chieftain tanks, German Leopard tanks and U.S. Pattons. The Cairo paper's editor, Muhammad Hassanein Heikal, a Nasser confidant, said the Arab nations should attack first in the next Mideast war from several bases at once--from Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. This strategy, he said, would enable Soviet-built MIG jets to attack the heart of Israel and would force Israel to divide its troops among several fronts. He said the Arabs could win despite superior Israeli technology if they killed 10,000 Israelis in the first phase and continued the fighting for six to eight weeks, basing his statement on the assertion that Israel did not have resources for a prolonged war. He said the Egyptian front at the Suez Canal was so strong today that Israel could not penetrate it.

Diplomats See Eban Note On Terrorism As Criticism Of Thant

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Mar. 9 (JTA) -- Diplomatic observers here today interpreted a note from Israel's Foreign Minister as implicitly criticizing Secretary-General U Thant for apparently failing to take action aimed at halting terrorism by guerrillas based in Arab nations. Mr. Eban said in a letter delivered Thursday that after the Feb. 18 terrorist attack on an El Al airliner in Zurich, he had asked Ambassador Yosef Tekoah to request that Mr. Thant pose certain questions to Arab Governments. These included "whether they would dissociate themselves from such attacks and take the required steps against their organizers and perpetrators," the latest letter said. "I regret that these questions were not conveyed."

(The Washington Post's UN correspondent Robert Estabrook reported that "Mr. Thant is understood to have been in touch privately with representatives of the countries concerned, but the public Israeli demand undoubtedly ended any chance of useful action through these channels.")

Mr. Eban's note said terrorism and irregular warfare were as much violations of the Security Council's Nov. 22, 1967 Mideast resolution as were regular military hostilities, and termed terrorism a major factor "retarding progress toward a peaceful settlement."

Gen. Abdel Moneim Riad, Egyptian Chief Of Staff, Reported Killed At Suez Canal

LONDON, Mar. 9 (JTA) -- Gen. Abdel Moneim Riad, the Egyptian chief of staff, who was second in command of Egypt's armed forces, was fatally wounded today during the Arab-Israeli artillery fight at the Suez Canal, Cairo announced officially. He was regarded as Egypt's top military strategist and operated directly under President Nasser.

Gen. Riad became chief of staff following Egypt's defeat in the Six-Day War. During the war he directed the joint Egyptian-Jordanian command established just before the war began on June 5, 1967. He had reportedly received training in the Soviet Union. Egypt did not immediately announce where at the Canal he had been killed.

Shazar Confers With Knesset Factions Before Asking Mrs. Meir To Form Government

JERUSALEM, Mar. 9 (JTA) -- Israel's President Zalman Shazar conferred today with all political factions in the Knesset (Parliament) to make sure there was complete assent before naming Mrs. Golda Meir as Prime Minister-designate and asking her to form a new government. Mrs. Meir was nominated for the Premiership--and accepted--last Friday by a vote of 287-0 with 45 abstentions in the Labor Party Central Committee. The Labor Party, in alignment with Mapam, holds an absolute majority in the Knesset, but President Shazar apparently wanted to hear the views of all factions before he acts, probably on Tuesday.

Observers here believe Mrs. Meir will have no trouble forming a government. The Labor Party, in nominating her for the Premiership, also approved a resolution calling for a government with the same coalition partners and the same distribution of portfolios as the one which served under the late Levi Eshkol and which now serves as a caretaker government under Acting Prime Minister Yigal Allon.

Some differences have arisen which could delay her announcement of the new government. These stem from a demand by Gahal (Herut-Liberal alignment), the second largest party in the coalition, that the government's basic platform be rewritten to reflect the present cease-fire lines. The present platform mentions the armistice lines which existed prior to June 5, 1967. Labor Party leaders agreed to this last week, but Mapam has raised objections claiming that the revision would raise the matter of future boundaries at the wrong time and make it a subject of public debate. Gahal favors Israel's permanent retention of the cease-fire boundaries. The left-wing Mapam believes the boundary question should be left open pending peace negotiations with the Arabs. An inter-party committee has been appointed to try to iron out the differences.

In accepting her party's nomination, Mrs. Meir pledged to maintain national unity and called on those who served under Mr. Eshkol to "continue in the same framework" in her government. If she takes office, she and Mrs. Indira Gandhi of India would be the world's only women prime ministers. But Mrs. Meir, who will be 71 in May and suffers from a circulatory ailment, was expected to be an interim Premier. Most political observers believed her tenure would end when Israelis go to the polls Oct. 28 to elect a new Knesset. Her selection by the Labor Party leadership came about largely because she was believed to be the only politician with sufficient influence to avert an open fight for power between the two principle contenders for the Premiership, Acting Prime Minister Allon and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan. Dayan is immensely popular with Israelis but not with the party inner circle which up to now has always selected Israel's Premiers. The 45 abstentions in the vote for Mrs. Meir were registered by members of his Rafi faction. Forty other Rafi members voted for her but said they did so only because there was no other name on the list. They said they would support Gen. Dayan in a showdown fight. Such a fight could occur before election day when the Labor Party sits down to prepare its list and select its leader. Some observers said Mrs. Meir could resign before then and turn the Premiership over to Mr. Allon whom she favors.

Reds Meet Resistance In Efforts To Clothe Czech Anti-Semitism In Anti-Zionist Guise

LONDON, Mar. 9 (JTA) -- Hard-line proponents of Communist orthodoxy in Czechoslovakia are attempting, with Soviet encouragement, to infuse the country with anti-Semitism in the guise of anti-Zionism, a tactic that has worked in Poland. But they are meeting determined resistance from Czech liberals and intellectuals who are apparently not cowed by the Soviet-led invasion of their homeland last summer, according to reports reaching here. Anti-Semitism is frequently evident in the Soviet occupation newspaper Zpravdy and in clandestine pamphlets believed circulated by pro-Moscow elements. (The Soviet news agency Tass last week featured a summary of an article in a Beirut newspaper that accused leading Czech Jews of conspiring to overthrow Socialism in Czechoslovakia in the interests of Israel.)

The degree of Czech resistance to this type of propaganda was evident in yesterday's ceremonies at the 15th Century Pinkas Synagogue in Prague where government leaders, Jews and non-Jews officially honored the memory of 3,800 Czech Jews murdered by the Nazis at Auschwitz 25 years ago. Hitherto, the anniversary of the death camp's liquidation on March 8, 1944 had been officially ignored, but yesterday Czech leaders went out of their way to condemn anti-Semitism of the Hitler and Stalin eras. The principle speaker, Petr Colotka, president of the Czech Parliament, recalled how Jewish children had gone to their deaths in the Auschwitz gas chambers singing the Czech national anthem. He declared that the best way to prevent a new Auschwitz was by passing laws guaranteeing democratic freedoms and rehabilitating the victims of Stalinist injustice, many of them Jews. Earlier Premier Stanislav Razl of the Czech Republic and Evzen Erban, chairman of the National Front and a member of the Communist Party presidium attended the ceremonies.

The Prague newspaper Svobodne Slovo, a leading daily, said on the occasion that the memorial observances proved "that a new spirit of democracy and humanism reigns in our country and that in this country with such profound democratic traditions there is no place for anti-Semitism."

Students Decry 'Establishment' As Lacking Involvement In Important Social Issues

WASHINGTON, Mar. 9 (JTA) -- The organized Jewish community was attacked by its college generation today for being more involved with institutional structure and ritualistic Judaism than in adopting militant action on ethical issues confronting society. In a confrontation between leaders of 27 Jewish secular and religious organizations, 66 Jewish student leaders from 34 colleges attacked the Jewish "Establishment" and even the conference itself. The students ranging from New Leftists to supporters of traditional campus movements made the point that they wanted to structure their own programs and were "turned off" by the Jewish community of their parents' generation. The students and community leaders together with 20 Jewish academicians were brought together for the three-day conference by the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation.

Some of the students rejected the premise that the Jewish student is alienated from Judaism and that the campus has become a "disaster area" for Jewish community life. It was organized Judaism in America, they maintained, that needed to be reconstructed and was in greater need of reform. Campus protests against the military draft, Vietnam war, poverty, racial discrimination and the "dehumanized society," and demands for revolutionary change in social mores, was more in keeping with prophetic Judaism than the activities of the Jewish "Establishment," students said.

Students charged that the quality and contents of pre-college Jewish education were dull and unimaginative and that the "Establishment" placed too much stress on budgets and money spent on religious buildings and not enough on education. The students demanded and were given a voice in making up the agenda of the conference. They had charged that the Jewish "Establishment" was trying to impose its views on participants. They were rebutted by organizational leaders who said they were anxious to hear what students had to say but urged them not to generalize falsely about the Jewish community and assume that it and the students were on opposing sides. Students attacked the Jewish pulpit for failing to take greater leadership on social action. They claimed that the campus was the most disenfranchised group in the Jewish community. It was asserted that the Jewish community would not be permitted by students to dictate the "Establishment" concept of Judaism to the campus community.

Their sharp attacks notwithstanding, the students welcomed the chance for the exchange with a broad representation of Jewish leadership, the first such national dialogue between the two groups ever held. A number of community leaders deplored the communication gap between the community and the campus. They reminded the students that they were not on opposing sides in many of the issues of mutual concern.

Javits Urges U.S. To Formulate Plan To Resettle Arab Refugees Outside Arab States

NEW YORK, Mar. 9 (JTA) -- Sen. Jacob K. Javits, New York Republican, today urged the United States to formulate a plan for resettling Arab refugees outside the Arab states, following the example of the United Nations' resettlement of European refugees after World War II.

In an address to 1,200 members and delegates to the United Hias Services' 85th annual meeting, Sen. Javits said 20 years of work by the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) had failed to produce a solution. He urged the U.S. to work out a plan that would resettle the refugees--especially those in occupied territories--outside the Arab states; condition continued UNRWA support of Arab refugees on steps to be taken by Israel and Arab host governments to resettle and repatriate the refugees; and would terminate U.S. support for UNRWA to the extent that it furnishes assistance to any Arab settlements or individuals participating in guerrilla activity against any people or government in the Mideast. Sen. Javits, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, said also that for remnants of Jews in the Arab states, especially Iraq and Egypt, emigration is "a matter of life and death."

State Assembly Passes Bill That Would Require Officer To Prove Sabbath Violation

ALBANY, N.Y., Mar. 9 (JTA) -- The State Assembly has passed a bill that would correct defects in the Fair Sabbath Law by placing the burden of proof for alleged Sabbath business violations on the police officer who makes the charge. The bill, sponsored by State Senator Jeremiah B. Bloom and Assemblyman George A. Cincotta, both Brooklyn Democrats, now goes to the Senate.

The bill is intended to eliminate the necessity of a court appearance by a Sabbath observer charged with breaking the law. It requires the police officer to inquire whether the alleged violator is entitled to exemption for observing a day of rest other than Sunday before issuing a summons. It places the responsibility of "probable violation" on the policeman and not on the Sabbath observer to prove that he is entitled to exemption under the Fair Sabbath Law. The Bloom-Cincotta bill also spells out a day of rest other than Sunday which it defines as from sundown Friday to 45 minutes past sundown Saturday. Mr. Cincotta stated in presenting his bill, "We must continue to seek remedies for any existing conditions which restrict the free exercise of religious beliefs. Harassment because of observing religious beliefs and one's faith is un-American and discriminatory."

Services Held For Dr. Meyer Waxman, Professor Emeritus Of Jewish Literature

NEW YORK, Mar. 9 (JTA) -- Funeral services were held for Dr. Meyer Waxman, professor emeritus of Jewish literature at the Chicago Theological Seminary, who died at the age of 84 in Miami Beach where he was vacationing. Dr. Waxman made his home in Manhattan. He was born in Russia, came to the United States in 1901 and was educated at New York University, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and Columbia University where he received a doctorate. He was the author of 19 volumes and 300 articles on Jewish literature including the five volume "History of Jewish Literature From the Close of the Bible to Our Own Times." In 1919 he founded the Teachers Institute of Mizrahi that became the Teachers Institute of Yeshiva University.