

# 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. XXXVII - Fifty-Third Year

Monday, March 16, 1970

No. 50

## Cabinet Discusses U.S. Jet Deal; Unconfirmed Report That Nixon Says No To Deal

JERUSALEM, March 15 (JTA)--The status of Israel's long pending request to buy more Phantom and Skyhawk jets from the United States was the main topic of discussion at today's Cabinet meeting. The session was attended by Gen. Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's Ambassador to Washington, who was called home for consultations suddenly on Thursday and arrived here Friday morning. There was no indication of what transpired at the Cabinet meeting except that Gen. Rabin reported on the state of American-Israeli relations. But the newspaper Haaretz carried a report, unconfirmed by any other sources, that President Nixon has refused outright to sell more Phantoms to Israel at this time.

According to Haaretz, the White House informed the Israeli Embassy in Washington that the negative decision was based on military grounds--specifically that in America's view, Israeli air superiority over the Arabs is assured for the next few years and therefore additional Phantoms are not needed at this time. There was no confirmation of this report from official quarters. But the sudden recall of Ambassador Rabin--after the Foreign Ministry denied emphatically last week that he was being called home--lent credence to rumors that something was amiss with the Phantom deal. Before attending today's Cabinet session, Gen. Rabin had lengthy meetings with Premier Golda Meir, Foreign Minister Abba Eban and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan.

## General Feeling Is That Nixon Will Supply Jets But Not Commit U.S. To Specific Number

Most observers here were not inclined to accept military grounds as the basis for a Nixon decision. They placed more credence in reports in American newspapers that the President would make a non-committal announcement, not refusing the jets but not committing the U.S. to the sale of a specific number at an announced date. They expect the White House to say that the U.S. would continue to watch the arms balance in the Mideast and would redress it when necessary. On Jan. 30, President Nixon promised at a press conference to announce his decision on Israel's request for more Phantoms within 30 days. That deadline passed almost two weeks ago with no announcement from the White House. But administration sources indicated over the week-end that a statement would be issued later this week.

Observers here have linked the delay to the recent announcement that bilateral U.S. - Soviet talks on the Mideast would soon be resumed. The Soviet Union is believed to have adopted a more conciliatory stand on the peace proposals outlined by Secretary of State William P. Rogers last Dec. 9. Sources here said President Nixon wanted to avoid an announcement on the Phantoms at a time when the Soviets may be more amenable to compromise. The Rogers plan originally elicited no positive response from Moscow although it was bitterly rejected by Israel.

## Democratic National Committee Says Nixon's Mideast Policy Too Sensitive To Discuss

WASHINGTON, March 15 (JTA)--The Democratic National Committee's rejoinder yesterday to President Nixon's State of the World message made no reference to the Administration's Mideast policy. Former ambassador W. Averell Harriman, chairman of the international affairs committee of the Democratic policy council, said the issue was "too sensitive" to discuss, although the President was scored on Vietnam and other controversial matters. Also omitted was comment on the Administration's general policy of letting other countries handle their own defense. In his Feb. 18 message to Congress, President Nixon asserted that Washington "would maintain a careful watch on the balance of military forces" in the Middle East and "provide arms to friendly states as the need arises."

## Four Israeli Soldiers Killed In Weekend Fighting; Egyptian Positions Pounded

TEL AVIV, March 15 (JTA)--Israel Air Force jets continued to pound Egyptian defense positions west of the Suez Canal for the second successive day. Today's targets were about 20 miles inland from the waterway. Yesterday Israeli planes attacked Russian-made SA-2 ground-to-air missile bases at Mansura in the Nile Delta about 65 miles north of Cairo and 60 miles west of the Suez Canal. On Friday, the Israeli bombers concentrated on artillery and anti-aircraft gun emplacements in the northern and southern sections of the canal zone. All planes returned safely from all missions.

Israel lost four soldiers in fighting over the week-end in the Suez Canal area and in the Golan Heights. Two of them were killed Friday night in twin Israeli commando attacks on Egyptian positions on the west bank of the canal about 30 miles south of Port Said, an operation which the Israeli military called an outstanding success. Two other Israeli soldiers were killed Friday when their vehicle hit a mine north of Hispin in the Golan Heights while on patrol. The soldiers killed in the Suez attack were identified as Sgt. Dan Epstein, 20, of Kibbutz Alonim and Corp. Yosef Birenbaum, 21, of Kibbutz Maoz Chaim. The mine victims were Pvt. Abraham Levi, 31 and Corp. Hillel Helmana, 27, both from Holon. Syrian forces fired small arms and bazookas at an Israeli post in the southern Golan Heights last night. Mortars were fired earlier at another Golan post. There were

no Israeli casualties. Military sources said the sudden escalation of fighting on the Syrian front was apparently the result of high level government policy in Damascus rather than incidental acts by guerrillas. An Israeli soldier was injured this morning when an Army vehicle struck a mine near Hatzeva, south of the Dead Sea. Bazooka shells were fired from Lebanese territory this morning at the Israeli settlement of Kfar Yuval. There were no casualties or damage. An Israeli patrol killed one Arab and wounded another trying to escape from an identity check in Gaza today. The dead man was identified as an Arab from Haifa. The other was a local resident. A military spokesman describing Friday night's commando raid across the Suez Canal said the Israeli forces crossed and re-crossed the waterway without being detected by Egyptian forces. He said, however, that the fighting took place on difficult terrain and that the commandos were pitted against crack Egyptian troops. Nevertheless, they killed at least eight Egyptians and probably wounded more against a loss of two Israeli dead and four wounded. The Egyptian positions were demolished and a quantity of Russian-made rifles, machineguns and bazookas were captured.

### Mapam Leader Says Israel's 'Hawks' And 'Doves' Oppose Unilateral Withdrawal

NEW YORK, March 15 (JTA)--The position of Israeli "doves" and who they are was explained in a letter published in the New York Times today by Simha Flapan, a leading member of Mapam (United Workers Party) in Israel. According to the writer, so-called "doves" in Israel cover "a broad spectrum of liberal and religious professors, labor intellectuals, Socialists of Mapam who, while differing on details, contest the official Israeli policy on essential points." "When it comes to security," Mr. Flapan wrote, "the doves no less than the hawks, oppose unilateral withdrawal without a peace settlement or a peace settlement without guarantees. The doves are against a policy of 'faits accomplis'--establishment of Jewish civilian settlements in the occupied areas--but they approve of military installations necessary for war."

Mr. Flapan, who edits the English-language monthly "New Outlook" in Tel Aviv, said Israeli "doves" demand clear and unequivocal acceptance of the Security Council's Nov. 22, 1967 resolution "implemented as an indivisible whole" but "oppose insistence on 'direct negotiations' not because this is morally wrong but because it is unrealistic. They recognize the existence of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination and they demand immediate unilateral steps by Israel for rehabilitation of the Palestinian refugees."

(A veteran Zionist leader in London today rapped one of Israel's leading "hawks." Dr. S. Levenberg, chairman of the Eretz Israel Committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and a long time representative of the Jewish Agency in Europe, said his committee was "astonished" to read a statement by the Israeli Minister of Transport, Gen. Ezer Weizman that what some people called occupied territories was part of "Zion" and must be retained permanently by Israel. The Zionist leader acknowledged that Gen. Weizman's statement represented his personal opinion but said it helped those who are trying to confuse world opinion about Israel's intentions.)

### Worldwide Organization Of Fighters Against Nazis To Be Established

TEL AVIV, March 15 (JTA)--A worldwide organization of fighters against Nazis will be set up in accordance with a decision adopted at an international convention of Jewish Fighters Against Nazis and Concentration Camp Inmates held here. Stefan Grayek, chairman of the Israel Organization of Nazi Fighters, said the aims of the organization would be to battle active anti-Semitism like that in Poland and the Soviet Union, fight neo-Nazis in West Germany and other countries, locate Nazi criminals, and activate dormant underground associations to fight Arab terrorist groups which are cooperating with former Nazis.

### Hanna Meron Says She Expects To Return To Israel Within Four To Six Weeks

TEL AVIV, March 15 (JTA)--Hanna Meron, the Israeli stage star who was seriously injured in the terrorist attack at Munich airport, said that she expected to be back in Israel in four to six weeks. One of her legs had to be amputated because of the injuries she suffered when terrorists opened fire on a busload of El Al passengers at the airport on Feb. 10. She disclosed her plans in a telephone interview over the army broadcasting service. Officials here said her voice sounded firm and that she said her condition was improving rapidly. She said the turning point was noted by physicians at a Munich hospital a few days ago when they decided no additional surgery was needed and that Miss Meron's wounds were healing satisfactorily.

### 234 Soldiers Killed Since Israel's 1947-48 War of Independence Are Memorialized

JERUSALEM, March 15 (JTA)--Two hundred thirty-four Israeli soldiers killed since the 1947-48 War of Independence and whose bodies have never been found were memorialized here today. Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Alon spoke to their families, telling them that Jews honor the dead to the same extent they honor the living. Among the 234 were victims of the Dakar submarine disappearance and of the destroyer Eilat, the latter torpedoed by Egyptians after the cease-fire agreement. The Central Memorial services were led by Chief Army Chaplain Maj. Gen. Shlomo Goren.

### Presidium To Be Asked If Disciplinary Measures Should Be Taken Against Deputy

JERUSALEM, March 15 (JTA)--The Speaker of the Knesset, Reuben Barkat, has decided to raise with the Knesset presidium the issue of whether disciplinary action should be taken against an Agudat Israel deputy who spat on a Reform prayerbook and threw it to the floor during Knesset debate. The incident took place during passage last week of an amendment to the Law of Return. Rabbi Menahem Porush, the Agudat Israel deputy, apologized for the action. Meanwhile, Rabbi Porush has received many congratulatory messages from Agudat Israel supporters here and abroad.

## Worldwide Expressions Of Solidarity With Soviet Jews Observed This Weekend

JERUSALEM, March 15 (JTA)--The first of a series of worldwide expressions of solidarity with Soviet Jewry was observed here today as cars drove with headlights on, street lamps were lighted, and Mayor Teddy Kollek unveiled a plaque renaming Zion Square "Soviet Jewry Square" for the day. The location was chosen, Kollek explained, because it is in the heart of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem is the heart of Israel. The blowing of a shofar ended the observance. (In Geneva, Stockholm and Vienna, Jewish students held protest demonstrations this weekend against the treatment of Soviet Jews. In Stockholm, the students picketed the Soviet Embassy and then marched in a torchlight parade. Telegrams were sent by the students to Swedish and foreign political and intellectual leaders explaining the nature of their protests. In Geneva, Jewish students sent a telegram to the Soviet ambassador asking for the release of Jacob Flashvili. In Vienna, the students sent a telegram to the Soviet ambassador asking for the release of Wulf Gordin.)

(The Synagogue Council of America accused the Soviet Union of waging "a cruel campaign to compel Soviet Jews to deny their spiritual links with the land and people of Israel." Rabbi Solomon J. Sharfman, president of the coordinating agency for the Conservative, Orthodox and Reform branches of American Judaism, cited a statement by several rabbis in the Soviet Union in which they attacked Israel and Zionism. He said that the statement was reminiscent of confessions extracted in the show trials of the Stalin era. "Nothing that has happened in the Soviet Union in recent years confirms more poignantly the tragic plight of its Jewish citizens than the crude and unconscionable manner in which Soviet authorities are abusing the several remaining rabbis in the Soviet Union in their anti-Israel and anti-Zionist campaign," Rabbi Sharfman declared.)

(Christian Science Monitor correspondent Charlotte Saikowski reported Saturday from Moscow that the Kremlin may have gotten more than it bargained for in its anti-Zionist campaign but the drive continues unabated. Despite the campaign, she reported, Israel's Radio Jerusalem is heard in Moscow without jamming. The radio "carries news in Russian about the Middle East and programs about Jews in the Soviet Union and their right to emigrate.")

## Mayor Of Nice And Mayor Of Nathanya Criticize French Mideast Policies

NICE, France, March 15 (JTA)--The Mayor of Nice and the Mayor of Nathanya criticized French Middle East policies today. Mayor Oved Ben Ami, of the Israeli town, is here as the guest of Mayor Jacques Medicin. Addressing a reception in Mayor Ben Ami's honor, the French official declared that "95 percent of the Frenchmen in the south of France retain their friendship and warm regard for Israel, despite what is going on in Paris." He added that "Ultimately the genuine friendship of Frenchmen for Israel will assert itself."

Mr. Ben Ami responded by recalling the halcyon days of Franco-Israeli friendship in the mid-fifties when Premier Guy Mollet along with Prime Minister Anthony Eden, of Britain, joined Israel in the Suez campaign. "Now France tells us to retreat from some of the liberated territories," Mr. Ben Ami said. "We can no more abandon these territories than France could abandon Alsace Lorraine." He charged the government of President Georges Pompidou with trying to drive a wedge between Israel and diaspora Jewry which, he claimed "no force on earth can separate."

## Rabbi Melchior Says Polish Jewish Refugees Streaming Into Denmark

WASHINGTON, March 15 (JTA)--The Chief Rabbi of Denmark said here that the Polish refugees streaming into Denmark would become more Jewish than they had ever been. Declaring that "these were top people in the Polish Government," Rabbi Bent Melchior added that "they are looking for some kind of identity. It will be difficult for them to identify themselves as Danes, so they will have to identify themselves as Jews." Rabbi Melchior, who was installed in his post last week, succeeding his father, who held the position from 1947 until his recent death, is on a visit to the United States. Speaking at a press conference at the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington, he said the Polish refugees had been coming to Denmark ever since the government announced an unrestricted immigration policy in response to the upsurge of anti-Semitism in Poland. From last spring until the end of 1969, he reported, some 1,500 Poles emigrated to Denmark.

He said the Jewish community in Denmark numbers about 7,000, not counting the uncertain number of refugees from Poland. He said there is no "Jewish neighborhood" because apartments are so scarce that young couples take them wherever they can find them. As a result, Rabbi Melchior reported, Jewish education suffers. At his insistence, the Danish Jewish community is experimenting with a series of monthly "Jewish weekends" to replace the once-a-week Hebrew school lessons. He said the experiment was having "great success."

## IATA Reports Arab States Pledge To Combat Air Terrorism And Ensure Airline Safety

GENEVA, March 15 (JTA)--The International Air Transport Association said today that it had pledges from the Arab states to do all in their power to combat air terrorism and ensure the safety of airliners. The IATA announcement came shortly after an Egyptian airliner crash landed near Alexandria following an explosion that wrecked part of its undercarriage. The United Arab Airline jet was on a flight from Athens to Cairo with ten passengers, one of whom was reported slightly injured by fragments. Egyptian authorities said they could not discount sabotage and appointed a committee to investigate the crash. IATA spokesmen seemed to be satisfied with the pledge from the Arab governments, at least for the time being. (In Amman today, guerrilla leader Yasir Arafat repeated his statement that none of the Palestinian commando groups was responsible for the explosion that destroyed an Israel-bound Swissair jet with 47 persons aboard last Feb. 21.)

## Goodell Assails Arab Extremists; Jewish Group Calls Rogers' Policy A Munich Trap

NEW YORK, March 15 (JTA)--Sen. Charles Goodell, a New York Republican, today assailed "Arab extremists" and "the short-sighted men in Moscow and Paris who are encouraging Arab belligerence." Sen. Goodell addressed the New York Chapter of the American Jewish Committee. Mr. Goodell also criticized the Middle East proposals made last Dec. 9 by Secretary of State William P. Rogers. He called them "a prescription not for peace but for further aggravation of tensions." He expressed "gratification" however with some of President Richard M. Nixon's recent statements on the Mideast, especially one made to Jewish leaders on Jan. 25 pledging to send Israel the military equipment necessary to defend its security. "The acid test of the Administration's intentions is whether or not it follows through on that promise," Sen. Goodell declared.

Meanwhile, the Free Sons of Israel, has called upon the State Department to abandon its Mid-East proposals and "fulfill the will of the majority of Congress...to effectuate direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab States." It charged the proposals were a Munich appeasement trap, veiling an intent to impose a truce upon Israel, which will "lead to another war." Louis Norris, Grand Master of the Order, stated that now that the "waters muddled by the Pompidou visit have settled," the United States should go back to pursue the basic principle of achieving a viable peace in the Mid-East. That principle, he said, is direct peace talks between the combatant states, Israel and the Arabs. In a strong letter of protest to Secretary of State Rogers, the 121 year-old fraternal organization also suggested that an impartially supervised referendum be held among the Arab people on the issue of direct negotiations. "The world should not be mislead by the poisonous propaganda of the Arab agitators," the protest read. "The Arab people yearn for peace as do the people of Israel. They are heartsick of the tragic and meaningless struggle. They desire reconciliation with Israel." The protest letter was signed by Mr. Norris and Jack E. Levine, counsel of the Free Sons of Israel. Copies were sent to President Nixon, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Yost, and to individual legislators. It assailed the policy of the State Department of "playing the phony international game of 'truce.'" It said: "A truce is no substitute for peace. On the contrary, it is a political device to protract hostilities, while tensions, subversions, sabotage, guerrilla warfare and reprisals escalate. Witness Berlin, Korea, Laos. There was also a truce in Vietnam."

## Some 2000 University Professors Sign Petition Calling For Air Safety

WASHINGTON, March 15 (JTA)--Some 2,000 university professors have signed petitions sent to President Nixon asking him to act to make air travel safe for the academic community "if it is to contribute to the solutions of the problems of mankind." The petitions were forwarded from nine universities to Deputy Undersecretary of State Elliott Richardson by Dr. A. Clifford Barger of Harvard University. His brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. E. Richard Weirnerman, were two of the 47 persons killed in the sabotage of a Swissair plane in Zurich on Feb. 21.

In a telephone interview, Dr. Barger said he did not solicit the signatures. "Some friends called from all over asking me what I was going to do and we decided on this." The petitions were signed by faculty members at Yale--where Dr. Weirnerman was a professor of public health--and at Harvard, Columbia, Johns Hopkins, Michigan, Pittsburgh, Brandeis and California Universities. The petition from Harvard said that the United States must take "the lead in insuring that resolute measures are taken to deal with this growing menace." The message also said that "the lack of firm international action against air piracy and sabotage and against governments harboring, assisting and encouraging those responsible has resulted in this tragic episode in Zurich."

## Dr. Jarring Completes First Round Of Exploratory Talks On Resumption Of Peace Mission

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., March 15 (JTA)--Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring completed his first round of exploratory talks here Friday with the mission heads of Israel and the Arab states and was to report to Secretary General U Thant this weekend on what the talks had revealed as to the possibilities of a resumption of his peace-seeking efforts. UN sources were insistent in their assertions that without some new basis or considerable new encouragement Dr. Jarring would not return to the Middle East to journey from capital to capital. They indicated however that if any possibilities did open up, Dr. Jarring would resume his mission here in New York at the outset, making contact with each of the governments involved through his mission here. There were no indications this weekend what success Dr. Jarring met with in his first exploratory talks.

(The New York Times said in an editorial today that the return of the United Nations special Mid-east peace envoy, Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring to an active role in the crisis was a "hopeful sign." But, according to the Times, "A major obstacle to Ambassador Jarring's new effort is the absence of a bona fide spokesman for one of the central parties to the Arab-Israeli dispute--the Palestinians." The editorial observed "If the Palestinians continue to allow a handful of uncompromising extremists to be the sole spokesman for Palestine, they will find their legitimate aspirations once more frustrated," the Times said. The editorial added, however, "Unless the Palestinians themselves are brought into peace discussions, no settlement reached between Israel and the leaders of existing Arab states is likely to endure.")

Dr. Jarring's talks here coincided with the thirtieth meeting of the Four Powers who have been trying with complete lack of success since early last year to establish new "guidelines" for his mission. Yakov Malik, the Soviet Ambassador, reported Friday to Mr. Thant on the meeting Thursday. American sources said that absolutely no progress had been made at that meeting and that what had been described as a "positive development" at the previous meeting had all but vanished.