

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## Sirhan, Palestinian Arab, Found Guilty In First Degree In Murder Of Robert F. Kennedy

LOS ANGELES, April 17 (JTA) -- The trial of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan for the slaying of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, which the Palestinian-born Arab youth sought to make an anti-Israel forum, a propaganda effort backed by Arab guerrilla groups, ended today with a verdict of guilty of first degree murder. The verdict meant that Sirhan faced the possibility of death in a California gas chamber or life in prison. The same jurors will begin deliberation of the sentence. The trial lasted 15 weeks but the determination of the sentence was expected to be made within a few days.

Early in the trial, Sirhan testified that he had witnessed "brutal" acts by the Jews during the 1948 War of Independence and that this was why he hated the Senator and had decided to kill him for his support of Israel's cause. However, fears that the defendant would use the witness chair throughout the whole trial for such statements proved unfounded.

Much of the arguments between defense and prosecution revolved around the question of the degree of Sirhan's sanity. The jury obviously believed the prosecution argument that Sirhan was a liar who was using the pretext of "amnesia" to avoid a possible death sentence. However, Sirhan consistently upset his defense attorneys by denying he was mentally ill, and he told psychiatrists that he wanted to be a hero and a martyr in the eyes of the Arab world. He did contend, in his testimony, that he could not remember the actual shooting or that he had written in a notebook that he intended to kill the Senator because Mr. Kennedy had promised to send 50 Phantom jet fighter-bombers to Israel if he was elected President. In a trial in which Sirhan repeatedly clashed with both prosecution and defense attorneys, the youth displayed great agitation when the prosecution disclosed the content of the notebook. The Senator was killed in Los Angeles last June 5, the date marking the first anniversary of the beginning of the Six-Day War.

## Thant Backs Big 4, Says Jarring Does Not Want To Continue His Futile Efforts'

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., April 17 (JTA) -- Secretary-General U Thant strongly supported today the efforts of the Big Four to bring about peace in the Mideast. He said that Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring, his special peace envoy, is not inclined to repeat "futile efforts" for another 17 months as he has done until now. Addressing the United Nations Correspondents Association, he said, "I pin my hope on the success of the Big Four deliberations which, he said, were "important" to the Jarring mission. He especially "welcomed" the Big Four meetings. "Active involvement" of the Big Four is "essential," he said, adding that without such major power talks, he does not see that a lasting peace is possible.

Mr. Thant said that Dr. Jarring acted with wisdom and tact but so far no progress has been made. "And I don't believe he will do it for another year and a half," he said. He pointed out that Dr. Jarring has never resigned as Sweden's Ambassador to Moscow and still holds the position, implying that he will fully resume that post if his mission does not succeed. He has returned to it temporarily.

Replying to a question about what he thought of the role of the Palestine commandos at present, he said that when a solution is too long delayed, extremists come to the forefront and the voice of the moderates becomes still. Regarding Israel's position on the Security Council's Nov. 22, 1967 resolution, he said that judging from public statements of Israeli leaders, Israel has accepted it but there has been no clear statement on implementation.

## Big 4 Hold 4th Meeting, May Decide On Reassessment Of Talks

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., April 17 (JTA) -- The Big Four held their fourth meeting today--in morning and afternoon sessions--amid reports that they regarded it as crucial and might, depending on its results, consider a re-evaluation to see whether the talks are worthwhile.

The meeting was hosted by Ambassador Charles W. Yost, chief U.S. representative to the UN. Attending were Lord Caradon of Britain, Yacov A. Malik of Russia and Armand Berard of France. Diplomatic sources said the meeting ended the first round of talks by the Big Powers and that unless significant progress was made, there might be a pause for reassessment to determine whether their continuing efforts to find a settlement acceptable to Israel and the Arab states were worthwhile. But a British spokesman today said, "Of course the talks will go on."

The Big Four meetings, started at the initiative of France and the Soviet Union, were undertaken on the assumption by all four Powers that a new outbreak of war in the Mideast was imminent, a view not shared by Israel. King Hussein of Jordan warned in speeches at the National Press Club in Washington last week and at a UN press luncheon yesterday that the Big Powers had "very, very little time" to come up with a solution if a full-scale war was to be averted.

The four Powers appeared to have reached an impasse. According to diplomatic sources, a working group set up by the four ambassadors to establish what the Israelis and Arabs would accept as an "honorable peace" has shown no results and might be abandoned.

## Syria Joins Other Arab Nations, 5 Guerrilla Groups In Rejecting Hussein Peace

LONDON, April 17 (JTA) -- Syria joined today the mounting chorus of Arab dissent over the six-point Mideast peace plan offered by King Hussein of Jordan in Washington last week. The plan has been rejected by Saudi Arabia, South Yemen, Kuwait, Iraq and Algeria. On Tuesday, five Palestinian guerrilla organizations issued joint statement in Beirut rejecting "the latest Jordanian proposals and all other proposals to liquidate the Palestine cause."

Syria, however, was the first of the three Arab combatant nations in the June, 1967 Six-Day War to explicitly turn down the Hussein proposals. Syrian President Nouraddin al-Atassi's statement in Damascus did not mention the Jordanian ruler by name. But there was no doubt that he referred to King Hussein's plan when he said, "We refuse all plans which would force us to make concessions. We are holding and will continue to hold onto our rights." He said to achieve the ultimate goal of "complete liberation of Arab lands," Syria would strengthen the popular resistance movement.

The joint guerrilla statement came from five groups which have been competing for prestige and feuding among themselves. The five organizations are the El Fatah, Al Saiqah, the Palestine Liberation Front, the Popular Democratic Front and the Palestine Liberation Organization. They said they decided on "a policy of unity to face such a critical situation" and would send delegations to Arab nations to seek definitions of their policies toward a peaceful settlement.

## Status Of Jerusalem Is Not A Subject Of Negotiation, Israel's Tourism Minister Says

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- A cabinet minister declared yesterday that the status of Jerusalem cannot be negotiated with King Hussein of Jordan or with anyone else no matter how powerful or friendly to Israel they may be. Moshe Kol, Minister of Tourism and Development, spoke at the opening of a new tourism center. He said, however, that Israel was prepared to give "a special and honored place" in Jerusalem to the churches and holy sites of all religions. "But there will be no political status for foreigners in the capital of Israel," he added. The ceremonies were attended by Jerusalem's Mayor Teddy Kollek who expressed his "private opinion" earlier this week that an independent Arab Jerusalem and an independent Jewish Jerusalem could exist side-by-side if peace came.

## Israelis Fear Change In Nixon Policy, Demonstrate Outside U.S. Embassy

TEL AVIV, April 17 (JTA) -- About 60 Israelis demonstrated in front of the United States Embassy here yesterday to protest what they claimed were indications that the Nixon Administration was altering U.S. Middle East policy in a manner unfavorable to Israel. The counsellor of the Embassy received a delegation of Knesset members representing the Free Center faction, who handed him a statement. Other demonstrators carried placards with such inscriptions as "America, don't abandon your true friends." Police were on hand in large numbers but had nothing to do. Some militants observed to reporters that the demonstration was "too peaceful."

## Dayan Says Arabs May 'Heat Up' Borders This Summer But Are Not In Position To Make War

TEL AVIV, April 17 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Moshe Dayan said yesterday that the Arabs might try to "heat up" the frontiers this summer but were not in a position to launch an all-out war. Gen. Dayan spoke in an Independence Day interview on the Army radio. He said the Arabs might try a surprise attack on Israeli airfields but added, "I do not think they will succeed."

Gen. Dayan said the Four Power talks on the Mideast were undertaken on the assumption that the threat of renewed warfare was serious and observed that "it is not impossible that the Arabs, especially Egypt, are really trying to create such a picture." But he thought Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser would not go beyond the talking stage of his March 27 threat to bomb and shell Israeli civilian centers. Gen. Dayan also disputed Col. Nasser's contention that time was working for the Arabs. He said Israel's security forces faced a four-fold task: Day-to-day security, manning the cease-fire lines; fighting guerrillas, and administering occupied territories.

## Golda Meir Visits Her 'Own Children' In Bunkers At Suez Canal

TEL AVIV, April 17 (JTA) -- The "First Grandmother" of Israel toured the front lines along the Suez Canal yesterday. Premier Golda Meir visited Israeli troops in their bunkers and inspected armored corps units accompanied by Defense Minister Dayan, Chief of Staff Gen. Haim Bar-Lev, Gen. Yeshayahu Gavish, commander of the Southern Command, and Armored Corps commander Gen. Abraham Adan. Mrs. Meir, who will be 71 next month, talked with officers and men of the ranks. Later she told a Pioneer Women's meeting in her honor here that she felt the soldiers were all "my own children and I know what responsibility I have when a decision is to be taken and these boys are involved."

## Egyptian Artillery And Tanks Lay Down Another Barrage Along Waterway Front

TEL AVIV, April 17 (JTA) -- Egyptian artillery and tanks have renewed their now daily barrages across the Suez Canal this evening. According to latest reports, Israeli guns returned the fire and the exchange was continuing. An Israeli civilian was wounded by Egyptian sniper fire near Port Tewfik earlier in the day. In other actions, an Israeli border policeman was killed and three other policemen and a soldier were wounded in a surprise attack today with mortars, machineguns and recoilless guns near Neve Urr in the Beisan Valley. An Israeli soldier was wounded during the 14th consecutive day of clashes with Jordanian forces along the Jordan River, a military spokesman reported.

Today's shelling along the Suez Canal began at 5 p.m. local time near Port Tewfik and in the Dweir Suwer area. The shooting spread later to the Firdan bridge area near Ismailia. A United Nations observers' car on the east bank of the canal was hit and burst into flame. Egyptian artillery shelled Israeli positions yesterday between Port Tewfik and the Bitter Lakes. Israeli gunners did not

return the fire. No Israeli casualties were reported. Reports reached here today said that an Algerian senior army officer believed to be the commander of an Algerian brigade deployed in the Port Suez sector of the Suez Canal was killed in a recent clash between Israeli and Egyptian forces. The Beisan Valley attack occurred at 5:30 a.m. local time and was described as heavy and concentrated. The Israeli patrol was extricated after a 20-minute exchange of fire. A border patrol armored car was attacked last night near the Lebanese border. There were no casualties. An Israeli military spokesman said a series of clashes along the Jordan River yesterday began in the morning near the Abdullah bridge north of the Dead Sea. The Jordanians employed artillery, tank and small arms fire. The clash lasted 45 minutes. Jordanian forces opened fire again at 6 p.m. local time in the same region. An artillery and small arms exchange followed about an hour later in the vicinity of the Allenby bridge.

### Armed Forces Magazine Says Israel Has Developed World's Largest Mortar

TEL AVIV, April 17 (JTA) -- An Israeli armaments firm has developed a 160-mm. super-mortar that is already operational, it was disclosed today in the Independence Day issue of Bamachaneh, the magazine of Israel's armed forces.

The mortar, designed by engineers and technicians of the Israel Ordnance Corps, weighs a ton with its battle equipment and is about nine feet long. It is mounted on the chassis of a converted Sherman Priest tank and requires a crew of seven to operate it. According to Bamachaneh, mobile mortars of such size and weight do not exist in any other armies in the world. A mortar is an infantry weapon that combines heavy fire power with easy mobility. Most conventional mortars have a three or four man crew and can be transported by manpower or on light trucks. But they lack the seven mile range of the new Israeli weapon.

### Israel Will Decide Soon On Compensation For U.S. Sailors Of Liberty, Hit During War

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- The Cabinet will decide shortly how much to pay in compensation to wounded crewmen of the American electronic intelligence ship Liberty which Israeli jets attacked in error and severely damaged off the Sinai coast at the height of the June, 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The U.S. Navy has reportedly asked \$3.5 million on behalf of the 166 wounded men. Last year Israel paid \$3.3 million in compensation to the families of the 34 American sailors who died.

The U.S. Government has also submitted a claim for the Liberty itself but the amount has not been disclosed. The vessel, built as a Victory-type freighter during World War II, returned home under its own power and has been laid up ever since. Its fatal mission off Sinai during the Six-Day War has been likened to that of the Navy intelligence ship Pueblo, captured by North Korea last year. Israeli pilots attacked the Liberty thinking it was an enemy craft. A subsequent investigation in Washington revealed that the vessel had been ordered out of the Middle East war zone but her commander never received the order owing to the misrouting of the message.

### British Will See Film Purporting To Show The Courtroom Confession Of Slansky

LONDON, April 17 (JTA) -- A film purporting to show the courtroom confession of Rudolf Slansky, secretary general of the Communist Party and former Vice Premier of Czechoslovakia, who was executed in the anti-Semitic purges of 1952, has come into the hands of the British Broadcasting Corp. and will be shown tomorrow, it was reported here. Mr. Slansky, a Jew, was accused at the time of "Trotskyite, Titoist and Zionist" crimes. The film was reportedly made on the orders of the then President of Czechoslovakia, Klement Gottwald, who wanted to see how convincing the confessions appeared in court. It was on the film's evidence that the general public was admitted to later trials. The film, which runs for about 15 minutes, reportedly shows Mr. Slansky being questioned by the public prosecutor.

Mr. Gottwald was said to have ordered the film destroyed. But a laboratory assistant made a copy before destroying the master negative and kept it hidden until last year when he showed it to the new liberal party leaders, the report said. He was instructed to edit and add a commentary so the film could be shown on Czech television last September. But the Russians invaded Prague in the meantime and the technician fled first to Bulgaria and then to Yugoslavia. He was tracked down by a West German six months later who purchased the film and sold the British and certain foreign rights to the BBC for several hundred pounds.

A promise that Czechoslovakia will not return to "the 1950s", a reference to the Stalinist purges that occurred under the regime of Antonin Novotny, was made yesterday by Gustav Husak, the Slovak who is the new First Secretary of the Communist Party. He succeeds Alexander Dubcek, the liberal who tried to democratize his nation, who resigned yesterday. Mr. Husak's accession was announced by President Ludvik Svoboda against a background of a nationwide crackdown against alleged "criminal and anti-social elements" some of whom may have been Jews.

### Congress Of Polish Federations Demands Russia, Poland Permit Jews To Emigrate

TEL AVIV, April 17 (JTA) -- The World Congress of Polish Jewish Federations concluded a four-day convention here with demands on Soviet and Polish authorities to permit Jews in those countries to emigrate if they so desired. The convention, attended by delegates from 15 countries, condemned what it called official anti-Semitism in Russia and Poland. The delegates demanded that the governments of both countries release the documentary and cultural material still in their possession relating to Eastern European Jewry. The gathering also called on Germany and Austria to speed up legal proceedings against Nazi war criminals. The Federation plans to build a House of Polish Jewry in Tel Aviv and to compile a history of 1,000 years of Jewish life in Poland.

## Major Events are Slated In New York To Mark 21st Anniversary Of State Of Israel

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- New Yorkers will celebrate the 21st anniversary of Israel's independence in three major events scheduled for this month and for June. The council of organizations of the United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York announced that some 3,000 persons will attend a public birthday celebration at Manhattan Center on April 20. They will witness the lighting of 21 huge candles and will be treated to a program of music and song by American and Israeli artists.

The American Zionist Council announced that it will hold Yom Haatzmaut celebrations on April 22 at the Felt Forum in Madison Square Garden featuring celebrities of stage, screen and television and a children's choir led by Yacov Knani. There will also be a dramatic presentation entitled "Israel Reborn." Some 5,000 persons are expected.

About 40,000 adults and students are expected to march in a "Salute to Israel" parade here on June 1. The route will be along Fifth Ave. from 57th to 86th Sts. Chairmen of the event are Theodore Comet, consultant on overseas services for the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, and Stanley E. Stern, president of Stern Management and Construction Corp.

## Seattle Jews And Catholic Diocese Protest Treatment Of Jews, Others, In Arab Lands

SEATTLE, Washington, April 17 (JTA) -- Twenty-two Jewish organizations and congregations and the Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle joined in a community protest here last week against the treatment of Jews and other minorities in the Arab states. The protest meeting was held under the auspices of the Jewish Federation and Council of Greater Seattle. A resolution, copies of which were sent to President Richard M. Nixon and United Nations Secretary-General U Thant, called on the United States and "all other civilized nations to express in the strongest possible terms their abhorrence of the practices of the Governments of Iraq, Syria and the United Arab Republic in systematically depriving their Jewish citizens and, in some cases, other minorities, of fundamental human rights such as freedom of their persons and property." It urged "that persons imprisoned in those countries because they are Jews or members of other minorities be released."

## Dr. Schwartz Goes To Western Europe And Israel To Confer With Bond Leaders

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz, vice president of the Israel Bond Organization, headed for Israel today for a series of conferences with Prime Minister Golda Meir and Finance Minister and Minister of Commerce and Industry, Zeev Sharef. Their talks will deal with the creation of wider opportunities for economic development, especially in the area of increasing Israel's export trade. He will meet first with Bond Campaign leaders in Western Europe.

## \$5,000 Prize Named For Morris J. Kaplun Is Established At Hebrew University

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- The Hebrew University in Jerusalem has announced the establishment of the Morris J. Kaplun International Prize to be awarded annually in the fields of the humanities, natural sciences, technology, social studies and Jewish studies. The \$5,000 award was announced in a joint statement issued by Nathaniel Goldstein, president of the American Friends of the Hebrew University, and Avraham Harman, university president. The prize will be administered by the Morris J. Kaplun Foundation, according to Moshe Sheinbaum, a trustee. The first awards will be conferred during a special convocation in Jerusalem in July. Mr. Kaplun is an American philanthropist who has endowed several educational projects in America and Israel in memory of his son, the late Dr. Saul Kaplun. They include an Applied Mathematics Library at the California Institute of Technology, the Institute for Applied Mathematics and Space Physics at Tel Aviv University and the Center for Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at the Hebrew University.

## Ida Kaminska Recovers From Heart Attack, Due To Return To Residence In New York

MONTREAL, April 17 (JTA) -- Actress Ida Kaminska has recovered from a mild heart attack and was to return today with her family to their New York residence. She suffered the attack last month while on a tour in the play "Mirele Efros." The tour, which was to have included Canadian and American cities, has been called off. She had been hospitalized here.

## Jewish Servicemen In Antarctic Given Bibles By Laymen's National Bible Committee

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- Jewish servicemen based in the Antarctic have been given Old Testaments by the Laymen's National Bible Committee. They were presented to Rear Admiral Lloyd Abbott, commander of the U.S. Antarctic Support Force, along with Bibles for Catholics and Protestants. The servicemen, based 820 miles from the South Pole, are part of "Operation Deep Freeze." The committee promotes Bible reading among all religions and attendance at synagogues and houses of worship of all faiths. It was formed by New York businessmen nearly 30 years ago and sponsors National Bible Week.

## Rabbi Meyer Pam Dies At 90, Was Talmudic Instructor At Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- Rabbi Meyer Pam, a retired Orthodox rabbi in Brooklyn, died here Tuesday at the age of 90. Rabbi Pam was born in Russia and came to the United States in 1924. He served as rabbi of the Medras Hagadol Synagogue and for about 20 years was a Talmudic instructor at the Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin.

## Yeshiva Will Dedicate New \$5 Million Mendel Gottesman Library On April 20

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- Yeshiva University has announced that its new Mendel Gottesman Library will be dedicated on April 20. The \$5 million structure fronts an entire block near the Yeshiva main campus in upper Manhattan. It will house more than 260,000 volumes which have previously been stored in various buildings around the city.