

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

Wednesday, April 29, 1970

No. 81

U Thant Reported Cooling A Request By Israel To Apprise Jordan Of Grave Situation

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., April 28 (JTA)--Secretary General U Thant appeared today to take a casual approach to an urgent request by Israel's Ambassador Yosef Tekoah that the Jordanian government be apprised "of the full implication that would ensue from a declaration repudiating the cease-fire." The request, contained in a letter from Mr. Tekoah to Mr. Thant was, according to a United Nations spokesman, being circulated to all member states. "There is no indication that the Secretary General will do more at this time," the spokesman added. The letter, which was delivered to Mr. Thant yesterday, was in response to an announcement Friday by Jordan's Foreign Minister Abdul Munaim Rifai on Lebanese television and reported by the Middle East News Agency that he "agreed with Nasser" that the cease-fire between Arabs and Israel was non-existent. Sources at the UN described Mr. Thant's failure so far to communicate with the Jordanian government as an act of "procrastination."

At the same time, Jordan's Ambassador to the UN, Muhammed H. El-Farra, submitted a letter to Security Council President Max Jakobson of Finland stating that the Security Council "and particularly the permanent members primarily responsible for international peace and security" are "duty bound to act in order to save both the lives of the innocent and the prestige of the United Nations authority." Mr. El-Farra did not call for a Security Council meeting to deal with what he termed "Israeli arrogance and acts of lawlessness." He offered no explanation of how the Council could "act" without calling a formal meeting. The Jordanian ambassador charged in his letter that "further Israeli attacks...are mainly directed against civilians and threaten their means of livelihood. He cited a series of actions by Israel from January 1 to April 10 in which "over 85 attacks were carried out." (The letters by Mr. Tekoah and Mr. El-Farra and the announcement that the cease-fire was non-existent came against a background of renewed and intensified shellings by Jordan of Israeli settlements in the Beisan Valley and a resurgence of Egyptian military activity in the Suez Canal zone.)

Mr. El-Farra cited as one instance that of Israeli pilots who "strafed" a "funeral procession" in the village of Esh-Shuna Esh-Shamaly on April 10, resulting in "a high toll of casualties: six civilians killed and 18 wounded, two of them seriously"; in addition, "three civilian cars were destroyed." Mr. El-Farra also alluded to the "strafing" of another funeral procession in a small, unidentified Jordanian village, resulting in "the killing and wounding of 24 civilians in a few minutes." He charged that this was an "irresponsible act dictated by a policy of ruthlessness instilled in the souls and minds of Israeli pilots and soldiers." He said "the international community cannot afford to remain silent, and the Security Council should not continue to shelve such complaints without taking effective and protective measures." Mr. El-Farra further charged that Israel was using Jordanian airspace and territory as "a testing ground for newly delivered American Phantoms, rockets and other military equipment." This, he said, constitutes a gross violation of the armistice agreement and the cease-fire.

Tekoah: Actions By Israel Directed Against Irregular Forces Not Against Civilians

Answering these charges, Mr. Tekoah, in a letter to Mr. Jakobson said the action in the Esh-Shuna Esh-Shamaly area was "carried out against the sources of attacks on the Israeli town of Beit Shean and on villages in the Beit Shean Valley." He said "the shelling of these Israeli civilian targets by Katyusha rockets was boastfully publicized in a communique issued that day by the terrorist organization El Assifa." Mr. Tekoah observed that other Israeli raids on so-called civilian target areas in Jordan were actions against irregular forces abetted by Jordanian authorities. He assailed the "despicable nature of the aggression against Israel from Jordanian territory" demonstrated recently by the choosing of the first night of Passover for the shelling of a number of Beisan Valley villages while hundreds of inhabitants were assembled for holiday celebrations.

Mr. Tekoah assailed "the continuation of the Jordanian government's attempt to cover up its utter disregard for the cease-fire." The ambassador noted that acts of aggression emanating from Jordanian territory by regular and irregular forces "are continuing unabated." He stated that the operations of the irregulars engaged in terrorist warfare against Israeli civilians "are coordinated with the Jordanian authorities" and that "the armed attacks are directed against Israeli villages and towns and other civilian targets." Mr. Tekoah added, "Israel is compelled to act in self-defense. Its actions are aimed at the sources of fire and at the bases of aggression on Jordanian territory." In his letters to the Secretary General and the President of the Security Council, Mr. Tekoah emphasized that the Jordanian announcement that the cease-fire was non-existent "indicates a further grave development in Jordan's policy" assumed by it under the cease-fire resolution. "It will be recalled," Mr. Tekoah wrote in his letter to Mr. Thant, "that the cease-fire is unconditional except for being based on reciprocity and that the Security Council rejected all proposals to link it to any other matters whatever, including the question of withdrawal." Mr. Tekoah's reference to withdrawal was seen as a rebuttal of Mr. Rifai's reported statement Friday which included the observation that Jordan would not feel obliged to observe the cease-fire as long as Israel has its troops in occupied territories.

Arab Saboteurs Captured In Clashes With Israel Forces In Jordan Valley

TEL AVIV, April 28 (JTA)--Security officials reported the capture of nine Arab saboteurs in three clashes with Israeli forces in the Jordan Valley during the past few days. Two of the saboteurs were injured while resisting. There were no Israeli casualties. A quantity of ammunition and sabotage material was seized.

Israeli Interceptors Shoot Down Two Egyptian Sukhoi-7 Fighter Bombers

TEL AVIV, April 28 (JTA)--Israeli interceptors shot down two Egyptian Sukhoi-7 fighter-bombers this afternoon during an Egyptian air attack on Israeli positions in the northern section of the Suez Canal zone and the Gulf of Suez. They were the 90th and 91st Egyptian planes downed by Israel since the June, 1967 war. They were seen crashing near the Great Bitter Lake. All Israeli planes returned safely to their bases. There were no Israeli casualties from the Egyptian raid. Israeli settlements in the Beisan Valley came under heavy shelling from Jordan last night. An 18 year-old American girl, Suzi Fider, of New Orleans, was slightly wounded by shell fragments at Kibbutz Massadah. She was released from a hospital following treatment. Mortar shells also fell on Shar Hagolan, Ashdod Yaacov and Ein Gev, on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee where 200 persons were attending a music festival. No other casualties were reported.

The upsurge of shooting from Jordan was regarded as a demonstration to substantiate statements made Friday in Amman by the Jordanian Foreign Minister Muhammed Rafai that the cease-fire has ceased to exist. Israelis noted that the latest shellings occurred while repairs were being made to Jordan's major irrigation project, the Ghor canal, in preparation for the dry months ahead. Israel has refrained from interfering with the repairs on a pledge from Jordan that settlements along the demarcation line will be left in peace. As in the past, the pledge has not been honored and there was speculation here that Israel would take retaliatory action if the shooting continues. The renewed shooting on the Jordanian front coincided with a resurgence of Egyptian military activity in the Suez Canal zone which has claimed the lives of 12 Israeli soldiers and wounded 22 since April 10. Five Israeli soldiers were killed in the past 24 hours, two of them in a commando ambush in the northern sector of the canal zone Sunday night and three by Egyptian artillery fire in the central and southern sectors yesterday.

Heavy Action Expected On Egyptian Front Following Comparative Lull During Winter

A military spokesman said Sgt. David Sabah, 20, of Jerusalem and Sgt. Housein Shibli, a Bedouin, aged 25, were fatally wounded in the commando raid in which three other Israeli soldiers were hit. One Egyptian soldier was wounded and eight others are presumed to have drowned when the boat in which they were recrossing the canal was sunk by Israeli gunfire. The victims of yesterday's artillery fire were 1st Lt. Michael Czanik, 20, of Jerusalem and Lance Corp. Abraham Israelowitz, 20, of Ashdod. The third soldier killed was not identified although his family has been notified.

Israeli military sources warned that heavy action can be expected on the Egyptian front following a comparative lull during the winter months. They said the Egyptians were preparing for a new war with Israel but the Israeli Air Force will block them with raids on "selected targets." During the last days of Passover Egyptian aircraft bombed El Arish in the northern Sinai and staged two commando raids, one at midnight Saturday and the other Sunday night. According to Israeli reports, they lost two Ilyushin II bombers over El Arish and suffered casualties in the commando operations. Meanwhile the West Bank town of Nablus remained under curfew for the sixth day following a grenade explosion in the market place that injured 26 persons last Wednesday. Six of them were women tourists from the U.S., Europe, South America and South Africa. Mayor Haj Mazzaous Al Masri, of Nablus, sent a letter to the Israeli military governor dissociating himself from the terrorists. Several suspects are under interrogation.

Hebron Area Arabs Urge Israel To Rescind Order Sealing Off Area Used By Terrorists

JERUSALEM, April 28 (JTA)--Three hundred leading Arabs from the Hebron area have appealed to Israeli military authorities to rescind an order sealing off a 750 acre tract in the region that was considered a pocket for terrorist activities. The Arabs agreed, after a stormy meeting at Hebron last night, to "wait and see" how their appeal is received before taking further action. Sheikh Mohammed Ali Jaabari, Mayor of Hebron, urged patience. Some of the local leaders wanted to take the case to the United Nations and others advocated calling a general strike on the entire West Bank if the order is not rescinded. Mayor Jaabari appealed to Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and other Israeli authorities not to post more troops in the Hebron area. He also urged terrorists to keep out of towns and villages "if they believe in God and the homeland." The Israeli military order, announced last week, was officially described as a measure to combat terrorism which has been on the rise in the Hebron region. The 750 acres will not be confiscated but turned into a military zone to which Arabs can come and go only with special permission. Israeli officials denied that the order had anything to do with controversial plans to build a Jewish suburb adjoining Hebron, an all Arab town.

Mrs. Meir To Meet With High School Students To Explain Government's Approach To Peace

JERUSALEM, April 28 (JTA)--Premier Golda Meir is expected to meet with a group of Israeli high school seniors who have been questioning her government's approach to peace with the Arabs. The youngsters' views are similar to those expressed by Dr. Nahum Goldmann in recent articles charging the government with inflexibility. The students, all of whom will be drafted at the end of the school year, wrote to Mrs. Meir stating their doubts over the government's policies. One of them, the son of Victor Shemtov, a Mapam minister-without-portfolio in Mrs. Meir's Cabinet, said he was uncertain that he could fulfill his military duties with a clear sense of purpose. Circles close to the Prime Minister say she would meet the group because she considers it vital that Israeli soldiers know what they are doing and why they do it.

May Day, Traditionally A Workers' Holiday, Will Be A Regular Day Of Work This Year

TEL AVIV, April 28 (JTA)--This year's May 1 Workers' Day, traditionally a day of non-work, will be a regular working day with income going to aid the special border settlements, the Histadrut Central Committee has decided. In addition, newspapers will publish on May 1 for the first time. The usual Workers' Day demonstration will not be held, although some kind of rally is a possibility.

Polish Press Erases Jewish Character Of Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

LONDON, April 28 (JTA)--The Polish press is marking the 27th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising by depicting it as a chapter in the Polish underground resistance movement against the Nazis rather than a specifically Jewish act of resistance. Polish newspapers are pointedly ignoring the Jewish role in the revolt and the official line is to discourage the idea that it was a Jewish event. The popular daily Warsaw Life published an alleged conversation between a commander of the Polish Home Army and a leader of the Jewish underground at the time in which the latter is supposed to have said that the ghetto fighters were fighting for Poland without mentioning that they were Jews. The paper did not supply the name of the Jewish underground leader.

Col. Sbygniew Gabinski, a leader of the Polish War Veterans, told a Warsaw Ghetto anniversary meeting that "thousands of Poles spilled their blood and sacrificed their lives in defense of the Jewish population" and "thousands of Jews were saved with the help of the Polish people." He said the Warsaw ghetto fighters died "with the word Poland on their lips." A speech along the same lines was delivered by Gen. Tadeusz Piczak, chief of information and propaganda of the Polish Communist Party in Warsaw. Edward Raiber, chairman of the Jewish Social and Cultural Association, made no reference to the ghetto revolt but attacked Israel's "governing circles" for their "aggressive, grasping policy, supported by American imperialism which is bringing new calamities to the Middle East."

Palestinian Arab Who Tells UN Committee Of Torture In Israeli Jails Was Never Arrested

JERUSALEM, April 28 (JTA)--A Palestinian Arab who told a United Nations investigating committee that he was tortured in an Israeli jail was never even arrested, it was disclosed here today. According to local newspapers, Taysir Nabulsi, of Jenin, a former education inspector in the Nabulus district, was expelled to Jordan after he was involved in organizing an anti-Israel student strike in Jenin. But he was not detained or harmed, the papers said. Mr. Nabulsi appeared in Amman before a special UN committee investigating human rights in the Israel-occupied territories. He claimed he was severely beaten in jail. This is the second time in the past few weeks that testimony by a witness before the committee has been discredited. Earlier, an official of the Syrian Red Crescent submitted a document purported to be by the World Council of Churches alleging maltreatment of Arabs in occupied territories. The WCC repudiated the document. Israel has refused to admit the UN group on grounds that it was set up one-sidedly to investigate only allegations of Israeli mistreatment of Arabs and not the condition of Jews in Arab countries as well.

Brazilian Government Assailed For Liberal Immigration Policy For Arab Refugees

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil, April 28 (JTA)--The Brazilian government is under attack by Arab states for making it easy for Arab refugees to settle here, according to informed sources. Ambassadors from Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Algeria have charged that the government follows a policy of giving Israel indirect aid by helping Palestinians to settle here under an extremely relaxed immigration policy. Informed sources say that the Cairo-based Middle East News Agency contends that Brazil's immigration policy is causing "Palestine to be emptied of its Arab inhabitants." The four Arab ambassadors were reported to have told the Arab League that 9,000 Arab refugees had emigrated to Brazil since the Six-Day War.

Palestinian Liberation Organization Revives Ancient Passover Blood Libel Against Jews

JERUSALEM, April 28 (JTA)--The monitoring department of the Israeli Broadcasting Services reported that the radio station of the Palestine Liberation Organization has claimed that "According to reports from the homeland, the Zionist enemy are kidnaping Arab children off the streets in Gaza, and after killing them extract their blood and discard the bodies." The Cairo station said "Gaza residents have seen this with their own eyes." Political sources here commented that the revival of the ancient Passover blood libel indicates the real character of the alleged liberation movement, which claims abroad to be in favor of a Palestinian state with a Jewish minority in a secular democracy.

Project Aids Young Polish Jewish Immigrants In Rome In Study Of Jewish Identity

MONTREAL, April 28 (JTA)--A program of Jewish cultural, sports and recreational activities is now in progress for the younger element among the Polish Jewish transmigrants waiting in Rome for their emigration papers, according to a report by the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Canada. The program, geared to the 16-to-30 year age group of whom there are an estimated 400 among the 1,400 Polish and other East European transmigrants now in Rome. It aims to give the younger Polish refugees a chance to learn more about Jewish history, thought and culture, and to discuss questions of Jewish identification which have been raised by the young people themselves. "The young refugees are even more sensitive than their parents to the traumatic experience of being uprooted from their homes under unusually difficult circumstances and the uncertainties of being suspended in a kind of limbo during the months they had to wait for resettlement," the report stated. The program is a cooperative effort. The Rome Jewish community put at the disposal of the program the premises of the Kadima Club, located in a synagogue in the center of the city and the Central British Fund has contributed money for sporting goods and other equipment. The project, under the direction of Izi Azgad, an Israeli youth worker assigned by the Jewish Agency, is considered as a model for programs for other groups of refugees in the future.

Israeli Mayors Invited By Mayor Of Leningrad To Attend International Congress

TEL AVIV, April 28 (JTA)--The mayors of Tel Aviv, Petah Tiqva, Nathanya and other cities are seeking advice from the Foreign Ministry on whether to accept invitations, reported to be routine, to attend the seventh International Congress of Twin Cities in Leningrad as part of the Lenin centenary. The invitations, channeled through the Local Councils World Union, were signed by the mayor of Leningrad, Alexander Syzoff.

Orthodox Jew Files Complaint He Could Not Wear Yarmulka In Stock Exchange

NEW YORK, April 28 (JTA)--The New York City commission on Human Rights announced today it will hold a hearing on May 7 on the complaint of an Orthodox Jew that he was refused permission to wear a skullcap while working at his job at the New York Stock Exchange. The commission said the complaint, charging discrimination, was filed by Abraham J. Goldstein, 26, of Forest Hills, N.Y. who has been employed by the exchange as a tube operator since April, 1968. The complainant declared that, during an orientation session soon after he was hired, he was told he could not wear a skullcap while he was working on the floor during trading hours and when Mr. Goldstein asked why, he was told it would "disturb the brokers." He said he then agreed not to wear the skullcap, as required by Jewish tradition, during those trading hours. Last January, he declared in his complaint, he was wearing the skullcap while working off the exchange floor on an upper level, a practice he followed since he was hired, when a supervisor told him he could not wear the skullcap anywhere in the exchange building. He filed his complaint in January, charging he was discriminated against because of his religion, which is illegal under city anti-discrimination law.

Senate Subcommittee On Genocide Treaty Ends Hearings; Further Action Up To Senate

WASHINGTON, April 28 (JTA)--The Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on the Genocide Convention concluded hearings yesterday on the UN treaty that would outlaw genocide. Subcommittee chairman Sen. Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, said he supported Senate ratification of the treaty because "I think it is chiefly important for its symbolic value." The treaty has been in the Senate since June, 1949, when President Harry Truman asked for Senate ratification so that the United States could sign it. Since that time 75 nations have signed, including all the major UN powers. "We are conspicuous by our absence," Church said.

Sen. John Sherman Cooper, Republican of Kentucky, pointed out that despite U.S. reluctance to sign, "our record is not bad. Our boys freed Buchenwald and Auschwitz." Richard N. Gardner, representing the ad hoc committee on the Human Rights and Genocide Treaties, called the failure to ratify the treaty "a costly anachronism," in that it weakened the law and the U.S. image in the eyes of the world. The treaty is not self-implementing. While it outlaws genocide, it provides no sanctions. Each country is required to set its own penalties within its own penal code for genocide as defined by the UN convention. Trial and punishment is left to the individual countries. Subcommittee members seemed to be most concerned about extradition under the treaty. They were worried that American citizens who committed genocide in other countries might be tried in those countries without due process of law and the guarantee of rights under the U.S. Constitution.

Gov. Mandel Proclaims May 10 Liberation Day In Maryland; Soviet Jews And Israel Topics

ANNAPOLIS, Md., April 28 (JTA)--Governor Marvin Mandel proclaimed today that the 25th year of liberation from the concentration camps of over 8000 Maryland citizen - New Americans - will be marked here on May 10 at Temple Israel in Silver Spring, Md. Sponsored by Club Shalom and the New Americans Committee, the anniversary will bring to the attention of America the plight of 3 million Jews in Soviet Russia, and mark Israel's 22nd Independence Day, expressing solidarity with them in their struggle for a just peace in the Middle East. Folk singer and recording star Bina Landau, a survivor of the Nazi holocaust, will present a program of "Songs of Freedom and Hope." The New Americans Committee and Club Shalom were organized in the Maryland - D.C. area to help newcomers in their cultural and educational adjustment.

New England AJCommittee To Examine Problems Confronting Jewish Communities In 1970's

BOSTON, April 28 (JTA)--The New England Region of the American Jewish Committee will examine some of the problems confronting Jewish communities during the decade of the seventies. That will be the theme of its eighth annual conference at Windsor, Conn. May 2-3. The conference will touch on what it regards as two major challenges to American Jews--Israel and their own youth. Middle East power politics and its implications for Israel will be discussed by Ehud G. Mouchly, vice consul of Israel for political and economic planning. A panel session will be devoted to the confrontation between Jewish youth and the Jewish establishment, presided over by Bernard Abrams, of Hartford. The general condition of American Jewry in the 70's will be discussed at the opening session by Seymour Samet, national director of the AJCommittee's intergroup relations and social actions department.

Jewish Youths From Many Lands To Participate In Israel's International Youth Festival

NEW YORK, April 28 (JTA)--Competitive sports will be the big feature at Israel's first International Youth Festival to be held July 15-Aug. 5, according to Haskell Cohen, of the National Jewish Welfare Board who is international chairman of the event. He said about 100 American boys and girls between 15 and 17 would join some 400 other Jewish youths from South America, South Africa and Israel in a variety of sporting events and tours of Israel this summer. Mr. Cohen is co-chairman of the JWB's national basketball committee. He said sports activities at the Festival will include track and field, tennis, volleyball, ping pong, swimming, basketball, soccer and wrestling. There will also be a chess competition. The idea of the festival is to bring Jewish youth overseas into close contact with Israel and Israeli youth, Cohen said.

Katriel Katz To Tour U.S. Discussing Lessons To Be Learned From Holocaust

NEW YORK, April 28 (JTA)--Katriel Katz, chairman of Yad Vashem, the Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, arrives here Thursday to speak on area campuses on the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust. Mr. Katz, whose visit is sponsored by the World Federation of Underground Fighters was formerly Israeli ambassador to Poland and the Soviet Union. He has also served as Chief Secretary of the Israel government and as Consul General here. His campus agenda is under the auspices of the American Zionist Youth Foundation.