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Spokesman Declares Nixon Administration Does Not Seek To Impose Peace On Middle East

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 28(JTA) -- A Republican Congressional leader said here today that "the Nixon administration does not seek to impose peace in the Middle East but will spare no effort to help find the road to peace." Representative Gerald R. Ford, of Michigan, Republican minority leader in the House of Representatives, outlined the latest views of the Nixon Administration on the Middle East in a speech prepared for delivery tonight at the opening of the 72nd national convention of the Zionist Organization of America. His speech before 1,000 ZOA delegates was presumed to have been cleared by the White House.

According to Rep. Ford, the main objective of the Nixon Administration in the region is peace, not only for the safety of the region but "because the United States does not want to become involved in a major conflict in the Middle East or any other area." For that reason, he said, the administration has decided to continue bilateral talks with the Soviet Union. He said those talks have not broken down but are in fact "continuing."

Mr. Ford asserted that "the Administration does not believe that the U.S.-Soviet talks can bring peace in and of themselves but it does believe the United States would be derelict if it did not make every effort to determine whether negotiations between Israel and the Arab states would be possible under the auspices of United Nations Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring."

Declares Administration Is Fulfilling Its Security Commitments To Israel

The Republican leader said the first of 50 Phantom jet supersonic fighter-bombers now on order for Israel will be delivered in September. He disclosed that the original Israeli order of 44 Skyhawk subsonic jets has been doubled to 88. Mr. Ford asserted that the Nixon Administration was fulfilling its security commitments to Israel. He cited the recent graduation of "the first class of Israeli Phantom pilots" trained by the U.S. Air Force. He said Israeli mechanics were also being trained here for maintenance of the highly sophisticated aircraft.

Mr. Ford was critical of the Security Council's unanimous condemnation of Israel's Aug. 11 air raid on guerrilla bases in Lebanon. "It has been said that the U.S. should employ a more balanced policy in the Middle East," the Congressman declared. "If there is validity in that statement, then what should be said of the United Nations and its practice of condemning Israel for its retaliatory raids but only mildly reproofing Arab violators of the UN cease-fire? And what should be said of the Arabs who currently are firing Russian-made rockets into Jerusalem?"

Sees Soviet Influence In Mideast As 'regrettable Fact of Life'

Rep. Ford said the Nixon Administration saw Soviet influence in the Middle East as a "regrettable fact of life---a demonstration of Soviet power which must be dealt with just as anywhere else in the world." He said the administration "has no illusions about long-range Soviet intentions in that area" but is "trying to turn an era of confrontation into an era of negotiation."

Mr. Ford charged that "The Soviets are trying to use Arab-Israeli tensions to expand into the Middle East and it is in the vital interests of the U.S. to prevent Soviet domination there." He said "We know that the Russians are now employing gun-boat diplomacy in the Mediterranean," that Russian warships there now outnumber the U.S. Sixth Fleet and that the Russians "are engaged in naval exercises off the coasts of Syria and Egypt, using bases in those two countries and that the exercises include a Russian aircraft carrier equipped for troop-carrying helicopters."

In this situation, he said, the continuation of bilateral talks with Moscow was necessary "to probe and assess Russian intentions" and to "keep up a dialogue in order to avoid a nuclear confrontation in that area of the world." Mr. Ford said it was possible that the talks "will produce a broad framework for realistic negotiations between the principal parties to the dispute."

Says Four Power Talks Have Reduced Danger of Nuclear Confrontation

He said that the Four Power and Two Power talks in which the U.S. has participated have not yet contributed in any measure to ending the Middle East conflict but have greatly reduced the danger of nuclear confrontation. He said the Nixon Administration was fully aware that even if an imposed peace were possible in the Middle East it would not likely prove permanent. "I assure you," Mr. Ford said, "the Nixon Administration is convinced that only local initiatives can resolve local conflicts; it is only local solutions that can produce permanent peace" in the Middle East. He noted that the President spoke of "local responsibility for peace, progress and security" during his recent tour of Asian countries. "He said the search for Middle East peace must go on and the "Russians might ultimately conclude that they have made a bad investment in that area."

Torczyner Asks Administration To Provide Israel With More Planes and Arms

The president of the Zionist Organization of America urged the Nixon Administration tonight to provide Israel with additional jet planes and other necessary arms to defend itself, Jacques Torczyner, in his keynote address to the 1,000 delegates at the convention said, "we hope the President will listen with sympathy to the request that will be made by the government of Israel during the official visit here of Premier Golda Meir." He said additional jets were necessary to reduce the quantitative imbalance of air strength between Israel and its Arab neighbors, supplied by the Soviet Union.

"The President knows that Israel is the only bulwark against Communism in the Middle East," Mr. Torczyner said.

Fred Kahan, who presided at the opening session, warned that "we must not minimize the real danger to Israel at this time. The prospect facing the State of Israel is that of a long war of attrition." He said that the task of the Zionist movement was to defend the interest of the people in Israel, in America, the Soviet Union and in every corner of the globe where they were in danger.

Special Knesset Session Calls For World Effort To Move Jews Out Of Arab States

JERUSALEM, Aug. 28 (JTA) -- The Knesset, Israel's Parliament, unanimously adopted a resolution at an extraordinary session today expressing "horror and alarm" over the persecution of Jews in Arab countries, notably Iraq, and calling on humanitarian organizations and heads of state all over the world to intervene on their behalf.

The Knesset declared that the only way to save the lives of those Jews was to get them out of the Arab countries. The resolution said Israel would make every possible effort to save them.

The Knesset's sentiments were echoed by Premier Golda Meir in an emotional speech before the chamber. She said the only salvation for the remaining Jews in Arab lands was their immediate evacuation to any destination. "I appeal to the conscience of the world. Let action be taken immediately for their rescue before it is too late," she said.

Mrs. Meir said that what she called the "bloody statistics" in Iraq showed that during the past 11 months, 53 persons including 11 Jews have been hanged. Seven other Jews were tortured to death in Iraqi jails and dozens more have been thrown into prison and denied communications with their families and the outside world.

Mrs. Meir contended that the 4,000 remaining Jews in Syria are being persecuted "within an inch of their lives" and that in Egypt, 1,500 Jews live in constant danger and others are imprisoned and are at the mercy of the regime.

Mrs. Meir said that in this situation it was incredible that the prestigious Human Rights Commission of the United Nations sent its emissaries to the Arab capitals to investigate the situation of Arabs in the Israel occupied territories which are open to the world press while it has so far refused to investigate the condition of Jews in Arab lands. The resolution adopted by the Knesset said the situation justified Israel's demand for such an investigation.

Argentine Intellectuals Protest Persecution Of Jews In Iraq

BUENOS AIRES, Aug. 28 (JTA) -- A group of Argentine writers and professionals protested today against the executions of alleged Israeli and American spies in Baghdad this week and demanded that the Iraqi government permit its Jewish minority to leave that country. The Committee for the Defense of Jewish Rights in Arab States sent a letter to President Al Bakr, of Iraq condemning "the act of barbarity consummated in Iraq." The committee called the executions "an echo of terror and shame which has spread all over the world."

The committee is headed by the noted Argentine writer, Jorge Luis Borges. It includes prominent lawyers, doctors, political figures, and scientists.

Canadian Jewish Congress Advertisements Call For Protests To Iraq

TORONTO, Aug. 28 (JTA) -- The Canadian Jewish Congress took half-page advertisements in the Toronto newspapers yesterday to protest against the executions in Iraq and to call on Canadian public opinion to make its voice heard.

Under the heading, "Is Justice Dead?" the advertisement pointed out that "Iraq repeats its senseless barbarism. We protest in the most energetic and unequivocal terms against the rape of justice in Iraq."

Israel Makes Diplomatic Moves To Safeguard Jewish Communities In Moslem, Non-Arab Lands

JERUSALEM, Aug. 28 (JTA) -- Israel has made direct and indirect approaches to non-Arab Moslem countries to express concern for the safety of their Jewish communities in the face of Arab incitement over the El Aksa mosque fire, it was learned today.

Israel fears that exhortations for a holy war voiced by such Arab leaders as President Nasser of Egypt and King Faisal of Saudi Arabia and the daily incitement by guerrilla chiefs in radio broadcasts from the Arab capitals have placed Jews in Moslem lands in acute danger. Israel maintains friendly relations with such non-Arab Moslem states as Turkey and Iran but not with Pakistan, Afghanistan and others.

Israeli Commando Force Strikes Egyptian Military Headquarters In Upper Egypt

TEL AVIV, Aug. 28 (JTA) -- Israeli commandos penetrated deep into Egypt last night and battered an Egyptian Army headquarters base with powerful short range weapons. All of the commandos returned safely to their bases, a military spokesman reported. The target was the regional headquarters at Manqabad, 200 miles south of Cairo on the Nile River and about the same distance from the Aswan High Dam. The base is near Asyut, the Nile Valley birthplace of Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Israeli sources gave no indication of how the commandos reached their target or how many were involved. It is presumed that they were ferried by helicopters which also carried 120 mm. heavy mortars used to shell the Egyptian base. The target is 145 miles from the nearest possible take-off point on the Israel-occupied Sinai peninsula.

An Israeli spokesman said the raid was in retaliation for continuous violations by Egypt of the June, 1967 cease-fire agreements. There were 126 incidents of Egyptian sniping and artillery fire across the Suez Canal last week. Eleven Israeli soldiers were killed in the canal zone in less than two weeks.

Israeli sources said the attackers who struck at 11:15 p.m. local time achieved complete surprise despite the fact that the headquarters base and nearby army camp were brightly lit by flames. The Egyptians fired wildly in all directions and also opened fire with anti-aircraft guns, presumably believing that they were under air attack. (Cairo claimed today that a single Israeli aircraft had attempted to bomb the Manqabad base but was driven off and dropped its bombs harmlessly. No mention was made of a commando raid.)

First Israeli Commando Attack In Months, Was Aimed To Show Israel's Striking Power

The attack was the first Israeli commando raid into Egypt since last month's foray against anti-aircraft batteries on Green Island in the Gulf of Suez. Last September and last April, Israeli units raided bridges and electric power stations in the Nile Valley.

Observers here said last night's attack was intended as a further demonstration of Israel's ability to hit targets deep inside Egypt at will. They said the demonstration was considered necessary in light of Egyptian incitement of a Moslem holy war against Israel for the burning of the El Akla mosque in Jerusalem a week ago. It was also presumably a warning to the Arab League foreign ministers who held an emergency session in Cairo Monday to plan an Arab states war conference.

The Israelis are believed to have used a locally manufactured mortar in the attack--the "Sultam" which is lighter than other mortars of its calibre but fires a more powerful shell than the mortars used by U.S. and Communist forces in Vietnam.

Israeli Jets Strafe Jordanian Position After Mortar Attack On Israeli Patrol

Israeli jets attacked a Jordanian position near the Damiya bridge today following a mortar attack on an Israeli patrol this morning in which one Israeli soldier was fatally wounded. All the planes returned safely to their bases, a military spokesman said.

Two Israeli soldiers were wounded today during an Egyptian mortar and automatic weapons attack in the southern section of the Suez Canal zone. Sporadic shelling from the Egyptian side was reported during the day.

Five Arab saboteurs who had orders to blow up an olive oil factory, a railway line and a police station in Nablus and Kalkilya on the West Bank, were captured yesterday in the northern Samarian hills. A military spokesman said the gang gave itself up except for one member who grabbed for his gun and was wounded by an Israeli soldier. The gang's capture yielded a very large quantity of explosives along with detonators, five Russian-made Kalachnikov rifles, six magazines for each, 30 hand grenades, a bazooka and self-firing devices.

A civilian was injured last night when an explosive charge went off underneath a small bridge in Western Galilee just as a civilian car was crossing it. The bridge is on the Idmith-Yarra road.

Israeli forces silenced guerrilla positions with heavy fire today after an Israeli patrol was attacked in the southern Beisen Valley near Kfar Ruppim. The attackers used bazookas and automatic weapons. No casualties were reported on the Israeli side.

East Jerusalem Strike To Mark El Aksa Fire Passes Without Incident

JERUSALEM, Aug. 28 (JTA) -- East Jerusalem Arabs held a partial strike today to mark the seventh day since the El Aksa mosque was severely burned in a fire of mysterious origin. Coffee houses and most shops were closed. Food stores remained open and transportation and other public services functioned normally. There were no incidents.

Arabs in the Sinai township of El Arish staged a general strike which shut down all shops and services. They did it with the permission of the local Israeli military commander after Arab leaders promised that the demonstration would be one of mourning, not violence. There were no strikes in West Bank towns despite calls for them in radio broadcasts from Arab capitals.

Jewish National Fund Concentrating Reclamation Efforts On Golan Heights

TEL AVIV, Aug. 28(JTA)--The Jewish National Fund is concentrating on land reclamation in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, JNF chairman Jacob Tsur reported today. He said about 12,500 acres of rehabilitated land has been handed over to settlements in the heights and another 25,000 acres are being prepared for agriculture there. Mr. Tsur said the JNF employs 1500 Arabs from the occupied territories in afforestation work in the Gaza Strip.

British Board of Deputies Asks Foreign Office To Intervene For Jews Of Iraq

LONDON, Aug. 28(JTA)--The Board of Deputies of British Jews has asked the British government to use its influence to prevent a repetition of this week's executions in Iraq and to prevail upon Iraqi authorities to permit the remaining Jews to leave that country. The plea was made by a delegation which visited Minister of State Goronwy Roberts in the Foreign Office. Mr. Roberts is substituting for vacationing Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart.

Humphrey Berkeley, chairman of the United Nations Association, wrote to the Foreign Secretary today expressing shock over the Baghdad executions. He said such acts only served to increase tensions in the area and the danger of another, more disastrous war in the Middle East.

Scotland Yard Readies Plans To Prevent 'Holy War' In England Between Jews And Arabs

LONDON, Aug. 28(JTA)--The Daily Express reported today that Scotland Yard's Special Branch drew up plans at top-level talks yesterday to prevent a "holy war" between Arabs and Jews from spreading to Britain. The paper said that security precautions have been tightened at Jewish and Israel-owned premises in the country following Monday's bomb blast in the Regent Street office of Israel's Zim Lines. The Express said in an editorial that it must be made clear to Arabs and Israelis that any terrorism caught in Britain will be punished.

Eichmann's Aides Want His Prosecutor To Testify In Their Behalf In War Crimes Case

BONN, Aug. 28(JTA)--The lawyer defending two former aides of the notorious Gestapo deportation chief Adolf Eichmann has asked that Gideon Hausner, the man who prosecuted Eichmann in Israel a decade ago be called to testify in his client's behalf.

The defendants, Hermann Krumei and Otto Hunsche are charged with complicity in the mass murder of Jews while serving under Eichmann during World War II. Their counsel said he wanted Hausner to testify that Eichmann was a pathological liar and that any confessions he made implicating his clients should be dismissed as evidence.

Rabbi Levin Of Moscow Sends Holiday Greetings Through Teenage Visitors

NEW YORK, Aug. 28(JTA)--Rabbi Yehuda Leib, Chief Rabbi of Moscow's Central Synagogue, sent his New Year's greetings to American and Canadian Jewry through a group of teenagers who visited him in Moscow. The group has just returned from a trip to the Soviet Union, Rumania and Israel under the auspices of the United Synagogue of America.

The 76-year-old rabbi, whose visit to the United States a year ago provoked a storm, expressed warm appreciation for the visit of the youngsters who were led by Rabbi Arthur A. Chiel of Woodbridge, N.Y. He described the meeting as a gladdening encounter.

Bialystok Marks 26th Anniversary Of Ghetto Uprising There; Handful Of Jews Present

LONDON, Aug. 28(JTA)--The 26th anniversary of the Bialystok ghetto uprising was marked in that Polish town this week. The ceremonies were attended by local people including a handful of Jews who remain there, it was reported here today.

According to the report, the celebration was sponsored by the Jewish Social and Cultural Association which has its headquarters in Warsaw. The mayor of Bialystok addressed the gathering and referred to the fact that Jews and Poles "suffered together and resisted together."

Eban To Accompany Golda Meir On White House Visit Next Month

JERUSALEM, Aug. 28 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Abba Eban will accompany Premier Golda Meir when she visits President Richard M. Nixon at the White House Sept. 24 and 25, it was learned here today. Mr. Eban will be in the United States next month to attend the opening of the fall session of the United Nations General Assembly. He is expected to address the Assembly on the second or third day of its session.

Students Criticize Jewish Educators For Failure To Communicate 'Substantive Content'

STARLIGHT, Pa., Aug. 28 (JTA)--A group of Jewish college students charged today that the "level of sophistication in teaching" in Jewish schools does not grow as young people mature in their ability to think.

Some 30 undergraduates at B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation's annual summer institute at Camp B'nai B'rith here said that as students progress in yeshiva education, they study the same basic "body of knowledge" they first learned at an "uncritical age." The group, participants in a seminar on Jewish education that was added to the institute's agenda at the student's insistence, complained that young people did not learn how to interpret what they are taught in terms of their own lives and interests.

In calling for "issue-centered" school curricula, the group criticized educators who tried to "perpetuate Jewish values without explanation" instead of training students to question what they are teaching them.