

JTA daily news bulletin

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc. 660 First Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016

Contents copyright: Republication only by previous arrangement.

vol. XXXVI Fifty Second Year

Wednesday, December 10, 1969

No. 233

Bank Of Israel Reports Further \$36 Million Drop In Foreign Reserves

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9(JTA)--Foreign currency reserves held by the Bank of Israel fell to \$442 million in November, the Bank revealed today. The reserves dropped \$36 million during the month.

Israel exports during the month of November were up by 13 percent as compared to November 1968, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported today.

Israel Says Egypt Violated Geneva Convention On Treatment Of Prisoners

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9(JTA)--Israeli Army authorities notified the local representative of the International Red Cross today that medical findings and the reports of the two Israeli pilots who had been held as prisoners of war in Egypt until their exchange last Saturday, indicated that they had not been treated by their Egyptian captors in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

The IRC has been invited to send representatives to visit the two Israeli pilots and see their condition. Both are confined to an Israeli hospital.

New Policy Crisis Delays Agreement On Formation Of Coalition Government

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9(JTA)--Justice Minister Yacov Shapira met with Gahal Leader Menachem Beigin today to try to iron out last-minute difficulties which have arisen between the Labor and Gahal factions over policies of the new government in formation. The issues were said to involve proposed legislation on health insurance and labor disputes. On both of these issues, Gahal was described as wanting a free hand while the maximum the Labor forces were prepared to grant was freedom to abstain without breaching coalition discipline when these issues came up in the Knesset.

A meeting Monday between Prime Minister-designate Golda Meir and Gahal leaders ended without agreement and the Labor leadership bureau met later to try to work out a new formula.

The new crisis in the coalition talks arose when Gahal demanded the right to initiate legislation on the health and labor issues. The Gahal Knesset faction met tonight to discuss the Labor proposals for redrafting the controversial section of the agreement and the Labor Party's central bureau scheduled another meeting for tomorrow.

As matters stood tonight, it appeared most unlikely that Mrs. Meir would be in a position to announce a new government by tomorrow. The 10-day extension she obtained from President Shazar in which to complete negotiations expires tomorrow. Under the law, Mrs. Meir can ask for another 11-day extension.

Eban Is Expected To Meet With Rogers, Stewart To Discuss Big Four Talks

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9(JTA)--Foreign Minister Abba Eban is expected to meet in Washington next week with Secretary of State William P. Rogers for a general discussion of American-Israeli relations. Mr. Eban is proceeding to the United States where he will address the national conference of the United Jewish Appeal in New York this week end, meet the press on Friday and speak in a number of American cities.

A major topic in the Eban Rogers talks will be the Four Power talks with Mr. Eban expected to stress the Israeli view that the talks harm the prospects of peace in the area.

On his way home from the United States, Mr. Eban is expected to stop over in London to meet Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart.

Freedom Of Shipping In Gulf Of Akaba Remains Basic Element Of Israeli Policy

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9(JTA)--The Israeli Foreign Ministry reaffirmed today that freedom of shipping in the Gulf of Akaba is a basic tenet of Israeli policy as announced and implemented since 1967. The declaration was made in response to questions about charges that Israeli naval forces had fired on a Japanese ship that was proceeding in the Gulf to the Jordanian port of Akaba, three miles from the Israeli port of Eilat.

The incident occurred at 4 a.m., last Saturday morning, the bridge officer on the Japanese freighter apparently dozed and the vessel strayed off course toward the Israeli coast. An Israeli boat sailed out to warn the freighter away with flares. There was no damage to the ship nor were there any casualties. The Japanese diplomatic representative was informed of the incident.

Israeli Planes Blast Guerrilla Emplacements In Four-Hour Raid

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9(JTA)--Israeli jets struck again today at positions on the central section of the Suez Canal and at concentrations of saboteurs and Jordanian troops. Officials reported that all planes returned safely from both sectors. They also reported that Lt. Yoram Shaham, 23 of Haifa, was killed today and another soldier injured when their army vehicle hit a mine in the Golan Heights.

The air raid against Jordanian positions was in reprisal for a Katyusha rocket attack this morning on Kinneret at the southern tip of Lake Tiberias. Pilots braved anti-aircraft fire in the four-hour raid. Residents in the Beisan valley could see direct hits being scored by the Israeli pilots.

A synagogue in Beisan Township was damaged Monday night by a Katyusha rocket fired from a launcher on Jordanian territory. A second rocket did no damage. The Synagogue, belonging to the Rumanian Jewish community, was hit by rockets a year ago.

Israeli artillery shelled the Irbid area of Jordan from which the rockets were launched. Irbid is about 27 km from the border. The Jordanians claimed immediately that two people were killed in the Israeli shelling and a number wounded.

Yardena Settlement was also attacked Monday night, this time by mortar fire from Jordanian territory, as a Chanukah evening was being celebrated with the participation of a Chassidic guest troupe. There was no damage and heavy Israeli return fire silenced the attackers.

Kiryat Tzvi, in the southern part of the Beisan Valley also came under fire Monday night. There were no casualties.

Egyptians Taking Credit For 'Papyrus Victories' Israelis Claim

JERUSALEM, Dec.9(JTA)--Israeli sources said today that the Egyptian Government had apparently embarked on a program of claiming "papyrus victories" in order to bolster Arab morale in advance of the summit meeting at Rabat later this month and on the eve of the departure of an Egyptian delegation to Moscow.

The greatest of the "papyrus victories" claimed by the Egyptians was a so-called "company strength" attack on an Israeli strongpoint on the Suez Canal which the Egyptians said they captured and held for 24 hours beating off Israeli counter-attacks and attempts to lower the Egyptian flag which flew over the strongpoint. Any connection between the Egyptian claims, Israeli sources said, and the facts of the situation are entirely non-existent.

Israeli sources insist that the big Egyptian attack never took place, not a single position was attacked nor were Israeli tanks damaged or soldiers killed in any such incident. Nor, they said, was an Israeli plane shot down as the Egyptians claimed.

During the past year, the Egyptians have claimed to have shot down at least 110 Israeli planes, 58 of them in the last four months, seven in the month of November alone. Actual losses, according to official Israeli sources, were four Israeli planes shot down in the last four months. During November, Israel lost no planes at all. During the four-month period, Egyptian losses were 20 planes although Cairo officially admitted the loss of only six.

The terrorist organizations have also adopted the Egyptian system of claiming "papyrus victories," the Israelis declare. In August, the terror groups claimed to have carried out 561 actions. At least 40 percent of these were imaginary with no indication that they were ever even attempted. In September, the announced number was 369, 50 percent of which were imaginary. In October, the percentage of imaginary attacks was even higher. The Arab terrorists claimed they had carried out 376 actions but 64 percent of these never took place. There was roughly the same amount of imagination involved in the terrorist claim of 334 actions in November.

House Report Says Soviet Is Expanding Its Military Power In Mideast

WASHINGTON, Dec.9(JTA)--The Soviet Union is expanding its military power in the Middle East and building up the armed forces of the radical Arab states, the House Appropriations Committee and defense subcommittee has reported in connection with recommendations for new defense appropriations.

According to the House evaluation of developments in the Middle East, "the Soviet Union continues to expand its influence and military presence. Whether they have formally established naval bases in the Mediterranean is less important than the fact that such bases are available for their use."

It was pointed out that, "president Nixon's initiative in seeking the cooperation of the Soviet Union in ameliorating the Arab-Israeli dispute and reestablishing peace in that region has yet to bear fruit. Our Government's efforts to achieve an agreement on the limitation of arms shipments to both sides in that conflict have also been unsuccessful."

"Meanwhile," said the report, "the Soviets continue to equip, supply, train, and encourage the military forces of the more radical Arab states in that region. In this environment, the presence of the U.S. 6th fleet in the Mediterranean is making a major contribution to the stability of the region."

Senate Committee Approves \$40 Million Grant For Israeli Desalting Plant

WASHINGTON, Dec.9(JTA)--The Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out a Senate version of the House Foreign Aid Bill today that retained an authorization for \$40 million in desalination funds for Israel and other sums for Israeli institutions. The desalination item was included in the authorization for development loan funds.

An effort was made by the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development to delete the desalination authorization. But the House-approved measure nevertheless passed another hurdle by emerging from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Sen. Gaylord Nelson, Wisconsin Democrat, and 23 colleagues of both parties are sponsoring the desalting amendment in the Senate. It corresponds with the measure introduced in the House by Rep. Benjamin Rosenthal, New York Democrat, and Rep. Peter Frelinghuysen, New Jersey Republican. The House acted favorably after desalination experts told the House Foreign Affairs Committee of the desirability of a joint American-Israeli Desalting undertaking. Final action by the Senate is expected by the end of this week.

Fiftieth Anniversary Convention of Histadrut Is Opened In Jerusalem

JERUSALEM, Dec.9(JTA)--The 50th anniversary convention of the Histadrut, Israel's Labor Federation, was opened here tonight at Convention Hall. President Zalman Shazar told the opening session that the federation should give consideration to the question of whether its mass character did not endanger the quality of its membership. Also attending were Premier Golda Meir and many visitors representing trade unions other countries. The more than 1,000 delegates will continue working sessions of the convention in Tel Aviv tomorrow. Among the foreign guests was Heinz Better, chairman of the West German Trade Union Movement. He arrived by air today for a two-day stay in the country.

U.S. Amnesty Branch Questions London Office Report On Arab Treatment

NEW YORK, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The chairman of the American branch of Amnesty International issued a statement today questioning assertions of the London-based international civil liberties group that Israeli authorities had mistreated Arab prisoners. Earlier this week Israeli officials took sharp issue with the Amnesty report and said no further visits would be permitted by Amnesty representatives to the occupied territories.

Mark K. Benenson, chairman of the American branch, said that the American affiliate "was not consulted" about the London statement and added that under rules of the organization, it was supposed to help non-violent "prisoners of conscience," but that the Arab prisoners involved in the controversy were "apparently terrorists." He also said that Amnesty-USA was against any mistreatment of prisoners, if that had occurred, but that Amnesty should "concentrate on cases within its own frame of reference." He said "we do not understand the reasons for the apparent deviation in this case."

He also declared that he regretted that the London statement had not made clear that while Amnesty had been permitted to send an investigation team into Israel, with the full cooperation of Israeli authorities, this had not been the case in any of the Arab countries. Moreover, he asserted, the Israelis, to whom Amnesty had given the names of the prisoners making the charges of ill-treatment, had submitted "extremely detailed replies" to the organization. He added that he understood that all of those cases had been "satisfactorily disposed of in Amnesty's opinion." He reported that the American affiliate had called for an impartial investigation of imprisonment conditions in any country in which they might be found, regardless of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In barring further investigations by Amnesty, an Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman had said in Jerusalem that the organization had published unsubstantiated accusations of maltreatment of Arab detainees in Israel, even though a formal report by Amnesty said conditions in Israel jails holding captured Arab guerrillas were considered satisfactory.

El Al Security Guard's Trial In Athens Criticized By Defense Counsel

ZURICH, Dec. 9 (JTA)--Defense counsel for the El Al security guard, Mordechai Rachamim, charged Monday that the Zurich police and judiciary have not acted impartially so far in the trial of his client who is charged with killing one of four Arab terrorists during an attack on a Israeli airliner at Zurich Airport last Feb. 18.

Mr. Rachamim is on trial for manslaughter and faces a five-year prison term. The case hinges on whether or not the terrorist was armed at the moment he was shot by the accused. Several Zurich police officers have testified in court that he was not. Defense lawyer Hans Meiser contends that their testimony contradicted statements they made during the pre-trial investigation. He called a press conference here to accuse the presiding judge, Dr. Hans Gut, of refusing to allow him to call a key witness who would have testified that the chief prosecution witness had lied.

According to Mr. Meiser, his witness, Max Meyer, was prepared to swear that the prosecution's witness, Hans Durr, had told him on the day of the attack that the terrorist was brandishing a weapon when Rachamim shot him. Mr. Meiser said that if Dr. Gut allowed him to call his witness, he was prepared to file a complaint of perjury against Durr and against another Cantonal police officer, Hans Strub.

Late News

U.S. Calls For Jordanian Role In Future Administration Of Jerusalem

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9 (JTA)--Secretary of State William P. Rogers enunciated tonight the Nixon Administration's most comprehensive and specific statement of Middle East policy which reiterated the United States position on Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and phrased for the first time a settlement envisaging a Jordanian role in the future of Jerusalem.

(A full report of the Rogers speech will be carried in tomorrow's JTA Daily News Bulletin.)

Emphasis also was given to the need for a settlement taking into account the "desires and aspirations of the (Arab) refugees. Mr. Rogers warned that the refugee problem would become more serious if not resolved because "there is a new consciousness among the young Palestinians."

Mr. Rogers revealed, in his address before the 1969 Galaxy Conference on Adult Education here, that the U.S. was not putting emphasis on the Jordanian aspects of a settlement and the Big Four powers, meeting in New York City, had already begun such discussions. The Secretary stressed the need for Israeli withdrawal, citing the 1949 armistice boundaries in stating that "any changes in the pre-existing lines should not reflect the weight of conquest and should be confined to insubstantial alterations required for mutual security. We do not support expansionism. We believe troops must be withdrawn as the resolution provides."

The Secretary's most dramatic new stand came on Jerusalem. He recalled that the U.S. said it could not accept "unilateral" action on the final status of the city. He added, however, that "Jerusalem should be a unified city within which there would no longer be restrictions on the movement of persons and goods." But he added, "there should be roles for both Israel and Jordan in the civic, economic and religious life of the city."

State Department officials indicated that the U.S. stand as voiced tonight by Mr. Rogers, stressed that Israel would have to withdraw from most of the occupied territories but is entitled to practical security arrangements, although these arrangements might fall short of an actual peace treaty. The officials said Mr. Rogers spoke out because continuing violence was perpetuating a risk of Middle East conflict for the major powers.

400 To Attend Annual Meeting Of Joint Distribution Committee Here Today

NEW YORK, Dec.9(JTA)--More than 400 Jewish leaders from all parts of the United States and Canada will attend the 55th annual meeting of the Joint Distribution Committee which will be held here tomorrow at the New York Hilton. The JDC meeting will precede the national conference of the United Jewish Appeal which opens on Thursday. The JDC receives funds for its worldwide assistance program mainly from the United Jewish Appeal.

The conference will review the JDC program for 1969 which provided aid to some 300,000 Jews in 27 countries, and will adopt a budget for 1970.

Jewish Group To Hold Anti-War Demonstration In Front Of White House

WASHINGTON, Dec.9(JTA)--An organization composed mainly of young Jews in government service, the Jews for Urban Justice, announced plans today for a series of anti-war demonstrations here on Thursday and Friday including a rally and silent vigil in Lafayette Park, across from the White House at Friday noon.

The group will also conduct a "teach-in" on the American University campus and a series of workshops on the Jewish role in the peace movement. One workshop, dealing with peace in the Middle East, will be addressed by Simcha Flappan, a Mapam Party leader.

The organization complained today that Conservative synagogues in the Washington area would not permit use of their premises for the organization's activities which are part of the nationwide December Vietnam Moratorium program.

Crown Family Establishes \$1.5 Scholarship Fund For Brandeis University

CHICAGO, Dec.9(JTA)--A \$1.5 million fellowship gift to Brandeis University by the Crown family of Chicago was announced here today by Morris B. Abram, president of the university. He said the gift would enable Brandeis to subsidize graduate students in the field of American civilization with substantial grants to complete their studies and research. Brandeis, located in Waltham, Mass., is the only Jewish-sponsored non-sectarian university in America.

The gift, described as one of the largest of its kind ever received by Brandeis, was established in honor of Irving and Rose Crown. It will be awarded for a 20-year period by the Crown Family Foundation, the Arie and Ida Crown Memorial. At least ten fellowships up to \$7,500 will be awarded annually beginning with the 1969-70 academic year, Mr. Abram said.

Congress Acts To Strengthen Yiddish Cultural Activities In Free World

NEW YORK, Dec.9(JTA)--Resolutions aimed at strengthening Yiddish cultural work throughout the free world were adopted here yesterday at the closing session of a four-day world congress for Jewish culture. The parley also issued a manifesto calling for observance of a "week of Yiddish culture" to be observed all over the world. It made an appeal to the Soviet Union to cease the suppression of Jewish culture and to permit Soviet Jews to emigrate to be reunited with their families abroad.

Delegates from 12 countries, including Israel, attended the congress which heard reports on the state of Yiddish in Israel, Latin America and other countries. A feature of the congress was the presentation of the H. Leivick 1969 prize for literature to Aaron Zeitlin, the poet.

Trial Set For Jewish Youth Who Chained Selves To Soviet Embassy

WASHINGTON, Dec.9(JTA)--Eighteen young Jews who chained themselves to the gates of the Soviet Embassy here last week to protest Soviet anti-Semitism will go on trial Feb. 5. The youths were released after arraignment on personal assurance of appearance for the trial.

43 Jewish Refugees Arrive Here On Chartered Flight

NEW YORK, Dec.9(JTA)--Forty-three Jewish refugees from the Middle East, Poland, Czechoslovakia and other Eastern European countries arrived at Kennedy Airport Monday in a chartered flight arranged by the United Hias Service. Relatives met many of the men, women and children at the airport, in some cases after years of separation.

The new arrivals will be resettled with the help of local cooperating agencies in New York City and a dozen other communities.

1,200 Expected At JNF Salute To Astronauts In Houston Sunday

HOUSTON, TEX, Dec.9(JTA)--More than 1,200 persons are expected at the Jewish National Fund dinner on Sunday in honor of the astronaut corps of the Manned Spacecraft Center of NASA. Proceeds from the dinner will endow the U.S. Astronaut Forest to be planted by the JNF in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

Gov. Preston Smith of Texas and the mayors of the state's major cities are serving on the dinner committee of which former Governor John B. Connally is chairman. Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem will fly in to address the function.

Daniel Ifshin, General Manager Of Forward, Dead At 62

NEW YORK, Dec.9(JTA)--Daniel Ifshin, general manager of the Jewish Daily Forward, and for many years a key official of the Workman's Circle, died here suddenly last night at Beth Israel Hospital to which he had been taken the previous day. Cause of death was not given. He was 62. Funeral services will be held tomorrow.

Born and educated in New York, Mr. Ifshin had been in private law practice since 1931. He had been chairman of the New York City committee of the Workmen's Circle, chairman of its national organization committee, and administrative director for many years. He had been a member of the Jewish Forward Association, which publishes the Yiddish-language daily and connected with the daily for most of his life. He had also served as a member of the executive committee of the Jewish Labor Committee and of the national council of the Jewish Welfare Board.