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Nixon Thanks Mrs. Meir For Message On Viet Speech; Report Ex-LBJ Aides' Startled

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23(JTA)--The White House has disclosed that President Richard M. Nixon "deeply appreciated" Israeli Premier Golda Meir's recent message of praise for his Nov.3 Vietnam speech. In a reply to Mrs. Meir, Mr. Nixon said he was "grateful" for her "thoughtful message," was "pleased by its positive reception in the United States" and was "especially gratified to know that leaders around the world like the Prime Minister have found hope in it."

Israeli official circles have denied that Mrs. Meir's message constituted an endorsement of the President's Vietnam policy. But the United States Information Service in Israel published a contrary interpretation. A press release handed out last week on the Meir letter carried the headline "Israel's Prime Minister Backs Nixon's Vietnam Policy." The release was datelined Washington.

In her message, Mrs. Meir congratulated Mr. Nixon on his "meaningful speech" expressed "hope that he will speedily succeed in bringing about peace in Vietnam. The President's speech contains much that encourages and strengthens freedom-loving small nations the world over which, striving to maintain their independent existence, look to that great democracy, the United States," she declared.

Meanwhile, a Washington columnist nationally syndicated by Newsday, a Long Island newspaper, has reported that the White House attaches great significance to the Meir message. Nick Thimmesch reported that "Golda Meir's unexpected message of congratulation to President Nixon on his Vietnam speech has delighted the White House and startled former aides of (former) President Lyndon E. Johnson who panted in vain for such support when he was stuck with running the war." The well-informed correspondent disclosed that "Dr. Henry Kissinger, the President's National Security advisor, took one look at the communication, as relayed by Walworth Barbour, U.S. Ambassador to Israel, and urged President Nixon to respond immediately."

Mr. Thimmesch said that "Johnson yearned for any kind of support message from Israel on Vietnam. But was rejected. He asked "why did Nixon, who got 17 percent of the Jewish vote in 1968, get the message which Lyndon Johnson, who got nearly all the Jewish vote in 1964, desperately wanted?" replying to this rhetorical question, Mr. Thimmesch said that Mrs. Meir "developed a personal sympathy for Nixon during her recent state visit to Washington as his guest."

Mrs. Meir knows that while Nixon isn't popular with American Jews, Israeli military leaders like him, and in a recent policy statement she described him as an old friend of the state," said Mr. Thimmesch. Although the Arab onslaught against Israel and the U.S. involvement in Vietnam "are not analogous...Mrs. Meir feels that she and Mr. Nixon are two world leaders in a real fix...Israel fears that if the U.S. pulls out of Vietnam in humiliation, the Arab world, particularly the radical Arab states, would be encouraged to make more war on Israel," wrote Mr. Thimmesch. He stressed that Mrs. Meir is shrewd enough to know that her support of Nixon's Vietnam policy is a welcome tonic for the President which could be repaid by delivery of even more than the 50 American Phantom jetfighters to Israel," already enroute there.

Arab Summit Conference In Morocco Can Be Expected To Decide On War, Eban Declares

JERUSALEM, Nov 23,(JTA)--The Arab summit conference in Rabat, Morocco in December can be expected to decide on nothing less than open war with Israel, Foreign Minister Abba Eban told the Israeli Cabinet today. The parley will probably discuss military tactics and timetables rather than the principle of peace, which President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt has officially renounced, Mr. Eban said.

Mr. Eban also told the Cabinet that he had again expressed Israel's opposition to the current American-Soviet bilateral negotiations, and to four power talks, in a discussion last week with British Ambassador Ernest J.W. Barnes. Meetings between Mr. Eban and ambassadors of the United States and France are also slated, he said.

On another issue, Mr. Eban noted that most of the nations which voted last Thursday for the United Nations General Assembly's Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee resolution condemning Israeli "collective punishment" policies were Arab and Communist.

The committee's 51 to 11 vote condemned the destruction of homes and deportation of Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories and called upon Israel to desist from the alleged repressive measures taken in reprisal for Arab terrorism. Mr. Eban noted that most of the 51 states have no diplomatic ties with Israel and that their number was smaller than that voting last year for a similar measure.

Mr. Eban noted that the 50 abstainers included the United States and many Western European friends of Israel. He reportedly expressed hope that the resolution would be defeated when it comes up for confirmation in the General Assembly where a two-thirds vote is needed to have the resolution passed and included in the record.

Foreign Ministry circles have noted that the resolution, co-sponsored by India, Pakistan, Yugoslavia, Guinea and The Congo (Brazzaville), contained the word "reported" in describing "repressive practices and policies" because no impartial agency had found the allegations to be grounded on fact.

The sources also observed that the resolution ignored completely the plight of Jews in Arab countries which have barred any UN investigation of the Jews' condition. The aim of the resolution's sponsors was patently political and not humanitarian, the sources said.

(In abstaining, U.S. delegate Mrs. Rita Hauser criticized the measure for disregarding the violations of rights of Jews living in Syria and Iraq. Last year the U.S. voted against a similar measure but this year shifted its position because of reports of alleged Israeli mass arrests and deportations.)

A spokesman for Mr. Eban's ministry meanwhile registered "surprise and consternation" over a U.S. State Department spokesman's statement deploring "collective punishment" by Israel. The ministry stressed that Israel had never applied "collective punishment" in the occupied areas and had no intention of so doing. A term "neighborhood punishment" used by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan in a recent press conference has been mistakenly construed to mean "collective punishment," the ministry said. The only instances of "collective punishment" are impositions of curfews, whereas "neighborhood punishment" means acts like blowing up houses whose residents or owners had actively aided terrorists, the spokesman declared.

Factions Agree On Policy Toward Territories; Government May Be Formed This Week

TEL AVIV, Nov. 23 (JTA)--Efforts by a special committee to draft basic policy lines for a new Government of national unity appeared to be making progress today. A formula was accepted by representatives of the various factions on the question of occupied territories. It was based on Premier Golda Meir's statement in the Knesset, when she took office earlier this year, that policies in the occupied territories will be dictated by the nation's security needs.

On Friday, a committee headed by Justice Minister Yaacov S. Shapiro, agreed not to change existing policy lines governing religious matters--in effect to maintain the status quo that has prevailed since the State was established. Parties represented on the committee were the Labor-Mapam Alignment, Gahal and the Religious bloc. As of today, the only obstacle to establishing a new Government appeared to be Mapam's refusal to join a coalition with the right-wing Gahal. If Mapam leaders can be convinced to change their attitude, a new Government may be formed this week.

3 Commandos Killed In Raid Across canal; Youngsters Foil New Haifa Bomb Attempt

TEL AVIV, Nov. 23 (JTA)--Three Egyptian commandos were killed early yesterday in an abortive raid on Israeli position on the east bank of the Suez Canal. A military spokesman said two Israelis were wounded when the Arabs ambushed a patrol less than a mile inside Israeli-held territory. The commandos were driven back across the waterway leaving behind three dead, one of them an officer, and several bazookas and Kalachnikov rifles. Three Israeli soldiers were wounded today during an artillery duel at the southern sector of the Canal.

Alert school children in Haifa foiled what was apparently another terrorist attempt to blow up a house on Mount Carmel. The youngsters, spotting a suspicious looking parcel near an apartment building, told their teacher who called police. A policeman dismantled the parcel which contained two and a half kilograms of explosives and a timing device.

The Israeli version of yesterday's Suez Canal incident varied sharply from Cairo's announcement that the raiders had penetrated five miles into the Sinai Peninsula, destroyed three Israeli tanks, damaged two others and killed an unspecified number of soldiers. Egypt said three commandos were "left behind." An Israeli military spokesman termed the Egyptian account "sheer fabrication."

The latest commando raid came as Israeli authorities began a massive crackdown on Arab terrorists following a bazooka attack Friday on a fuel oil depot in Haifa. Two Arab saboteurs from the upper Galilee were killed when their explosive-laden car blew up on the outskirts of Acre, near Haifa. An Israeli spokesman said two bazooka shells fired by a home-made timing device started small fires in tanks containing crude oil and kerosene. The fires were extinguished before they caused serious damage. El Fatah claimed responsibility for the sabotage.

An accelerated effort to track down and arrest Arab saboteurs began in Jerusalem on Friday after a clash near Taibeh Village in which an Israeli border policeman was killed. The action followed disclosure last week of the capture of two terrorist gangs, one in East Jerusalem and one in Hebron. Officials said that some terrorists turned out to be well-off Israeli citizens and that one has a Jewish wife. They were held responsible for a series of grenade acts against crowded busses and planting of explosives near public buildings. Police said four terrorists had planted explosives at Kfar Saba and other places in central Israel. The clash at Taibeh followed the arrest of an Arab suspect who was found carrying a bayonet and a grenade.

Officials made no secret of their concern that many of the arrested terrorists are Israeli Arabs. That concern was apparently shared by Arab elders and headmen in several villages. Shmuel Toledano, adviser on Arab affairs in the Prime Minister's office, said that he had received messages from Arab officials and an Arab Knesset member, Diab Oubed, denouncing terrorist activities. He said Moslem trustee committees in Haifa, Lydda and Jaffa passed resolutions condemning terrorist acts.

Police Battle Youths Who Try To Storm Arab Section Of Acre

ACRE, Nov. 23 (JTA)--Israeli police fought mobs of Israeli youths who tried today to storm this seaport town's old walled Arab section. Showered by stones from Arab and Jewish youth, three policemen and four civilians were injured. Tension has mounted steadily since six Acre Arabs confessed to bombing Haifa apartment houses last month, killing two and wounding 16. Anger flamed among Jews when a car carrying explosives blew up today near here, killing two Arabs. Some 40 Israelis were reported arrested during three attempts to break into the Arab sector since Saturday. Arab youths counterattacked twice. Arab and Jews have lived peacefully side by side here since 1948. Leaders of both communities issued urgent appeals to both sides to keep cool.

Pearson Tells ZOA That Caution Is Needed Before Sending New UN Force To Mideast

NEW YORK, Nov. 23(JTA)--Lester B. Pearson, Canada's former Prime Minister and a Nobel Peace Prize winner, said today that no new United Nations Emergency Force should be sent to the Middle East without both the practical and the juridical basis of that force being made clear beyond danger of later and arbitrary interpretation." The only exception to this principle, he said, should be the dispatching of a UN force in the case of an "actual outbreak of fighting in circumstances which made UN intervention urgently and immediately necessary as a temporary measure." Mr. Pearson spoke at the annual dinner of the Zionist Organization of America at which ZOA president Jacques Torczyner presented to him the organization's annual Theodor Herzl award "in recognition of his commitment to Jewish freedom and Israel."

Addressing some 1,000 dinner guests, Herbert G. Klein, President Richard M. Nixon's Director of Communications, said that "a strong American presence in the Middle East will grow when Americans can go to work again with the people of the area in building a better future." He brought the President's greetings to the ZOA.

Mr. Pearson, as the then Secretary of State for External Affairs, presented a 1956 UN resolution on which called for an UN Emergency Force in the Sinai Peninsula. He received the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in resolving the 1956 Suez Crisis. In May, 1967, Secretary General U Thant withdrew the UNEF force along the Gaza Strip and at Sharm el-Sheikh at the request of Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser and without consulting UN organs. Mr. Pearson defended the 1956 UN intervention today saying that the armed conflict and threat of escalation at the time "required an international force to be brought into being without time for sufficient consideration of its organization and juridical basis being possible."

He called upon the Arab states to reverse their policy of non-recognition of Israel and to take that "essential first step" toward establishment of peace. He noted that behind Arab intransigence was the Soviet Union "without any pretence of objectivity or fairness of judgment, and with her own games to play." Mr. Torczyner praised Mr. Pearson's UN roles of two decades ago when he was instrumental in helping secure passage of the Palestine Partition Resolution. The gold medal was given to Mr. Pearson by Herman L. Weisman, chairman of the ZOA's administrative board.

Dr. Neumann Warns Against U.S. Proposal On Returning Sinai To Egypt

Dr. Emanuel Neumann, chairman of the American Section of the Jewish Agency, warned in a speech that the U.S. was showing "ominous signs of departing from her former position and yielding to the Soviet-Arab attempts at political extortion and blackmail." He recalled Mr. Pearson's contributions to the establishment of Israel in 1947 and 1948 when he had a major role in the decision for partition and establishment of Israel. Dr. Neumann, an honorary ZOA president, said it was "a coincidence that we Zionists should be honoring Mr. Pearson 21 years later at the moment when Israel may be faced with diplomatic and political decisions that transcend any since the establishment of the State itself."

Expressing hope that the U.S. would not depart from its historic tradition of friendship for Israel, Dr. Neumann said that Washington "has repeatedly stated that the grand objective is peace; that only the states which had been at war can negotiate the terms of peace; and that the settling of 'agreed and secure' boundaries for the future was an integral part of the peacemaking process. It is now reported," he added, "that State Department officials have already conveyed to the Russians an American proposal to have Israel return the Sinai Peninsula -- the whole of it -- to Egypt. This proposal, according to reports, has been made without the agreement of Israel and before a single meeting has taken place between the Israelis and Egyptians."

He added that this proposal "has been rejected by Egypt with scorn and opprobrium heaped upon the U.S. it is not too difficult to fathom the crude strategy: It is to maintain their pressure and their clamor with Russian backing until they have recovered all they had lost in war and are again in a position to renew the bloody conflict. How our State Department can fail to see this, and proceed down the slippery slope on which it has seemingly set foot, is much more difficult to understand. It is not too late to take the Egyptians at their word and withdraw the humiliating offer which has been made and rejected."

Greek Envoy Tells Presidents' Conference That Trial of Terrorists Has Not Been Put Off

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23(JTA)--The Greek Ambassador has denied reports that his Government has postponed the trial of two Arab terrorists who attacked an El Al airliner at Athens airport last Dec. 26. Ambassador Basil Witsaxis told a delegation representing the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations that news stories that the trial was deferred "for political reasons" or any other reasons were incorrect. An Israeli passenger was killed in the attack.

He said a statement by the public prosecutor in Athens had been misinterpreted and that "the date of the trial has simply not been set." The Israel Government meanwhile was reported to have been formally advised that Greece is proceeding with preparations for a January or February trial. The information was conveyed to Israel's diplomatic representative in Greece, Yaacov Carot.

The Jewish delegation asked Ambassador Witsaxis for clarification of a public statement by the Greek Orthodox Archbishop in Amman, Jordan that the two terrorists would be freed. The envoy said he would communicate with his Government. The Greek prosecutor's office had announced that a decision had been reached to postpone the trial indefinitely to avoid damaging Greek relations with Arab states. The Athens announcement evoked a strong protest from Israel which was conveyed to friendly nations.

House Oks, Sends To Senate, Foreign Aid Bill With \$50.5 Million For Israel Projects

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23(JTA)--The House of Representatives has narrowly adopted a foreign aid bill that includes \$50.5 million for projects in Israel, among them a \$40 million water desalination plant and lesser sums for medical, scientific and educational institutions. The desalination appropriation was written into the measure on the initiative of Rep. Benjamin Rosenthal, New York Democrat, and Peter Freylinghuysen, a New Jersey Republican. An effort by economy-minded Midwestern conservatives to strike it out was defeated on the floor.

The bill authorized \$5 million for the Hadassah-Hebrew University hospital and medical school in Jerusalem, \$3 million for the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovoth and \$1.9 million and \$600,000 respectively for two educational institutions, Merkaz Lechinuch Ichud and Amana Ulpamat.

Rep. H.R. Gross, Iowa Republican, and Rep. James McClure, Idaho Republican, criticized the desalination appropriation as "favorite country awards" likely to create more problems for the United States in the Middle East. But the House defeated their amendments to delete the funds. The House bill now goes to the Senate where efforts might be made to strike out the appropriations for Israel.

Rep. Emanuel Celler, New York Democrat, warned during debate on the foreign aid bill that sums for Arab refugees might be cut off unless the United Nations Relief and works Agency (UNRWA) stops aiding refugee camps controlled by Palestinian guerrillas. A provision of the bill was retained from the existing law that provided that no contributions by the U.S. should be made to UNRWA unless the UN takes all possible measures to assure that no part of the U.S. money aids refugees serving in guerrilla or terrorist groups.

In debate over an amendment to grant nationalist China \$45 million to buy jet fighters from the U.S., Congressmen argued that if Israel, which is in much more immediate peril, is required to pay for military equipment here, China should also be required to pay. However, the amendment was passed.

American Jews Have Raised Over \$260 Million For JNF Projects, Weisman Tells Fund

NEW YORK, Nov. 24,(JTA)--American Jewry has raised more than \$260 million for land purchase and soil reclamation through the Jewish National Fund before and after Israel's Statehood, Herman L. Weisman, president of the Jewish National Fund of America, reported to the biennial meeting of the Fund here. Mr. Weisman said the Fund would call on the American Jewish Community to intensify its support of the JNF activities in the frontier regions of Israel where it is preparing areas for new settlements.

Dr. Milton Aron, executive vice-president, disclosed that JNF income in this country had increased by \$250,000 during the past year. He reported growing interest throughout the country in JNF's program in Israel. Mr. Weisman, a New York attorney, was re-elected president of the organization. Dr. Israel Goldstein, Dr. Harris J. Levine and Albert Schiff were designated as honorary presidents.

JWV's New York State Commander Brands Defense League's Fund Bid As 'Shakedown'

NEW YORK, Nov. 23(JTA)--The New York State commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States has branded a request for money by the Jewish Defense League a "ridiculous shakedown." Jerome N. Nisman referred to a letter sent to several major national Jewish organizations including the JWV last week by JDL director Rabbi Meir Kahane asking for \$12,500 from each of them to help finance and staff the JDL's "civilian patrols." The JDL claims to protect Jewish life and property in racially tense, high crime areas.

Mr. Nisman said that Rabbi Kahane's letter "constitutes a cheap insulting bid for public exposure and nothing more. He knows very well that every responsible Jewish agency has repudiated the JDL. His letter is actually an appeal for financial support from those frightened individuals whom he has convinced of the complete breakdown of law enforcement in our city. The City of New York, and least of all the Jewish population in this city, does not need JDL protection, but rather protection from the JDL's hysterical inflammatory activities," Mr. Nisman said.

The JDL's request for funds was similarly repudiated last week by the American Jewish Congress, American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

93-Year-Old Washington Synagogue, Bought by Historical Society, Will Be Moved

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23(JTA)--A 93-year-old synagogue building that once housed Washington's Adas Israel congregation will be moved virtually intact next month to a new location three blocks from its present one so that it can be preserved as an historic site. The brick and wood structure was purchased by the Jewish Historical Society of Washington from the Metropolitan Area Transit Authority which is building a subway where the synagogue originally stood. The Historical Society, a non-profit group, paid a token fee of \$10 and is seeking a Federal grant for historic preservation.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has agreed tentatively to pay half of the \$150,000 moving cost. The balance and funds for restoration of the building will come from bank loans secured by personal notes of leaders of the Jewish Historical Society. The synagogue was constructed in 1876. Adas Israel moved out in 1908 but retained the property which has now been sold to the Transit Authority.

The lower floor of the synagogue had been converted to stores. Only the upper floor, containing the sanctuary, will be moved to the new site which the Historical Society has leased from the District of Columbia government. It will be put on a new foundation. The old synagogue is of Federal style architecture. The interior is of pine paneling painted white and is well preserved.