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Israeli Air Force Jets Attack Egyptian Positions; Two Israeli Soldiers Wounded

TEL AVIV, Feb. 3 (JTA)--Israel Air Force jets attacked Egyptian positions in the northern and southern sections of the Suez Canal zone and on the shores of the Gulf of Suez today. A military spokesman said all aircraft returned safely to their bases after a 90-minute assault which began at noon local time. He said Egyptian army positions, artillery batteries and anti-aircraft guns were hit. Israel conceded that some damage was done today by two Egyptian planes which attacked Israeli positions near Kantara in the northern section of the Suez Canal zone.

A military spokesman said the Egyptian planes dropped their bombs and fled without causing casualties. He denied a Cairo claim that Egyptian commandos raided Israeli positions near A Tour in Western Sinai near the Gulf of Suez. He said no attack was reported by any Israeli posts but a search was being made to find evidence of an Egyptian landing in deserted areas. Two Israeli soldiers were wounded today during exchanges of fire between Israeli and Egyptian forces in the central and southern sections of the Suez Canal zone. A military spokesman said today that an Israeli fighter pilot shot down by Syrian anti-aircraft fire yesterday is presumed to have been killed. He identified the pilot as Capt. Shlomo Navot, 27, of Beit Alpha. Capt. Navot was married and the father of two children.

Dayan Says Pres. Nixon's Decision On Arms To Israel May Determine Country's Future

TEL AVIV, Feb. 3 (JTA)--Defense Minister Moshe Dayan said yesterday that February will be a crucial month for Israel, mainly because President Richard M. Nixon will announce his decision on Israel's request for additional American arms and economic aid. If the decision is negative, it will be bad, but if it is positive, even in part, it will have wide-ranging political and military implications, Gen. Dayan said.

The Defense Minister spoke to an audience of students at Beersheba University and answered their questions. He said the United States remains the only country from which Israel can expect both arms and support in the political arena. "I hope and believe that this friendship will remain firm in spite of differences of opinion over borders, Jerusalem and the refugee question," Gen. Dayan said. He observed that Israel and the United States have much in common, including democratic government, the influential American-Jewish community and their diplomatic position in the world.

Gen. Dayan was sharply critical of Great Britain. He said that Israel contributed significantly to the improvement of Britain's prestigious Chieftain tank which is now apparently to be sold to Libya, a declared enemy of the Jewish State, but not to Israel. According to Gen. Dayan, British officers tested a number of Chieftain tanks in the Negev area to determine how they would perform in a hot, dry and dusty terrain. He said Israeli armoured corps experts proposed a number of modifications to improve the tanks which the British eagerly accepted. There was an understanding that the Chieftains would be sold to Israel, Gen. Dayan said. He said Britain's denial now that there ever was such a plan is "inconceivable."

Russia May Move To Furnish Egypt With Arms To Balance U.S. Arms Supply To Israel

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3 (JTA)--The Soviet Union is believed to have informed the United States that it will furnish Egypt and possibly other Arab nations with more arms of the latest type because of American supplies of arms to Israel. That intention is understood to have been stated in a message delivered to the White House by Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin personally on Sunday. The message reportedly blamed the U.S. for the recent escalation of Israeli military operations against Egypt.

The Soviet note was described here as a response to an American note, delivered about ten days ago, replying to the Soviet note of December 23 rejecting the American proposals for an Israeli-Egyptian settlement. This American note, to which no publicity was given at the time, also criticized the Soviet for repudiating an agreement reportedly reached between Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko on the acceptance of the Rhodes formula for Arab-Israeli negotiations.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman in Jerusalem said today that no Soviet ultimatum of any kind has been received by Israel from any source. He was commenting on foreign press reports that the Soviet Union had warned Israel, through the Western powers, that it would intervene unless Israel desists from its air attacks on Egypt.

Russia Also Seen As Opting For Peaceful Solution Of Mideast Crisis

The increased military activity by Israel is believed to have occasioned the brief but urgent calls on Prime Minister Harold Wilson, of Britain and President Georges Pompidou of France by the Soviet ambassadors in London and Paris yesterday. The Russian envoys are believed to have stressed their government's growing concern over events in the Middle East. Diplomatic sources however discounted rumors that the Soviets warned they would intervene in the Middle East to avert an Arab military defeat like the one they suffered at Israel's hands in June, 1967. (A Foreign Office spokesman in London

said Soviet Ambassador Mikhail Smirnovsky delivered a message from Premier Alexei N. Kosygin drawing attention to the dangers in the present situation in the Middle East and urging the need for progress toward a peaceful solution. The spokesman described the Soviet note as "a routine reminder basically, perhaps a little more forceful." He denied that the Russians offered any new proposals for a Middle East solution or that they called for a Big Power ultimatum to Israel.) (Soviet Ambassador Valerin Zorin called on President Pompidou yesterday but refused to confirm or deny that they had discussed the Middle East.)

Moscow is known to be under strong pressure from Egypt to provide it with the latest model Soviet fighters and bombers to offset Israeli aerial superiority and with latest electronically controlled ground-to-air missiles. The Kremlin is also weighing the effects that new American arms shipments to Israel would have on Soviet influence in Egypt and the entire Arab world. Israel has asked for additional U.S. Phantoms and Skyhawk jets and President Nixon announced last Friday that he will decide within 30 days whether Israel will get them.

The very fact of Mr. Nixon's announcement indicates to most diplomats that Israel will be given at least part of the arms it asked for. They note that if the President intended to reject Israel's requests he would not have told the world in advance when he planned to make his decision. According to reports from Cairo, Israel has been using U.S. Phantoms in its latest attacks on Egypt. Twenty-two of the supersonic jets are said to have been delivered to Israel so far out of 50 approved by the Johnson Administration. The Soviets are expected to balance the Phantoms by supplying Egypt with the new MIG-23.

Draft Legislation Approved Establishing Religious Criteria For Who Is Jewish

JERUSALEM, Feb. 3 (JTA)--The Cabinet today approved and sent to the Knesset draft legislation that will establish religious criteria as the only valid instrument for determining who is a Jew. The measure was worked out by a ministerial committee on legislative matters in line with last week's Cabinet decision to amend the Law of Return so that the non-Jewish spouses and children of immigrant receive equal rights but cannot be registered as Jews.

The draft meets Orthodox demands to nullify last month's Supreme Court ruling that persons may be Jewish by nationality even if they are not Jewish by religion. But it is almost certain to raise Orthodox hackles because it would accept conversions to Judaism performed by non-Orthodox rabbis. The bill that emerged from committee goes beyond the original Cabinet proposals by extending equal privileges to the grandchildren of mixed marriage immigrant families. It also stipulates that the registrar of population must accept the immigrant's statements unless he has documentary or other valid proof that the statements are incorrect. This will place the burden of proof on the Ministry of Interior rather than on the migrant in cases where "Jewishness" is in doubt.

The Orthodox National Religious Party opposed the liberal elements in the amendment to the Law of Return. The Minister for Religious Affairs, Zerach Warhaftig who was a member of the ministerial committee that produced the draft tried to have them deleted. He also demanded that the bill affirm the exclusivity of the Orthodox rabbinate in matters of conversion but was rejected by his colleagues. According to Jewish religious law, a person is Jewish only if born of a Jewish mother or converted to Judaism. The Orthodox insist that only Orthodox rabbis are qualified to perform conversions and refuse to recognize conversions performed by rabbis of the Conservative and Reform branches of Judaism.

In Israel, where Orthodoxy is the only officially recognized branch, the Chief Rabbinate alone decides who is qualified to perform conversions. But the vast majority of conversions to Judaism abroad are performed by Conservative or Reform rabbis. The proposed amendment to the Law of Return takes this into account and protects immigrants converted to Judaism abroad from being declared non-Jews on their arrival in Israel. The measure was passed by the Ministerial committee against negative votes by the NRP the leftist Mapam and the Independent Liberals which opposed it for entirely different reasons. Arye Dulcin, representing the liberal wing of Gahal (Herut-Liberal alignment) abstained.

Knesset Defeats Motion Of No Confidence In Government Filed By Haolam Hazeh

JERUSALEM, Feb. 3 (JTA)--The Knesset today easily defeated a motion of no confidence filed against the Government by the opposition Haolam Hazeh faction over the proposed amendment to the Law of Return. The vote was 73-5. But the chamber was thrown into an uproar when Shalom Cohen, of Haolam Hazeh, dramatically tore up his identity card in a symbolic protest against the amendment which establishes religious criteria as the sole determinant of who is entitled to Jewish nationality.

The tiny (two-man) faction demanded that nationality be deleted from population registration forms and identity cards. The Speaker of the Knesset, Reuben Barkat, threatened to take legal action against Mr. Cohen for violating the decorum of the chamber. But legal experts said the threat was an idle one because the Knesset-member enjoys parliamentary immunity.

Uri Avneri, the Tel Aviv magazine publisher who heads the Haolam Hazeh faction, argued that religion and nationality are a personal affair and should not be subjected to prying by officials or listed on personal identity cards. Minister of Justice Yaacov Shimshon Shapiro declined to reply on grounds that the matter will be debated in the Knesset next week when the amendments to the Law of Return come up for a vote. But he criticized the Haolam Hazeh faction for bringing up a motion of no confidence on a measure that has not yet been discussed in the Knesset. Haolam Hazeh was supported in the voting by the two Communist factions. Abstentions were recorded by the State List, headed by former Premier David Ben Gurion, the Free Center and the ultra-Orthodox Agudat Israel.

Yosef Tekoah Tells Security Council That Syria's Mounting Aggression Is Ominous

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. Feb. 3 (JTA)--Israel advised the Security Council yesterday that Syria was intensifying its aggression against Israel in violation of the cease-fire and termed these acts "particularly ominous as it occurs in the first month of Syrian membership in the Security Council." Ambassador Yosef Tekoah, permanent representative of Israel to the UN, presented this view in a letter to Mr. Liu Chieh of the Republic of China, this month's President of the Security Council.

In a second letter by Mr. Tekoah to Mr. Chieh, the Israeli ambassador refuted a Syrian charge made last Friday during a debate in the Security Council that Israel was receiving tanks from the Republic of South Africa. Mr. Tekoah characterized this charge by Syrian Ambassador George Tomeh as a "scurrilous anti-Israel tirade" which was totally false "and had already been denied in Israel."

Referring to Syria's mounting aggression, Mr. Tekoah stated that during January "more than sixty armed attacks have been perpetrated by Syrian forces." He noted that Syrian authorities have "openly admitted these acts of aggression." The Israeli ambassador observed that in addition to aggression by Syrian regular forces the Syrian government is "playing an active and central role in the warfare waged against Israel by terror organizations from Syria and from the territory of other Arab states."

Tekoah Refutes Syrian Charge Of South African-Israeli Tank Deal

In his letter dealing with Mr. Tomeh's statement, Mr. Tekoah noted that the charge of South African tank sales to Israel was based on a "propaganda report first published in the Soviet newspaper Izvestia." During the course of the council debate, Mr. Tomeh quoted a Jewish Telegraphic Agency dispatch as "proof" of his contention. He failed to mention that the JTA dispatch was quoting an allegation in Izvestia. The JTA story was datelined London, Jan. 19. Mr. Tomeh added that on Jan. 21, JTA reported that the Israeli government had no comment on the alleged tank deal. What JTA actually reported was that Jerusalem had no comment on Izvestia's allegation.

In a third letter to Mr. Chieh, Israel's ambassador denied Egyptian allegations that Israeli defense forces attacked the "civilian unarmed vessel Shadwan" on Jan. 25. Mr. Tekoah reiterated the statement made in Jerusalem that day that "the boat concerned was an auxiliary craft in the service of the Egyptian army and that the UAR allegations are unfounded." The Jerusalem statement added that Israeli defense forces are under order not to strike at civilian vessels and these orders are scrupulously observed."

Pres. Pompidou Fetes King Hassan Of Morocco Who Is In Paris On Mission Possibly

PARIS, Feb. 3 (JTA)--President Georges Pompidou entertained King Hassan II of Morocco at the plush Crillon Hotel yesterday. The King arrived here Saturday on an unofficial visit but he is expected to raise questions of French economic and military aid to Morocco in the next few days. Diplomatic observers saw King Hassan's visit as a further step in the French Government's program of cultivating anew French influence in North Africa. France and Morocco broke off diplomatic relations in 1966 after the kidnapping and presumed murder of a Moroccan opposition leader, Mehdi Ben Barka. Ambassadors were exchanged again last December.

The Pompidou Government has announced its intention of building up the French "presence" in the Mediterranean area. It is paying special attention to Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, all formerly part of French North Africa. But the major French effort has been aimed at Libya which is to be provided with more than 100 Mirage jets and other weapons as part of a \$400 million arms deal. Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, known as the "Maghreb" powers, have managed to settle disputes among themselves in recent years. They are said to be wary however of Libya since that country came under the control of a radical military junta and has entered into an alliance with Egypt and the Sudan.

Dr. Nahum Goldmann Pays Tribute To Lord Russell As Foe Of Anti-Semitism

LONDON, Feb. 3 (JTA)--Dr. Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress, paid tribute today to Lord Bertrand Russell, the British philosopher-mathematician who died yesterday at the age of 97. Dr. Goldmann said, "The Jewish people will always remember him with love and gratitude. He was in the forefront of the fight against anti-Semitism and discrimination in the Soviet Union and Poland. He urgently warned against the danger of political trials in Czechoslovakia directed against persons of Jewish origin. We recall his memorable words at a meeting in London commemorating the martyrs and heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising: 'I assure you in heart and soul that I am with you in all you stand for.' For us that is his epitaph," Dr. Goldmann said.

Polish Jewish Ex-Servicemen Protest Proposal To Free Rudolph Hess

LONDON, Feb. 3 (JTA)--The Association of Polish-Jewish ex-Servicemen in London protested today against proposals to free Rudolph Hess, Hitler's one-time deputy, who is serving a life sentence as a Nazi war criminal.

Dr. Simon Friesner, chairman of the association, said "It is our considered opinion that it would be wrong to compromise on the life sentence of Rudolph Hess. He was one of the main architects of the mass murder of six million Jews and countless others. Any leniency shown Hess would encourage similar treatment to other war criminals and thus nullify the idea of war crimes." Hess defected to Britain early in World War II and was brought to trial after the war.

AJCongress Sounds Alarm Over Imminent Passage Of Blaine Amendment Repeal Bill

NEW YORK, Feb. 3 (JTA)--The American Jewish Congress said today that repeal of the Blaine Amendment, a 76-year-old state constitutional ban on state aid to religious schools, would "mark the beginning of the end of public education as we know it" and would be an assault on "the religious liberties of millions of citizens of New York State who would see their tax money used to promote the religious beliefs of others." A bill to repeal the amendment was sent to the State Senate floor yesterday and is expected to come to a vote tomorrow. Noting the urgency of the situation, Theodore J. Kolish, chairman of the Executive Committee of the AJCongress' Metropolitan Council, will address a news conference tomorrow. The conference is being sponsored by PEARL, a coalition of civic and religious groups for Public Education and Religious Liberty. The AJC is a member. An AJCongress spokesman told the JTA today that "a grave threat to the survival of the public school system in New York State" is posed by "those who intend to open the treasury of the state to provide tax funds for religiously affiliated schools."

The bill, supported by Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, is not expected to come up in the State Assembly this week. In the last session of the Senate the bill was passed, but it died in the Assembly. Now that the Republicans dominate both branches of the State Legislature, its chances for passage appear improved. The bill comes at a time when many Jewish and Catholic parochial schools are in financial trouble and contend they will be forced to close their doors--thus causing an increase in student enrollment in the public schools--unless they get aid from the state.

Joseph Tanenbaum Of Toronto Elected To Jewish Telegraphic Agency Board Of Directors

NEW YORK, Feb. 3 (JTA)--Announcement of the election of Joseph M. Tanenbaum of Toronto to the board of directors of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency was made today by Robert H. Arnow, president.

Mr. Tanenbaum, an industrialist and philanthropist, is one of the active younger leaders being developed by the Canadian Jewish community. He maintains an active interest in local Jewish affairs as well as in the national and world scenes. A graduate of the University of Toronto, he has also been active in industrial accident prevention programs.

Black Newsmen And Israeli Official Discuss South African-Israeli Relations

NEW YORK, Feb. 3 (JTA)--Israel's policies of aid to the emerging nations of black Africa and the "sticky question" of its relations with the Republic of South Africa, were explained in detail to a group of visiting American Negro journalists in Jerusalem recently. An almost verbatim report of the briefing given the American group by Mordechai Lador, of the Israel Foreign Ministry, was published in the New York Amsterdam News, the largest Negro weekly newspaper in America. The account was given by Dick Edwards, a columnist for the Amsterdam News, in the second part of his series "Black Man in Israel." Mr. Edwards was one of ten black newsmen from all over the United States invited on a fact-finding tour of Israel. The tour was organized by the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League and was conducted by the Israel Government.

Quoting Mr. Lador on Israel's program of technical aid to black African countries, Mr. Edwards wrote: "We find that in many of these countries, the Israeli experience is close to the African people. For instance, if they came to America...and went to the Ford Motor Co., it is so huge that, going back to African countries, it is completely irrelevant to local African situations. On the other hand, the chances of establishing a Ford company in Liberia, or even Ghana, are remote. Here (in Israel) we have smaller plants, people get to know each other and logically speaking, plants here are more relevant to local African conditions."

Mr. Edwards reported that the Israeli official "fielded the sticky question on why the Israelis did business with racist South Africa with the following explanation: 'We have limited relations with South Africa in order to express the displeasure of Israelis with their apartheid policies. We don't have an ambassador there. Our diplomatic mission is headed by a charge d'affaires. We have in the United Nations supported all moves, mainly those initiated by the African countries, to impress South Africa that their apartheid policies are repugnant to the conscience of all mankind...In South Africa there is a Jewish community of over 100,000 and we are fearful lest the attitude which brings apartheid may degenerate into very unpleasant anti-Semitism.'"

Mr. Edwards, in the first part of his series, said that initially he was suspicious of Israeli propaganda intentions, but was favorably impressed by the candid manner in which the Israeli spokesman answered the group's questions about relations with the Arabs and Israel's policies in the occupied territories.

Portions Of Old Testament Being Translated Into South African Bushman Dialect

PRETORIA, Feb. 3 (JTA)--Would you believe that major portions of the Old Testament and the Ten Commandments are being translated into one of the major Bushman dialects? According to a report from this fourth largest South African city, Professor E.O.J. Westphal of Cape Town's University School of African Studies has undertaken the task with the aid of a Kalahari Desert Bushman.

The translation of the Old Testament and the New Testament was initiated by a group of missionaries, academicians, and the South African Bible Society. The dialect used in the translation, Kung, is spoken by only a few thousand of the estimated 50,000 Bushmen surviving in southern Africa. There was no indication of what prompted this pilot project but it could lead to some very interesting developments especially if the chapter on the Prophets from the Old Testament is correctly translated.