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Israel Calls Reports That It Has Atomic Bombs 'Speculative, Unauthorized, Unfounded'

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- Foreign Ministry officials said today that foreign press reports claiming that Israel had atomic bombs were "speculative, unauthorized and unfounded." The report published in the Montreal Gazette yesterday and re-published today in the London Evening Standard was attributed to an as yet unpublished article in the West German weekly, Der Spiegel. The Foreign Ministry officials said that such reports "crop up from time to time" but "Israel is not a nuclear state." The Government's policy has always been that Israel will not be the first nation to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East. The Foreign Ministry's denial corresponded word for word with a denial issued here last January when the National Broadcasting Co. reported that Israel had built or would very shortly build nuclear weapons.

'Montreal Gazette' Reports That Israel Is Completing 6th Bomb

MONTREAL, May 8 (JTA) -- The Montreal Gazette said yesterday that Israel has built "five nuclear bombs" and was completing a sixth. The front page story, by Peter Lust, the paper's specialist on German affairs, attributed the information to Der Spiegel. According to Mr. Lust, the existence of the bombs was discovered by a group of journalists representing Der Spiegel.

The Gazette described the bombs as 20 kiloton atomic bombs similar to those dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the closing days of World War II. It said the bombs were produced at a nuclear testing station in the Negev Desert 11 miles from Dimona, site of a plant where Israel is experimenting with nuclear power, reportedly for peaceful purposes. The story said when the bombs were completed they were rushed to an unknown destination "whose exact location is Israel's best kept military secret."

The Gazette said that Egyptian intelligence learned of the bombs last February and that President Gamal Abdel Nasser appealed urgently to the Soviet Union to station nuclear weapons in Egypt. "Moscow refused, but strengthened the Soviet Mediterranean fleet to include ships equipped with nuclear warheads," the Gazette reported, adding that simultaneously the Russians sent notes to Washington, London and Paris setting up the present Four Power talks on the Mideast.

Speculation on whether Israel has atomic bombs was touched off last January by a National Broadcasting Co. news report that Israel had developed or would shortly have a nuclear bomb and was working on a delivery system. Official sources in Israel denied the report while U.S. State Department officials in Washington called it "erroneous."

They expressed confidence at the time that Israel would live up to its pledge not to be the first nation to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East. But scientific authorities and knowledgeable journalists in the U.S. and Britain insisted that Israel had the know-how and technology to produce a nuclear bomb. They noted that nuclear reactors had been developed at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovoth, at Dimona and at Nahal Soreq.

The Gazette report said the reactor at Dimona was capable of producing both atomic and hydrogen bombs and was built with the help of France in the years when France was a close ally of Israel. Mr. Lust claimed that the atomic bombs were completed last February, only 18 days after the NBC report. He said Israel could deliver the bombs either with its A-4 Skyhawk jets or with the F-4 Phantom jets which the United States will start delivering next September. The writer said the Dimona site was so closely guarded that an Israeli plane that strayed over it during the 1967 Six-Day War was shot down by Israeli rockets and its pilot killed.

Mrs. Meir Calls Lebanon, Where Arabs Are Clashing, Israel's 'New Trouble Spot'

TEL AVIV, May 8 (JTA) -- Premier Golda Meir warned yesterday that the Lebanese border was Israel's "new trouble spot" and said that top priority would be given to the construction of shelters in Israeli villages near the Lebanese frontier. Mrs. Meir spoke at a meeting of the Histadrut leadership as reports reached here of new clashes between Lebanese Army troops and guerrillas massed in the southern portion of the country for raids against Israel.

The guerrillas were said to belong to the Syrian-backed al-Saiqa (Thunderbolt) organization. But El Fatah, the most powerful Palestinian commando group, claimed in a broadcast from Cairo yesterday that five of its members had been killed by Lebanese soldiers and 10 others wounded in clashes that developed when the guerrillas attempted to invade Israel on a sabotage mission from southern Lebanon. The Lebanese military command denied the charge. It claimed earlier, however, that it would crack down on the growing number of guerrillas near Lebanon's borders with Israel.

(Official quarters in Beirut said 40 guerrillas were captured in fighting that developed yesterday after Lebanese Army units were attacked with mortars and machineguns in the Hasbaya and Marjayoun districts of southern Lebanon. Those held were said to be mostly Syrians. Lebanese sources said Syrian helicopters were seen dropping supplies to the guerrillas. They said one soldier

and two commandos were killed in the clashes.) Dr. Nassan Sabry al-Kholy, a special envoy of President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, arrived in Beirut today to mediate between Lebanese authorities and the guerrillas. Lebanon has been without a Government since the cabinet of Premier Rashid Karami fell last month after three days of bloody riots by students and Palestinian refugees.

The riots stemmed from protests against Lebanon's policy of curtailing guerrilla activities on its soil in order to avoid reprisals from Israel. Lebanon, whose population is half Moslem and half Christian, was not a participant in the June, 1967 Arab-Israel war and has tried to follow a course of non-involvement in the dispute since then. The country is split with advocates of a cautious policy coming under sharp attack from militant elements who demand freedom of action for the guerrillas. Mrs. Meir said yesterday that she did not know "who will come out on top, the guerrillas or the Lebanese Army." She warned Israelis that "we are going to face harsh situations and must have the spiritual strength and no illusions about what lies ahead."

(Mrs. Meir said in a taped television interview today that Israel would not return strategic areas captured from the Arab countries in the Six-Day War. But she described as "very, very wise" the statement by Premier Levi Eshkol shortly before his death Feb. 26 that Israel did not want to keep any part of the populated area of the West Bank captured from Jordan. Mrs. Meir was interviewed by Clifton Daniel, New York Times' managing editor. The interview was broadcast on the National Education Television network. Asked whether Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem was to be regarded as an "accomplished fact," Mrs. Meir replied, "absolutely." She objected to the Four Power Mideast talks now going on in New York because two of the participants--France and the Soviet Union--have been openly pro-Arab and because "I do not believe nor do I accept the right of any powers large or small to decide the fate of others.)

Israeli Jets Raid Arab Guerrilla Bases In Jordan For 2nd Consecutive Day

TEL AVIV, May 8 (JTA) -- Israel Air Force jets raided Arab guerrilla bases in Jordan today for the second consecutive day. A military spokesman said the target was an El Fatah base at Bir el-Harir in southern Jordan. The action lasted a half hour. All planes returned safely to their bases. Yesterday Israeli planes struck an El Fatah base near the village of Rafila, 20 miles south-east of the Dead Sea.

Two Israeli soldiers were killed and three were wounded, one seriously, in a 12-hour artillery duel across the Suez Canal yesterday. A military spokesman said the shelling was centered in the Qantara area along the northern section of the waterway but fire was also exchanged around Ismailia at the canal's midpoint.

Egypt claimed that a number of Israeli shells hit the suburbs of Port Said, a city at the Mediterranean entrance to the canal which is an anchorage for several Soviet vessels. The Cairo report said there were no casualties, indicating that parts of Port Said may have been evacuated. Israeli sources denied an Egyptian claim that an Israeli observation plane had been forced down in the Port Said area. A military spokesman said Israeli artillery scored direct hits on Egyptian positions north of Qantara.

Five Arab saboteurs were killed and six were captured yesterday in clashes with Israeli patrols in the Araba district south of the Dead Sea and near Umm Tutz in the Jordan Valley. Large quantities of weapons, explosives and demolition material were captured.

Ministerial Committee Sets May 15 Observance Of Old City's Liberation

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- A special ministerial committee ended today an argument about observance of the liberation of East Jerusalem by approving a prayer rally in the Old City on May 15. The police had originally denied permission for such an event on grounds that the Hebrew date of the liberation coincided this year with the anniversary of Israel's independence. In the past that observance has been marked by demonstrations by Arabs. On May 14, a Torah Scroll will be installed at the Western Wall by parents of the soldiers who were killed in the liberation of the Old City.

Louis A. Pincus Sees Acceptance Of Jewish Agency Reorganization Program

NEW YORK, May 8 (JTA) -- Louis A. Pincus, chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, said here today that he had been gratified by the understanding shown by Jewish organizations in this country and their readiness to enter into partnership with the World Zionist Organization in a revamped Jewish Agency in which the organizations responsible for raising funds for Israel purposes would be represented on an equal basis with the WZO. He said that a broad basis of agreement had been reached in this country and abroad on participation and reported that the reorganization plan would be submitted to the Zionist Actions Committee, ruling body of the WZO between Congresses, next June.

Mr. Pincus expressed confidence the plan would receive a substantial majority in the Actions Committee after which, he said, actual negotiations on formation of a 300-member Jewish Agency Assembly could be begun. The new organization could become operative, he said, within six months. The World Zionist Organization would elect half the members of the Assembly and the fund-raising organizations the other half. The Assembly would be responsible for adoption of the Jewish Agency budget and for the election of the Executive. The World Zionist Organization would elect its own Executive and would continue its specifically Zionist tasks, but the two Executives would have the same chairman.

The Jewish Agency official stressed that the reorganization plan would give to the Jewish leadership responsible for fund-raising for Israeli purposes "ground level" participation in the decision-making processes and thus a voice in the expenditure of the funds which they had helped to raise.

The Labor Zionists, the General Zionist Confederation (Neumann group) and the Mizrahi were described as supporting the reorganization program. The World Confederation of General Zionists (Goldstein-Halprin group) supported the principle of reorganization but differed on the form it was to take. The Mapam Party was described as split on the question and the Herut Party was opposed to reorganization.

The Goldstein-Halprin group defined its stand on the proposals at a meeting of its executive body in London last weekend. It expressed itself in favor of reorganization and of the election of representatives of the bodies raising funds for Israel on a basis of parity with the World Zionist Organization but it opposed the creation of "two separate parallel organizations" and urged a revision of the plan to provide for one Executive which would deal with the work of the Jewish Agency as well as of the World Zionist Organization. It proposed that the Actions Committee establish a special committee composed one-half of WZO representatives and half of representatives of the fund-raising organizations to formulate a mutually acceptable plan.

Prof. Jacob Katz Is Elected Rector Of Hebrew University, A Surprise Choice

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- Prof. Jacob Katz, who teaches social and educational history and leans toward Orthodoxy, was elected rector of the Hebrew University by the University Senate yesterday. His election was a surprise since humanities and natural science professors usually alternate in the post and his predecessor, Prof. Nathan Rotenstreich, is a professor of philosophy. Prof. Katz was one of a number of religious faculty members who recently signed a letter protesting the opening of the university's swimming pool on the Sabbath.

Prof. Katz, who was born in Hungary in 1905 and came to Palestine in 1935, took a cool view of foreign students whose numbers are increasing at the Hebrew University. He told reporters that while the university must devote a great deal of energy toward integrating them, it should not be at the expense of other obligations which he defined as "education, scholarship, Israeli students and the teaching staff."

Site Of New Porat Josef Sephardic Yeshiva Is Dedicated In East Jerusalem

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- The site of the new Porat Yosef yeshiva in East Jerusalem, the only major Sephardic rabbinical seminary in Israel, was dedicated yesterday amid the rubble of the old building that was destroyed by the Jordanian Army in 1948. The dedication ceremonies were attended by Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem, Sephardic Chief Rabbi Isser Untermann and the Sephardic Chief Rabbis of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. The yeshiva has been housed in temporary quarters in West Jerusalem for the past few years.

Israel's Exports In April Increase 24 Percent Over Same Month In 1968

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- Israel's exports during the month of April were 24 percent greater than in April, 1968, it was announced today. The gross value was \$65 million compared to \$52 million a year ago. Exports rose 16 percent during the first third of this year. The rise was attributed to a 20 percent increase in industrial exports and an eight percent rise in agricultural sales abroad, mainly citrus.

American Nazi Indicted For Allegedly Planning To Blow Up Shalom, Which Doesn't Exist

NEW YORK, May 8 (JTA) -- A card-carrying member of the reportedly defunct American Nazi Party was arraigned here today on a technical charge of failing to register explosives. His intention, according to Assistant District Attorney Stuart Stillman, was to blow up the Israeli luxury liner Shalom, a ship that has not existed since 1967.

Mr. Stillman said that Charles S. Schofer was arrested after he turned over 10 sticks of dynamite and two blasting caps to an undercover agent whom he tried to enlist in the plot. What Schofer did not know was that the Shalom, a money-loser, was sold by Israel's Zim Lines to the German-Atlantic Line of Hamburg which took her over in November, 1967. The former Israeli liner is now the Hanseatic, flying the German flag. Schofer was held for grand jury action.

Robert Gralla Becomes Fourth Jew To Attain Rank Of Vice Admiral In United States Navy

NEW YORK, May 8 (JTA) -- Rear Admiral Arthur Robert Gralla has been promoted to Vice Admiral and is the fourth Jew to attain that rank in U.S. Naval history. Vice Admiral is the equivalent of Lt. General in the Army, a three star rank. Admiral Gralla was also named by President Richard M. Nixon as Navy Inspector General. He has been in the Navy for 35 years. A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1934, Admiral Gralla was raised in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn where he attended a Hebrew school. His father for many years was chief clerk at New York City Police headquarters. Admiral Gralla won the Bronze Star and Gold Star during World War II. In 1959 he commanded the Navy missile test ship Norton Sound when she fired the first nuclear armed rockets 300 miles into space.

The only other Jews to attain the rank of Vice Admiral were Adolph Marix, who commanded the battleship Maine until a few weeks before she blew up in Havana harbor in 1898; Ben Morreel, who commanded the Navy Seabees (construction battalions) in the closing days of World War II; and Herschel Goldberg, who recently retired as Chief of the Navy Bureau of Supplies and Accounts.

New York Federation Of Reform Synagogues Prepares Kit On Dealing With The Draft

NEW YORK, May 8 (JTA) -- The New York Federation of Reform Synagogues has embarked on a program to provide young men of draft age with accurate information on the Jewish point of view on war and peace and on Selective Service procedures to help them "reach intelligent decisions regarding their course of action with respect to the draft." The information has been assembled in a kit under the heading "Selective Service and Its Alternatives" which the Federation has distributed to 103 Reform synagogues in the New York area through its youth activities department. The Federation stated that it and its parent body, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, take no official position on the draft "but seeks to help each young man to reach his own well thought out position."

The kit outlines the procedure for programming a conference on the question and recommends that presentations be made to participating young men by a rabbi, a representative of the Selective Service System and a draft counsellor, who would answer questions. The kit also contains relevant passages from the Bible, the Talmud and other Hebrew sources; the text of a resolution on Selective Service passed at the last biennial assembly of the UAHC; a sermon titled "Can a Jew Be a Conscientious Objector?" delivered by Rabbi Jerome K. Davidson, of Temple Beth-El, Great Neck, N.Y.; and a bibliography of publications containing official Government material and divergent views on the draft and conscientious objection.

Reconstructionist Rabbi Says Jewish Community Centers Should Stay Open On Sabbath

ALLENTOWN, Pa., May 8 (JTA) -- A rabbi of the Reconstructionist movement has urged Jewish community centers to remain open on the Sabbath to serve "the needs of those who do not hold to Orthodoxy." Rabbi Arthur Gilbert, dean of the new Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia, also declared that the Sabbath "must be re-established not as a restrictive day of Fourth Century worship and rest, but rather as a 20th Century turn-on to relevance."

Canadian Minister Of State Says Jews Should Support French Language In Quebec

MONTREAL, May 8 (JTA) -- Gerard Pelletier, Canadian Minister of State and a personal friend of Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, said here yesterday that "Jews in a province with a French majority like Quebec" must help to counter the English-language linguistic "ghetto which circumstances beyond their control have helped to erect."

The Canadian leader was addressing a gathering of 500 persons at Montreal's Beth-El Temple on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Jewish Aid to Immigrants Society. He mentioned that since 1957, more than 4,000 Jews from French-speaking countries had entered Canada, coming from North African and Asian countries. "All these Jews," he said, "have refused to let themselves be assimilated by the English-speaking milieu not only in Montreal but in Toronto also."

He warned the audience that they should carefully watch new Canadian and Quebec social and cultural trends, adding, "you should identify yourselves with the fundamental trends engulfing our society." He added that the French element in Quebec and in the rest of Canada had been acting vigorously in recent years to better protect the French cultural heritage.

"You as Diaspora Jews must understand better than anyone else this French striving for self-preservation, and (because of) the viable position you hold in a French community you must make efforts in answering this need," he said. But, he said, "all this does not imply your abandoning your own cultural heritage. The contribution brought by your culture represents a precious enrichment of the Canadian culture."

B'nai B'rith Youth Organization Will Provide Teens With Information On Drugs

WASHINGTON, May 8 (JTA) -- The B'nai B'rith Youth Organization announced today that it will soon launch a national effort to provide teen-agers with the latest information about drug abuse. The plan was disclosed at a conference of BBYO professional workers which received the results of a survey by the organization's program department confirming reports of an "alarming escalation" of drug use among high school and junior high school students.

Federal and New York City addiction prevention experts have agreed to aid as consultants in developing the information program along with adult workers of the BBYO. Seymour Cohen, BBYO program director, said the project would aim to equip young people with reliable facts and techniques to make more effective their discussion with their peers on the hazards of drug abuse and to suggest better guidelines for adults to follow in "getting through" to young people on the issue of drug use.

Funeral Services Held For Samuel Caplan, 74, Retired Editor Of 'Congress Bi-Weekly'

NEW YORK, May 8 (JTA) -- Funeral services were held today for Samuel Caplan, retired editor of Congress Bi-Weekly, a magazine published by the American Jewish Congress, who died Tuesday at the age of 74. Mr. Caplan was born in Russia and came to the United States in 1905. He attended the University of Pittsburgh and the Columbia University School of Journalism. In 1934 he edited The New Palestine magazine and in 1940 was appointed editor of the Congress Weekly, the post which he held until his retirement in 1966. The magazine became a bi-weekly in 1959.

JDC Announces Solender Joins Overseas Staff As Consultant On Centers, Camps

GENEVA, May 8 (JTA) -- The Joint Distribution Committee announced here that Stephen Solender, former director of the Skokie Jewish Community Center in Chicago, has joined its overseas staff as a consultant on Jewish community centers and vacation camps in Europe. Louis D. Horowitz, director general of the JDC, said the appointment was part of the technical assistance program for European Jewish communities.