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West German Government Condemns Arab Terrorist Attack On El Al Airline

TEL AVIV, Feb. 11 (JTA)--"An act of cowardice perpetrated by people who are incapable of fighting on or within the frontiers of Israel." These bitter words from Gen. Ezer Weizman, Minister of Transport, summed up Israeli reaction today to yesterday's Arab terrorist attack on El Al passengers at Munich Airport which took the life of a 32-year-old engineer from Haifa and injured 23 other persons, four of them seriously. The West German Government announced that it "most emphatically condemns this Arab terrorism," the third fatal attack on El Al at foreign airports since 1968.

(Police in Munich named an eight-man committee to investigate the attack. The Bavarian State Government expressed its deepest regrets over the outrage to Israeli Ambassador, Eliashev Ben Horin.)

The three Arab terrorists--two of them wounded--are in custody but have reportedly refused to answer questions. They were identified by police as Mohammed Hadidi and Mohammed Hanasi, both Jordanians and Abdul Rahman, an Egyptian.

Israeli newspapers today demanded retaliatory strikes at Damascus because Syria was reputedly the home base of the terrorists. A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the attack should "re-awaken governments and international bodies to put an end to criminal lawlessness by taking all necessary steps to insure freedom of civil air travel." But Gen. Weizman, a former Air Force commander who joined the Cabinet last year, said he didn't put much faith in international measures. "There is no harm in going through the motions, but I doubt if anything will come of it. We have to defend ourselves," he said.

Haifa Engineer Killed; Israeli Actress, Hanna Maron, Remains In Critical Condition

Munich police reported that the Arab terrorists hurled hand grenades and fired submachine guns at a bus carrying passengers from the Munich Airport terminal to an El Al Boeing 707 jet that was preparing to take off for London. Arye Katzenstein, a refrigeration engineer from Haifa, was killed. His father, Heinz, 37, was among the wounded passengers. Also wounded and in critical condition in a Munich hospital was Hanna Maron, 46, a popular Israeli stage and screen actress. Twenty-four year-old Asaff Dayan, the actor son of Israel's Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, was a passenger on the bus. He was unhurt.

Some reports from Munich said that he was the target of the terrorists. But other sources said that yesterday's attack, like the two previous ones, was indiscriminate and intended to inflict casualties at random on passengers and crew members of El Al. Capt. Uriel Cohen, commander of the flight, was slightly wounded. According to eye-witness accounts he wrestled a grenade wielding Arab to the ground while the others were firing on the bus. Mrs. Miriam Katzenstein, mother of the El Al passenger slain in Munich, flew there today with her son, Benjamin. Also headed for Munich was Mrs. Angelica Cohen, wife of the wounded pilot and the husband of Miss Maron, Jacob Rechter, an architect. He was accompanied by a surgeon from Tel Aviv's Beilinson Hospital.

Israelis registered some surprise when credit for the attack was claimed by the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an obscure Marxist group based in Syria. While supporting Palestinian guerrillas, that group in the past has repudiated individual acts of terrorism. A rival claim was made today by the so-called Action Organization for the Liberation of Palestine in Amman, Jordan. Israelis observed that whenever a new terrorist outrage is perpetrated, several guerrilla groups scramble for the credit. On Dec. 26, 1968, an El Al airliner was attacked by Arab terrorists at Athens Airport. One passenger, an Israeli marine engineer, was killed and a stewardess was injured. On Feb. 18, 1969, Arab attackers machinegunned an El Al plane at Zurich Airport, fatally wounding an Israeli pilot trainee. El Al said today that its flights were unaffected by the tragedy at Munich and that there were no cancellations as a result of it.

Pres. Nixon Signs Bill For \$20 Million Desalination Program In Israel

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 (JTA)--President Nixon signed a foreign aid bill today which includes a \$20 million grant to Israel for a desalination program and grants for other projects and institutions in Israel. The grant was advocated in the Senate by Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin and in the House by joint Democratic-Republican sponsorship. The concept behind the desalting grant is that Israeli expertise would be made available to other nations with similar problems involving water. Israeli institutions which will benefit from the grant include Hadassah Hospital, Weizman Institute, Merkaz Upanat B.A. Merkaz Lechinuch Ichud, Beth Yaacov Avat Girls School, Educational Center of Galilee and Amana Upanat B.A.

The grants were assailed when proposed by Senator J. W. Fullbright, Arkansas Democrat, as "practically dictated by special interest groups." He said that the grants resulted from manipulation by "lobbyists for special interests and foreign governments."

Knesset Approves Law Of Return Amendment; Wins Clear Majority On First Reading

JERUSALEM, Feb. 11 (JTA)--The Knesset voted 69-15 last night to approve a controversial amendment to the Law of Return which equates Jewish nationality with the Jewish religion. There were 23 abstentions and four members of the Ahdut Avodah faction of the Labor Party were absent. But the measure, sponsored by the Government with intense personal backing by Premier Golda Meir, won a clear majority on its first reading. It must stand two further readings in the Knesset but its final passage is virtually assured.

The bill, drafted by a Cabinet committee, stipulates that only persons who are Jewish according to the halachic (religious law) interpretation may be registered as Jewish by nationality. This excludes persons not born of a Jewish mother or not formally converted to Judaism. It provides however that the non-Jewish spouses, children and grandchildren of immigrants be accorded the same rights and privileges as Jewish immigrants.

The amendment was supported by all members of the Labor Party who voted, by the National Religious Party and the Herut wing of Gahal (Herut-Liberal alignment). One member of the latter, Dr. Yohanan Bader, cast a negative vote as did four members of Gahal's Liberal wing--Yosef Saphir, Zvi Zimmerman, Moshe Nissim and Gideon Patt. Other factions opposed were the Communists, Haolam Hazei, the State List headed by former Premier David Ben Gurion, and Mapam. The latter is a member of the Labor Alignment but votes independently on many issues. Abstentions were registered by the balance of Gahal and by the ultra-Orthodox Agudat Israel and Poalei Agudat Israel. The two Orthodox factions explained that they supported the measure in principle but opposed the provision for equal rights for the non-Jewish families of immigrants.

The vote was taken after ten hours of debate which began Monday. Labor Party MKs were under pressure of Party discipline to vote in accordance with the decision of the Party leadership. Mrs. Meir made it clear that she would tolerate no dissent in this matter. The 72-year-old Premier delivered a highly emotional speech in the Knesset in which she denied political motivation and claimed that the measure was a means of protecting Jewry from assimilation. Opponents of the amendment have charged that it was designed to appease the Israeli rabbinate and the Orthodox political parties. The National Religious Party, a member of the coalition, threatened to walk out of the Government unless it acted to nullify a recent Supreme Court decision which allowed Israelis to be registered as Jews by nationality even if they are not Jews by religion. More than 2000 Israeli students and adults demonstrated against the amendment when debate on it opened Monday.

Israeli And Egyptian Jets Trade Blows; Israeli Force Crosses Into Jordan

TEL AVIV, Feb. 11 (JTA)--Israeli and Egyptian jets exchanged blows across the Suez Canal today. The Egyptian planes attacked Israeli positions twice between 9:30 and 10 a.m. local time but caused no casualties or damage. Israeli jets struck in the afternoon at Egyptian bunkers and artillery positions in the northern section of the canal zone. The attack lasted an hour and 40 minutes and all aircraft returned safely to their bases, a military spokesman said. There was no comment here on an Egyptian claim that an infantry force of 100 men crossed the Suez Canal today and occupied a fortified Israeli position.

According to Cairo, the Egyptians killed or wounded at least 20 Israelis and destroyed three armored cars. The Egyptian air raid in the canal zone this morning was the 15th in 11 days. An Israeli force crossed the Dead Sea into Jordan today, killed two Arab saboteurs and captured a third. A military spokesman said the Israelis attacked near the mouth of the Arnon river which is a staging area for guerrillas bound on sabotage missions in Israel. Two motorboats used by the saboteurs were captured along with a large quantity of arms and ammunition, the spokesman said. There were no Israeli casualties.

Jordan Facing New Showdown With Guerrillas; Pakistani Troops Bolster Jordan Army

LONDON, Feb. 11 (JTA)--King Hussein, of Jordan, whose loyal forces apparently have been bolstered by an infantry regiment and training cadres from Pakistan, is facing a new showdown with Palestinian guerrillas, it was reported here today. Jordanian Government officials and guerrilla leaders began top level talks to avert a crisis. Yesterday a committee representing various commando groups based in Jordan threatened a "civil war" if Hussein moves to enforce a new order requiring guerrillas to turn their arms and ammunition over to Jordanian authorities. The new order re-affirms an old one that prohibited guerrillas from carrying arms in towns. But guerrillas strolled defiantly through the streets of Amman with Soviet-made rifles slung over their shoulders today and were not challenged by Jordanian soldiers or security guards, it was reported here.

According to reports from Beirut, Pakistan sent a 2000-3000 man infantry regiment into Jordan several months ago. It also reportedly sent training missions--one for the Jordanian Airforce and one for armoured units--each numbering between 200-300 men. Their presence has been confirmed by Western intelligence. The Jordanian Army, of about 55,000 men, is re-enforced by about 12,000 Iraqi and 5000 Syrian troops and some 1500 soldiers from Saudi Arabia. Pakistan is the first non-Arab country known to have sent military support against Israel. Observers believe however that the appearance of these forces in Jordan is intended less for use against Israel than to protect the Hussein regime from a popular uprising stirred by the guerrillas. El Fatah, the largest Palestinian commando group, denounced Hussein's arms control move in its nightly broadcast over Cairo radio. "The time has come," it said, "for the masses to act and act quickly not only to stop the new conspiracy but to inflict final defeat on the conspirators."

Wilson Says Britain Is Prepared To Work For Arms Limitation Agreement In Mideast

LONDON, Feb. 11 (JTA)--Prime Minister Harold Wilson disclosed in the House of Commons today that he has told Soviet Premier Alexei N. Kosygin that Britain is prepared to work for a general arms limitation agreement in the Middle East even in advance of a political settlement there. Mr. Wilson spoke in reply to Arthur Lewis, Labor MP, who asked what proposals were contained in Mr. Kosygin's note of Feb. 2 and in his reply. The Prime Minister said the message from Mr. Kosygin "drew attention to the dangers of the present situation in the Middle East and the need for progress toward a peaceful solution."

Mr. Wilson said that in his reply he stressed the need to re-establish an effective cease-fire and to "support the Security Council resolution of Nov. 22, 1967 and especially the twin proposals of the principles of withdrawal and commitment to peace." The ambassadors of six Arab states visited Foreign Minister Michael Stewart today and left an aide memoire which reportedly warned Britain of "dangerous consequences" if it supplied arms to Israel. The visitors were the envoys of Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Iraq, Libya, Jordan and Egypt. According to sources close to the Foreign Office the "consequences" hinted at a cut-off of Arab oil and trade with Britain in general.

Mirage Jet May Soon Be Manufactured In U.S.; France Sells 30 Mirage Jets To Spain

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 (JTA)--The Mirage jet, a French supersonic warplane may soon be manufactured in the United States for export to small countries that cannot afford more complex, more expensive aircraft, it was reported here today. According to the reports, the French manufacturer of the Mirage, Marcel Dassault, has made an offer to the Boeing Co. to produce the fighter plane in the U.S. under a licensing arrangement. The intent would be to enter the Mirage in the pending "Freedom Fighter" competition from which the U.S. Defense Department will select a high quality but relatively inexpensive aircraft for use by "third countries."

If the Boeing Co. accepts the Dassault offer it will probably build a version of the Mirage III or Mirage V, the reports said. France has recently agreed to sell more than 100 Mirages to Libya. Reports from Paris said that an agreement was signed there yesterday for the sale of 30 Mirages to Spain. The deal was described as fitted to current French policy of strengthening its position in the Mediterranean area, primarily through the sale of weaponry. A more immediate affect will be to bolster France's lagging aircraft industry which has suffered a loss of exports as a result of the arms embargo against Israel imposed by former President Charles de Gaulle.

Hand Grenade Thrown Into Crowd Of Civilians Injures 65 Arabs; Two In Serious Condition

TEL AVIV, Feb. 11 (JTA)--Sixty-five local Arabs were injured yesterday when a hand grenade exploded outside of the Military Governor's office in Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip. The wounded included an 85 year-old man and 22 teenagers. Thirty-three of the injured were hospitalized and two were reported in serious condition. Israeli officials said the grenade was deliberately thrown into the crowd of civilians in order to incense the local population against Israeli authorities. They quoted one of the Arab wounded as complaining bitterly that "the guerrillas fight against us but not against the Israelis on the front line." A curfew was imposed on the entire northern area of the Gaza Strip but was lifted today after local headmen assured Israeli authorities that they would maintain order.

New Campus Coalition Calls For Mideast Peace Based On Justice For Jews And Arabs

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 (JTA)--The Youth Committee for Peace and Democracy in the Middle East, a newly formed nationwide campus coalition called today for "the earliest possible peace in the Middle East which does not violate the principles of justice and democracy for either Arabs or Jews." Helen Kerszenzweig, Executive Secretary of the Committee, said that the group's position was "not based on any ethnic or nationalist bias. It is the cause of peace and democracy, and that alone, which concerns us." The Youth Committee has adopted a program stating that every nation in the Middle East, including Israel, has the right to exist, condemning the "Holy War campaign of many Arab governments and terrorist organizations to destroy Israel," and characterizing Israel as "an outpost of democracy in the Middle East." At the same time the Committee repudiated the "anti-democratic authoritarian nature" of other Arab countries, and called for democratic rule for all countries in the Middle East. The program also stated that the Arab-Israeli question must be settled free from "imposed settlements" from the "big powers." The Committee pledges to speak out against either American or Soviet attempts to force a Middle East settlement. It claims that the policy of the Soviet Union has "helped to perpetuate the Middle East crisis."

Arafat's Visit To Moscow May Signify Revised Russian Policy Toward Guerrilla Troops

LONDON, Feb. 11 (JTA)--The surprise visit of El Fatah leader Yasser Arafat to Moscow has touched off speculation that Soviet Russia might be revising its policies toward the Palestinian guerrilla groups which hitherto has been not render them direct aid. Sources close to the British Government predicted that Moscow will either announce a new policy or will re-interpret "direct aid."

They said the reason for this departure was that support for Arab terrorists was a safe way to harass Israel without the risk of involvement in a major Mideast conflict and without supplying the Arabs with the latest, most sophisticated weapons.

In the Russian view, these sources say, support for El Fatah and like organizations would be a means of toppling King Hussein's pro-Western regime in Jordan and substituting one of leftist orientation such as the Baathist regime in Syria. Most Western experts believe that Israel would have no trouble mastering the guerrillas, even if trained and equipped by the Russians.

Rabbis Assail Pompidou, Praise Nixon And Pledge Support To Soviet Jews

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 (JTA)--Rabbi Harold Saperstein, elected president of the New York Board of Rabbis at the group's 89th annual meeting here today, condemned France for its "callous disregard of ethical responsibility" in selling 110 aircraft to Libya while reneging on its commitment to sell Israel military equipment, and said that the Board of Rabbis will take the initiative "in calling on the whole Jewish community of New York to mobilize itself for appropriate demonstrations wherever French President Pompidou may appear." M. Pompidou will visit New York in early March. "Against this patent moral duplicity," the rabbi said, "we point the finger of bitter condemnation. As at the time of the Dreyfus trial, the cry of Zola rings out again, 'J'accuse.'"

The rabbi, urging President Nixon and the State Department to tell President Pompidou that the sale to Libya has "aroused" the feelings of the American people, and calling on public officials to refrain from participating in any reception honoring him in New York City, said that "we will not stand by in silence while another holocaust is prepared for the remnants of Jewry who have at last found a home in Israel." In his acceptance address, Rabbi Saperstein also praised President Nixon for his pledge to provide military equipment for Israel. "This assurance must not be compromised," he said. "We remind the spokesmen of our government that even-handed treatment does not mean the same treatment for the criminal and his victim," he added.

Turning to the Soviet Union, the rabbi said that he was "stirred" by the evidence of "courageous identification" thousands of Jewish youths in the Soviet Union have with Jewish life, and by the recent proclamations of Jews in Georgia, Moscow, and other sections of the Soviet Union of their desire to emigrate to Israel. "The silent Jews are finally speaking out," he noted. "To them we call out, 'Chazak v'ematz--be very strong and very courageous.' On our part we pledge that we will not forget them."

The rabbi also said that the Board of Rabbis and its lay advisory council will set up a committee to deal with "responsible" black leaders and public officials on racial problems; that the Board will set up an Institute on Drug Addiction and will urge synagogues and churches to open facilities for educational programs in this field; and that the Board demands that Mayor John V. Lindsay and Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller impose emergency measure to meet the effects of the New York City cemetery strike and that it will volunteer its services after the strike to assure dignified burials. Rabbi Saperstein has been the spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El of Lynbrook, N.Y. for 36 years. He succeeds Rabbi Gilbert Klapperman, who was elected Chairman of the Board of Governors. The New York Board of Rabbis includes the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Rabbinate of the New York Metropolitan area.

Sen. Ribicoff Praised For Courage In Assailing Northern Segregation Policies

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 (JTA)--Rabbi Maurice M. Eisendrath, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, today praised Sen. Abraham A. Ribicoff for his "courageous statement" Monday in the Senate charging the north with "monumental hypocrisy in its treatment of the black man."

In a telegram to the Connecticut senator, Rabbi Eisendrath stated: "You have earned the admiration and thanks of all fair-minded Americans for your moral and forthright speech on Monday before the Senate of the United States. We who deplore the acts and attitudes of southern white supremacists also share your repugnance of the hypocrisy of northern self-styled liberals, who, from the protected confines of their own lily-white enclaves, offer only useless lip service to the long-suffering black community." In his speech to the Senate, Mr. Ribicoff called for integration of northern suburbs and schools and said the north is plagued by "dual systems of education" and the "dual society that exists in every metropolitan area - the black society of the central city and the white society of the suburbs." His speech was in response to a statement by Mississippi Senator John Stennis that if segregation is wrong in the public schools of the south it is wrong in the public schools of all other states.

PEARL Vows To Continue Fight Against Blaine Amendment Repeal And Parent Aid Bill

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 (JTA)--PEARL, the Committee for Public Education and Religious Liberty, said today that yesterday's 41 to 15 vote in the State Senate in favor of a bill to repeal the "Blaine Amendment," has prompted them to mount a campaign to defeat the "Parent-Aid" bill, currently in both houses of the state legislature. The repeal bill, now in the State Assembly, is expected to pass there also. The "Parent-Aid" bill proposes direct financial aid to the parents of parochial school children. William Haddad, Executive Co-Chairman of PEARL and a member of the Governing Board of the American Jewish Congress, told the JTA that the action in the State Senate to repeal the 76-year-old constitutional ban on state aid to non-public schools, "gave a false sense of power to those groups that are trying to get state monies for religious schools." Because of this, he said, PEARL would attempt to actively educate the public to the "dangers" of several measures before the state legislature, including the "Parent-Aid" bill, that are attempting to "get around" the constitutional ban on state-aid to non-public schools.

Rabbi Tobias Geffen, Believed To Be Oldest Orthodox Rabbi In U.S., Dies At 99

ATLANTA, Feb. 11 (JTA)--Funeral services were held here today for Rabbi Tobias Geffen, believed to have been the oldest Orthodox rabbi in the United States. He died here yesterday at the age of 99. Rabbi Geffen was a founder of the Shearith Israel Congregation here, which he had served as spiritual leader for more than 60 years. He had continued as rabbi and as teacher of a class at the synagogue until recently when he became ill. He was founder of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada.