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Israel Calls On United Nations To Intervene To Prevent More Hangings In Iraq

JERUSALEM, Aug. 20 (JTA)--Israel asked the United Nations today to intervene on behalf of two Iraqi Jews and ten others facing trial -- and probably the gallows -- in Iraq for allegedly spying for Israel. Foreign Minister Abba Eban appealed to Secretary General U Thant to use his good offices with the Baghdad regime to prevent a repetition of last January's public hangings of Jews and other alleged spies in Baghdad and Basra. He said the charges brought against the accused, which Baghdad announced earlier this week, were "absolutely groundless and slanderous," made by a "regime whose policy it is to persecute religious and national minorities, primarily Jews."

(Mr. Eban's note was delivered personally to Mr. Thant last evening at his UN office by Ambassador Yosef Tekoah, head of the Israeli delegation.)

The announcement in Baghdad that a revolutionary court will try 12 men and women, including the Jewish brothers, Meir and Sassoun Abdou, has aroused anger and alarm in Israel. The chairman of the Association of Iraqi Jews in Israel, D. Pattel, called on the United Nations Human Rights Commission to investigate the condition of Jews in Iraq and other Arab countries without delay. Shlomo Hillel, deputy director of the Israel Foreign Ministry, urged world opinion to exert pressure on the Iraqi authorities. He said the "mock trials" in Baghdad could signal a new wave of hangings and persecution for Iraqi Jews.

Says Iraqi Rulers Intend To Continue Mock Trials And Public Executions

Mr. Eban, in his note to Mr. Thant, declared that "the public and barbaric hangings of Jews in a market place in Baghdad last January shocked the entire civilized world but apparently did not deter the Baghdad rulers who have decided to continue with mock trials and executions." Mr. Eban said the danger facing the Jews of Iraq is now at its height with scores of them imprisoned and thousands of others oppressed and fearful for their lives. Mr. Eban told Mr. Thant that he thought the action taken by the UN in the aftermath of last January's hangings was "inadequate" and in "sharp contrast to the energetic action" taken by the UN which appointed another commission to investigate the situation of Arabs in the Israeli-occupied areas. Mr. Eban referred to a special committee of the UN Human Rights Commission which is presently hearing testimony in the Arab capitals of alleged mistreatment of Arabs under Israeli rule.

Mr. Pattel, in his appeal to the Human Rights Commission, said the Iraqi regime was "infringing in the most barbaric way on the human rights of the Jewish minority." He said the Abdou brothers were arrested a year ago and held incommunicado. It was only this week that their family learned from Baghdad radio that they were to go on trial.

Mr. Hillel said that all hopes that the condition of Iraqi Jews might improve have faded. He said that five Jews have died or been killed in Iraqi prisons so far and only recently a Jew was killed in a Baghdad street but authorities made no effort to investigate the crime. Mr. Hillel said Iraq reneged on a promise by its president that any Jew who wished to leave the country could do so. He said that out of 1,500 applicants, an exit visa was granted to only one, an aged woman who was permitted to leave the country after having spent two years in jail.

State Department Officials See No Prospect Of Effective American Intercession

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20 (JTA)--Official United States intercession on behalf of Jews and others arrested in Iraq might do more harm than good in view of existing American - Iraqi relations, State Department officials said today.

The officials said that those arrested in Iraq in the last few days were obviously in peril of arbitrary death sentences but there was nothing the United States could accomplish by direct representations to Baghdad.

It was suggested that other nations possessing better links with the Arabs might more effectively involve themselves if such countries felt so disposed.

American Jewish Committee Urges 'Men of Good Will' To Seek End To Iraqi Persecution

NEW YORK, Aug. 20 (JTA) --Philip E. Hoffman, president of the American Jewish Committee, called on the United States Government, the United Nations and "men of good will everywhere" today to exert their efforts to prevail upon the Iraqi Government "to end the persecution of its Jewish and other minorities." The Committee charged that past statements by the president of Iraq that discriminatory legislation in his country would be ended and the Jews permitted to emigrate had not been honored.

Three Soviet Spy Ships In Mediterranean May Be Monitoring Israeli Communications

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20 (JTA)--United States naval sources said today that a number of Soviet intelligence-gathering ships were in the Middle East and indicated that they may be systematically monitoring Israeli military communications as well as the radio net of the U.S. 6th Fleet.

At least three Russian spy ships, all equipped with the latest electronic devices, have been discovered in the Mediterranean. The pattern of Russian surveillance covers Israel and Egypt, especially the area of operations at the Suez Canal. It is presumed that interpreters competent in Hebrew language and cryptographers are aboard the intelligence ships.

An attempt to learn if all three are on station in Middle Eastern waters was unsuccessful. Naval sources would say only that Russian surveillance indicated that Israel was "well-covered."

It was learned meanwhile that in addition to the 64 Russian naval vessels of all types now in the Mediterranean, 10 Soviet naval units have been spotted in the Indian Ocean. Some are in the vicinity of Yemen and the Red Sea. At least one of the ships is equipped for electronic spying. Such surveillance might include southern Israeli communications and sea-air movements to and from Sharm-el-Sheikh and the Sinai peninsula.

One or more Soviet submarines may be in the Red Sea - Indian Ocean area, according to sources here.

The United States Navy has made some "balancing dispositions" but no details were available. Defense Department sources said the Soviet helicopter carrier Moskva which entered the Mediterranean this week is equipped to land marine striking units from the 30 or more helicopters the ship carries.

Secretary Of State Sees No Correlation Between Soviet Naval And Political Moves

Secretary of State William P. Rogers said today that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is watching the Soviet naval build-up in the Mediterranean. But he said that no correlation has been noted between Russian naval and political moves.

Mr. Rogers told a press conference that Soviet naval power in the Mediterranean has varied since the June, 1967 Arab-Israeli war but recently reached a high point of about 63 Russian warships concentrated in the Mediterranean. He said NATO would take any action necessary "to see that the security of the area is not impaired."

(Civilian airline pilots arriving today at Lydda Airport from overseas reported seeing large concentrations of United States and Soviet warships in the Eastern Mediterranean. The pilots said they spotted an American flotilla near the island of Rhodes, south of the Turkish mainland, which included an aircraft carrier. They said Russian naval units were seen near Cyprus.)

Israel Calls On Egypt To Return Pilot Downed On Canal Area Attack Mission

TEL AVIV, Aug. 20 (JTA)--Israel demanded through the International Red Cross today that Egypt return Maj. Nissim Ashkenazi, 30, an Israeli pilot who was captured after his jet fighter-bomber was shot down by Egyptian anti-aircraft fire near the Suez Canal yesterday. Maj. Ashkenazi was flying an attack mission against Egyptian artillery which had been shelling Israeli positions on the canal's east bank near Al Shatt. An Israeli civilian was killed in the barrage. He was identified as Shimon Zarfatti, 35, a father of four. An Israeli soldier, 22 year-old Moshe Sahrawi, was killed yesterday by an Egyptian sniper near Kantara. Another soldier was wounded by a sniper this morning.

The Israeli demand for the return of Maj. Ashkenazi was handed to an IRC representative to forward to authorities in Cairo. But an Egyptian communique today claimed that the Israeli pilot was seriously injured and was undergoing treatment in a hospital. His fellow pilots who saw him bail out, said they were astonished by the report. They said they saw Maj. Ashkenazi land safely on Egyptian soil after ditching his burning plane and that he was standing on his feet which he could not have done if he were seriously wounded. They said he might have been injured by the Egyptians after they captured him. It was noted here that Israel holds an Egyptian pilot of equal rank who bailed out of his Su-7 bomber over Israel-held Sinai recently. It is possible that he will be exchanged for Maj. Ashkenazi, sources here said.

Report Comparative Quiet In Canal Area

The Suez Canal front was relatively quiet during the night except for sporadic fire from the Egyptian side which continued today. But two Israel Army patrols were attacked in the northern Golan Heights and near Quneitra. They returned the fire and suffered no casualties.

El Arish, the largest township on the Sinai peninsula, was placed under curfew last night following attacks on nearby Nahal Sinai and on the El Arish airstrip with Katyusha rockets. Several hundred local residents were questioned by police.

An Arab saboteur was killed in a clash with an Israeli patrol north of the Damiya bridge last night.

Galili Warns Syria Against Continuing Attacks On Israel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 20 (JTA)--An Israeli cabinet minister warned Syria today not to continue hostile activities against Israel because "you will be hit harder than you can hit us." Israel Galili, a Minister-Without-Portfolio who heads the government information services, visited Israeli positions on Mt. Hermon and settlements in the Golan Heights. He warned Damascus authorities that they would be making a "grave mistake by serving the interests of (President) Nasser" of Egypt.

Dayan Says 'Open Bridges' Policy Is Serving West Bank Arab Population Well

JERUSALEM, Aug. 20 (JTA)--Defense Minister Moshe Dayan toured the Jordan Valley today and remarked that the "open bridges" policy was serving the Arab population well and was being carried out in good order. The "open bridges" policy permits West Bank Arabs freedom of movement to and from Jordan across bridges spanning the river. The bridges also carry considerable trade between the East and West banks. Gen. Dayan said if the bridges were closed the Arab population would suffer.

He visited the Damiya bridge, accompanied by Chief of Staff Haim Bar Lev and other senior military officers, and conversed at random with Arab pedestrians and drivers. He talked with an Arab truck driver from Nablus on methods of transporting produce to Amman and with a woman from Kuwait on her way to visit relatives in Tulkarm. Gen. Dayan noted that 16,000 foreign Arabs have visited relatives on the West Bank since June 16 when the summer visitors program began. The Kuwaiti lady told him that she carried two passports because the authorities in her country and in Saudi Arabia which she must transit would not recognize a passport stamped with an Israeli entry permit.

Gen. Dayan also visited a construction site at Nahal Argaman and conferred with Arab building workers there.

Security Council Stalemated On Resolution To Dispose Of Lebanese, Israeli Complaints

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. Aug. 20 (JTA)--A deadlock prevailed today in the United Nations Security Council over disposition of the Lebanese and Israeli cross-complaints arising out of the Israeli air-strike against a terrorist enclave in southern Lebanon on August 11. Neither Pakistan, with a resolution sharply condemning Israel, nor the United States with a resolution condemning Israel, but at the same time, condemning all other violations of the cease-fire, had succeeded in obtaining the nine votes necessary to carry the resolution in the 15-member Security Council.

Because of the continuing deadlock, the Security Council has been unable to continue the deliberations it adjourned on Tuesday. Meanwhile its members have been in consultation seeking an agreed resolution. It was reported tonight that there might be some modification of the Lebanese position permitting adoption of a resolution acceptable to the United States, which would, while condemning Israel, still permit some criticism of violations of the cease-fire by guerrillas operating from Lebanese territory.

Israel charged today that the Jordan Government was actively encouraging aggressive activities against Israel by guerrillas based on its territory and that the Jordanian regular army was increasingly taking the initiative in harrassing Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley.

In a letter addressed to Secretary General U Thant, Ambassador Yosef Tekoah of Israel, said official statements by Jordanian leaders and reports disseminated by Arab and international news media left little doubt of Jordan's aggressive role, despite Amman's claims that it was the innocent victim of current events.

UN Committee Hears More Accusations Of Israeli Maltreatment Of Arab Population

LONDON, Aug. 20 (JTA)--A 23 year-old Palestinian mother who was arrested by Israeli authorities for terrorist activities on July, 1968, testified before a United Nations group in Amman Tuesday that Israel oppressed and tortured Arabs in violation of the Geneva Convention. Mrs. Abla Taha was the 30th witness to appear before a special committee of the UN Human Rights Commission charged with investigating the condition of Arab civilians in the territories occupied by Israel during the June, 1967 war. The committee has held hearings in Beirut and Damascus and will move to Cairo after its sessions in Amman.

Rumania's First Ambassador To Israel Presents Credentials To President Shazar

JERUSALEM, Aug. 20 (JTA)--Rumania's first Ambassador to Israel presented his credentials to President Zalman Shazar yesterday in ceremonies at the Presidential residence attended by Foreign Minister Abba Eban and senior officials of the Foreign Ministry. The new Ambassador, Valerie Georgescu, was previously Rumania's Minister to Israel. The two countries agreed last month to raise their respective legations to the rank of Embassies.

Israel's Ambassador-designate to Rumania, Rafael Ben Shalom, left for Bucharest last week.

Israel Treasury Pays \$5.1 Million In War Damages To Border Settlements

JERUSALEM, Aug. 20 (JTA)--The Israeli Finance Ministry paid out \$5.1 million in war damages during the last fiscal year to border settlements that have been targets of Arab attack, the Treasury reported today. The controller of income and payments said the sum was similar to that paid during fiscal 1967.

Business circles noted today that Israeli merchants would have to pay over \$1.5 million extra on cargoes as a result of a special surcharge planned by the various steamship conferences serving Israeli ports. The surcharge will be imposed beginning Aug. 25 unless measures are taken to end labor troubles on Israeli docks. Disputes at Haifa and Ashdod, Israel's principal ports have delayed the loading and discharge of cargo resulting in worse than normal congestion. The government-owned Zim Lines, itself a member of most freight conferences, failed to prevail upon foreign shipping lines to abandon the surcharge.

Baptist Scholar Terms Christian Anti-Semitism 'Manifestation Of The Pagan Spirit'

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Aug. 20 (JTA) -- A Baptist theologian said today that religious motivation is at the root of most contemporary anti-Semitism as it has been throughout history. Dr. Eric C. Rust, professor of Christian Apologetics at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, spoke at a three-day interfaith dialogue being held at the seminary. The event is sponsored jointly by the Southern Baptist Convention and the interreligious affairs department of the American Jewish Committee. It is the first to bring together Jewish and Baptist theologians and Biblical scholars.

Dr. Rust, who spoke on the Jew in Christian thought and practice, said "anti-Semitism as practiced by so-called Christian civilizations is a manifestation of the pagan depths in the human soul, even when it has been superficially Christianized." He said the pogroms of Czarist Russia and the Nazi Holocaust "sprang from a seed which the Church itself sowed in the early days of its history." He said the Roman Church, in acknowledging its guilt, "challenges all Christian men to stand by its side."

Christians Must Understand Meaning of Holocaust And Israel To Jewish People

In a companion paper delivered at the same session, Rabbi Marc H. Tannenbaum, director of the AJCommittee's interreligious affairs department, said that the Nazi Holocaust and the meaning of the State of Israel to the Jewish people and to Judaism were the "two decisive events of contemporary Jewish experience" that "must be taken into account in any effort to understand the interior life of the Jew today."

Rabbi Tannenbaum maintained that it was impossible to understand Jews or Judaism today without understanding "the impact on American Jews of the Arab-Israeli war of June, 1967." He said Arab threats to destroy Israel and annihilate its population drew "a response of Jewish unity, of Jewish solidarity, and of a new consciousness of interdependence in fate and destiny that is literally unprecedented in the last 2000 years of Jewish history."

He said that response stemmed in part "from a still deep psychic reaction to the Nazi Holocaust of the 1930s," from a "reoccupation with Christian silence in face of Nazi barbarism" and from feelings of guilt over the silence and inadequacy of the Jewish response.

Rabbi Tannenbaum said the fact that Israel became a haven for the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust was one reason for its importance to Jews today. "An equally important fact is that Israel is the only place in the world where Jews have created, out of the distinctive Jewish ethos and their own intellectual spiritual and moral resources, their own economic, military, political and social institutions."

Ruling Synagogue Is Liable For Taxes On Commercial Income From Property Is Under Study

NEW YORK, Aug. 20, (JTA) -- National Jewish organizations indicated today that they were studying the implications of a State Supreme Court ruling in Mineola, Long Island holding that a Conservative congregation had lost a portion of its immunity from taxation because it has leased part of its property for commercial use.

The decision was made by Justice Howard T. Hogan against Temple Beth Shalom in East Hills and the Roslyn Summer Day Camp. The decision reportedly stemmed from the first lawsuit in New York state brought by a taxpayer to force a religious agency to pay taxes on a commercial operation with which it was involved. The suit was brought by Mrs. Selma Winter of East Hills, a former member of the synagogue. According to the suit, the camp used the 12-1/2 acres of synagogue grounds and all rooms except the sanctuary for the campers.

Dr. Bernard Segal, executive director of the United Synagogue of America, the association of Conservative congregations, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the United Synagogue's position has been that any house of worship which makes its facilities available for commercial purposes should be prepared to pay the taxes on such earnings. He said that this position applied to the East Hills ruling.

Spokesmen for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Reform congregational agency, and for the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, indicated that the Mineola ruling was under consideration. The UAHC spokesman said the issue had been under study for some time.

Earlier this year, the Synagogue Council of America, the national coordinating agency for the lay and rabbinic arms of Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Jewry, said the SCA had been considering the issue for some time. The statement was made by Rabbi Henry Siegman, SCA Executive vice-president, in response to an inquiry by the JTA on the reactions of Jewish organizations to an announcement that the United States Supreme Court had agreed to hear, this fall, a challenge to the constitutionality of state laws exempting church property from real estate taxes.

Rabbi Siegman explained that the SCA had been "grappling with the issue" of tax exemption from real estate taxes because of earlier taxpayer suits against exemption for non-religious affiliated church property.

To Make Study Of Drug Use By Jewish Teenagers In Seven Southern States

NEW ORLEANS, Aug. 20 (JTA)--The Jewish Children's Home Service of New Orleans plans to make a study of the effects of drug use by Jewish teenagers in the seven-state southern area it services, Caro B. Hart, president announced today. The agency operates in cooperation with local Jewish agencies in service area. He said the first step would be collection of information from the local Jewish organizations on the effects on family relationships of the use and experimentation with drugs by teenage family members. He said it was hoped that the information would provide clues for casework treatment of affected Jewish families. The study also will seek to determine the extent to which the drug problem is being brought to the attention of the Jewish casework agencies, he said.