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## Israel Government Announces Officially Russian Pilots Are Flying Egyptian Jets

JERUSALEM, April 29 (JTA)--Israelis were officially told by their government this morning that Russian pilots are flying Egyptian jets on air defense missions over Egypt. An announcement on the state-owned radio at 7 a.m. local time said, "In the Soviet involvement in the Middle East there has been a grave development. In recent days it has become clear beyond any doubt to the government of Israel that for the first time Soviet pilots are flying operational missions from military installations under their control in Egypt."

The Israel government has officially informed the United States government of this development. Premier Golda Meir has reportedly sent a message to President Nixon requesting urgent reconsideration of his decision last month to withhold action on Israel's request for more Phantom and Skyhawk jets. Israel has reportedly told the U.S. that so far the Soviet-piloted Egyptian planes have kept out of the Suez Canal zone and there has been no combat contact between them and Israeli pilots. But over the last ten days, Russian pilots have been scrambling into attack formations at almost every potential approach by an Israeli plane into Egyptian air space beyond the canal zone, the Israelis informed Washington. They reported that two of their planes were pursued by eight Russian-piloted Egyptian MIG fighters on April 18, the day the new pattern of Soviet operations was detected.

(In Moscow today Soviet Foreign Ministry officials declined to confirm or deny the Israeli claims. They said, "We have no information on this.") (It was reported in Washington today that U.S. officials are still studying their own intelligence reports in an atmosphere of mounting concern. Washington sources said the Israelis have been reporting daily for more than a week the new role of Soviet pilots in Egypt. The Israeli reports were said to be based on intercepted radio messages. Russian pilots flying Egyptian MIGs appeared to be communicating in Russian deliberately to let Israeli pilots know of their presence. So far they are said to have scrupulously avoided the Suez Canal zone, where Israeli jets continue almost daily to pound Egyptian military positions. But their presence has apparently deterred Israel from new air raids inside Egypt. The last announced raid on the Egyptian interior occurred April 13.)

### Russian Pilots Believed Told To Shoot Down Israeli Planes Over Central Egypt

The Israeli government's radio announcement today said, "The operational activity of the Soviet pilots has not extended so far to the cease-fire line and they have not been involved in air combat in this region." The announcement noted that in March the Russians began installing SAM-3 anti-aircraft missiles in Egypt manned by Soviet personnel. "Now there is a further step of Soviet operational participation at the side of Egypt in the military campaign which Egypt is waging against Israel. This involvement has already enabled Egypt to increase its aggressive acts against Israel." Israeli military sources have noted a resurgence of Egyptian military activity in the air and on the ground after a comparative lull during the winter months. While Soviet-piloted planes so far have not interfered with Israeli retaliatory air-strikes at Egyptian positions in the canal zone, their activity has freed Egyptian pilots for attacks on Israeli positions on the waterway and deep inside the Sinai peninsula.

(According to American sources all Soviet-piloted Egyptian jets have come from one air base at Ben Suef, about 60 miles south of Cairo. But other diplomatic sources have suggested that the Russians are flying out of several bases in the Nile Delta. Diplomatic sources have estimated the number of newly arrived Russian pilots at 50 to 100 and speculate that their orders are to intercept and shoot down Israeli planes over central Egypt. Such orders would be tantamount to a Soviet commitment to defend Cairo, Alexandria, the Aswan High Dam and the newly installed SAM-3 missile launching sites. Past Israeli sorties into central Egypt have been intended to demonstrate to President Gamal Abdel Nasser the vulnerability of Egyptian cities and vital targets. According to reports from "defense sources" in London, the Russians have decided to use the Middle East as a testing ground for the SAM-3s and for their new, highly sophisticated MIG-23 fighter. Up to now there have been no reports of operational MIG-23s in the area. The Russian pilots are flying the slower, short-range MIG-21, which gives credence to the theory that their mission is defensive for the time being.)

Today's Israel government statement said "The escalation of Soviet involvement in Egypt must cause concern not only to Israel but to all freedom loving peoples. This latest development is a continuation of the policies of the Soviet Union and of its consistent identification with Egyptian aggression before the Six-Day War." The statement accused Russia of supporting President Nasser's abrogation of the cease-fire and encouraging him to reject appeals by Israel and other states to reinstate it. It said Russia further encouraged Egypt to adhere to the "no's" of the Khartoum summit meeting of Arab states--No recognition, no negotiations and no peace with Israel. "Israel will continue to defend itself against all aggression which violates the cease-fire arrangements and which aims at renewal of a war in the area," the government's statement said. Premier Golda Meir said today that Israel has no intention of shooting down Soviet pilots or any other pilots but is forced to defend itself. She said war operations from Egypt forced Israel into active and preventive defense. Mrs. Meir spoke at the inauguration of a new soldiers home in Jerusalem.

Washington Said To Be Concerned That Further Soviet Intervention Will Upset Balance

(New York Times Washington correspondent James Reston said today that diplomats in the capital differed in their interpretation of the meaning of the new Soviet involvement in Egypt. "The most alarming interpretation is that the Soviets, seeing President Nixon in trouble at home and in southeast Asia, are stepping up the pressure in the Middle East while the Administration is pre-occupied elsewhere," Mr. Reston wrote. "The more moderate interpretation is that Moscow is not engaged in a major power play at all--having economic troubles and Chinese preoccupation of its own--but is merely warning the Israelis to stop their deep aerial penetrations of Egypt or risk the fire of the Soviet pilots and technicians." According to Mr. Reston, even the latter interpretation worries the Israelis lest President Nasser misjudge his power, as he did in 1967, and stumble into another war. Mr. Reston reported that Washington is concerned that if Soviet pilots go beyond their implied threat of force in Egypt to actual shooting, the Middle East balance of power will clearly be upset, a development President Nixon has committed himself to avoid. The Washington Post quoted an un-named U.S. official as saying that Israel was using the growing Soviet pressure to try to build a case for more U.S. help. "They're trying to make it our problem," the official was quoted.)

British Foreign Office: If Israeli Report Correct Mideast Faces 'Significant' Danger

(In London, the British Foreign Office declined to comment on the Israeli report. Informed sources said the reason for the declination was that the Foreign Office "had no independent evidence" on which to make a statement. According to an informed source, the unofficial view of the Foreign Office was that if the report was correct the presence of the Russian pilots "would increase significantly the danger in the area and would indicate a pressing need to step up a search for peace in the Middle East." The political editor of the (London) Evening Standard reported that the British Cabinet's assessment of the latest Mideast crisis is that Soviet Russia is not out to ensure Israel's defeat by Egypt but rather to see to it that the Egyptians are adequately equipped to maintain a military balance. The paper said the Russians have carried out a top-level take-over in Egypt, installing senior Warsaw Pact general staff officers in charge of operations sections of the Egyptian high command.)

The London Evening News said Israel's charge that Russian pilots are flying missions over Egypt is cause for serious concern. However, it added, "It must still be difficult to believe that the Russians will take the Middle East gamble to a point of military combat with Israel. The Kremlin has too much trouble along the border with China to want to become involved in a shooting war in another region and a confrontation with the U.S.A. in the Mideast would look like the last thing the Soviet Union would be promoting at this time." (New York Daily News correspondent Henry Maule reported from London today that massive Soviet economic and military aid to the Arab states is one of the major causes of Russia's present economic difficulties, which may lead to the fall of the present Kremlin triumvirate--Brezhnev-Kosygin-Podgorny--with Communist party boss Leonid Brezhnev assuming full power. According to Mr. Maule, one possible outcome would be a more accommodating attitude on settling the Middle East conflict in order to improve the economic picture at home.)

Nixon Orders Full Study Of Reports Dealing With Presence Of Russian Pilots In Egypt

WASHINGTON, April 29 (JTA)--The White House disclosed today that President Nixon had ordered an immediate and full study of intelligence reports dealing with the presence of Russian pilots in Egypt. Ronald Zeigler, White House press secretary, hinted strongly that the United States might provide additional arms to Israel if the "strategic balance" of arms has been altered. Mr. Zeigler told newsmen that "President Nixon has ordered an immediate and full review and evaluation of all intelligence reports and the implication of them on the strategic balance in the Middle East." Mr. Zeigler added that the latest reports regarding Russian operations in Egypt are "of course, of concern to the United States." He recalled that when Nixon last month rejected Israel's request for more Phantom jets "the President emphasized that the Israeli arms decision was an interim decision and the military level would be watched closely."

A high ranking American diplomat warned today that an Israeli aerial victory over Russian pilots could lead to a new all-out war in the Middle East or a direct confrontation with the United States, neither of which the Soviet Union wants. The diplomat said there are real possibilities of Israeli victories over the Russian pilots. He noted that a superpower like Russia cannot afford to be defeated by a small country like Israel and would have to retaliate in a way that would make a renewed Arab-Israeli war or a confrontation with the U.S. inevitable. He stated the U.S. would continue to press for a political solution in the Middle East while making the world aware of its commitment to prevent a Soviet political or military take over of the area. The diplomat added that it would be an invitation to disaster if the world thought that "no more Vietnams" meant that the U.S. was a "paper tiger" in the Mideast. Such notions, he said, would lure the Russians to "play the game of brinkmanship closer to the brink."

Farbstein Urges Nixon To Make Good On Pledge To Preserve Mideast Military Balance

Rep. Leonard Farbstein, Democrat of New York, sent a telegram to President Nixon today asking him to make good his pledge to "preserve the military balance in the Middle East" in the wake of the Israeli report on Soviet pilots. Mr. Farbstein, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said that he felt now was the time to sell the 25 Phantom and 100 Skyhawk jets to Israel. Mr. Farbstein wrote: "Unless the U.S. determines to make available to Israel its military needs and publicly says so, the Soviets may very well be encouraged to widen the balance in favor of Nasser."

An informed U.S. source said today that the Nixon Administration's decision not to sell Israel more Phantom jets at this time was based on Israel's qualitative superiority over the Arabs in the air, but

that factor has been changed by the introduction of well-trained Russian pilots into the picture. Officials here consider the Soviet escalation of its military role in Egypt a direct slap at President Nixon. They noted that after refusing more jets to Israel, Mr. Nixon wrote Premier Alexei N. Kosygin urging Russian cooperating to restore the cease-fire and limit arms shipments to the Mideast. According to diplomatic sources in Washington the Arab governments have maintained an official silence on the Israeli disclosure but noted that, unofficially, Arab spokesmen commented that the Israeli claim was the "most significant" since the Six-Day War and has brought the possibility of an American-Soviet confrontation much closer.

### U Thant And Tekoah At Odds Over Role Of UN In New Middle East Crisis

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., April 29 (JTA)--A United Nations spokesman said today that Secretary General U Thant had no official statement on Israeli reports that Russian pilots are flying missions over Egypt. The spokesman said the Secretary General could not comment on press reports. However Mr. Thant did issue "a general view" of the Mideast situation. He said, "So long as the relevant resolutions of the Security Council are not implemented by the parties, the situation in the Middle East will continue to deteriorate with all the dangerous consequences, including outside involvement which will inevitably follow." The "relevant resolutions" referred to by Mr. Thant included the cease-fire resolutions and the Nov. 22, 1967 resolution which called for Israeli withdrawal, peace undertakings by the Arabs and set up Jarring peace mission to the Mideast.

Ambassador Yosef Tekoah of Israel sharply criticized this statement and declared it was proof that the United Nations could not deal objectively with the Arab-Israeli conflict. "To condone outside military intervention in the Middle East conflict on any grounds whatever is a misguided attitude courting disaster," Ambassador Tekoah asserted, and added that Mr. Thant's statement "is further evidence that the United Nations is unable to view objectively the Israel-Arab conflict and to contribute constructively to its resolution."

### Israeli View: Role Of Soviet Air Force Against Israel Without Precedent Or Parallel

(In Washington, the Israel Embassy said today that "the Soviet decision to despatch what are to all intents and purposes regular units of the Soviet Air Force against Israel is without precedent and parallel" and "its significance and portent are frankly alarming." The statement, contained in an Embassy policy background analysis, observed: "It is too early, at this stage, to establish the exact parameters of the Soviet involvement. "What is clear, however, is that it is already tied to a directly correlated escalation of offensive Egyptian action on the ground and in the air." The analysis said the Soviet Union "will surely know that Israel will defend itself. The degree to which the Soviet Union will be sobered and deterred from escalating its involvement is contingent to a large extent on the degree Israel will have the wherewithal to defend itself with effect." It added: "We have reached a new crossroads in the Middle East. From this point on the question is whether and how the Soviet Union is to be checked from further escalating tensions in general and its direct involvement in particular. This will be determined by two factors: first, the military strength of democratic Israel. Second, the rallying of the enlightened international community against the emergent Soviet aggression.")

Diplomatic sources at the United Nations said today it is unlikely that the Big Four will meet in emergency session prior to their scheduled meeting May 5 to discuss the new Middle East crisis. A British source observed that the function of the Big Four talks is "not to consider every situation on the ground but to concentrate on helping (Ambassador Gunner V.) Jarring" resume his Middle East peace mission. The British source said there was no hard or fast rule about meeting between scheduled meetings and that at "two or three" previous meetings of the Big Four the question of arms limitation was discussed. Sources also expressed skepticism that the Big Four deputies would have a memorandum completed by May 5. The deputies met yesterday and will meet again tomorrow. "It is dubious that they will have a completed memorandum by next week," the British source stated.

### Eban Meets With British And French Ambassadors To Discuss Israel's Stand On Soviet Pilots

JERUSALEM, April 29 (JTA)--Israel mounted a diplomatic challenge today to the new Soviet military role in Egypt. Foreign Minister Abba Eban met separately with the British and French ambassadors to delineate Israel's stand on the presence of Soviet pilots flying Egyptian planes in aerial missions over Egypt. Mr. Eban's meetings with Ambassadors John Barnes and Francis Hure were reported to be extensions of his talk yesterday with United Nations Ambassador Walworth Barbour. Further meetings are planned with the envoys of other nations in Israel and with foreign ministry officials in world capitals, it was learned. Mr. Eban reportedly related the latest Russian escalation to the Soviet Union's role in the Four Power talks on the Mideast in New York. The Soviet Union has become an active partner in military operations on one of the sides in the Mideast dispute while continuing to present itself to the other three powers as interested in furthering peace, Mr. Eban reportedly told the ambassadors.

By so doing it has introduced a new, serious dimension into the conflict, in contrast to the other participants in the Four Power talks which have adopted the principle of non-intervention in the military aspects of the dispute, the Israeli Foreign Minister reportedly said. He reportedly observed that the latest developments have re-enforced the Israeli position dissociating itself from any diplomatic move designed to accord the Soviet Union a special standing in the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was learned that Israeli representatives abroad have been instructed to stress that the prevention of foreign intervention in the Mideast is one of the conditions of peace in the area and the independence of all nations. They have reportedly been asked to re-emphasize Israel's view that the governments of the Mideast must create and consolidate peace among themselves without dragging the Big Powers into local conflicts.

## Richardson Says Soviet Pilots In Egypt Could Lead To U.S. Reappraisal of Jets To Israel

NEW YORK, April 29 (JTA)--Under-Secretary of State Elliot L. Richardson indicated today that the confirmation of the participation of Soviet pilots on Egypt's behalf could be a sufficient unbalancing of the Middle East military situation for the United States to reconsider its admittedly temporary decision against additional jet sales to Israel. Although he at first told a news conference here that the new development "requires assessment and careful examination," Mr. Richardson said a few moments later that "on the face of it, it certainly has had an effect" on what the Nixon Administration calls the current military balance. "The increased degree of (Soviet) engagement gives reason for added concern by the United States," he added, observing that now there are "Soviet personnel in an operational capacity" in the Mideast. He did not elaborate on the development, saying it would not be "useful or desirable for me to go into specifics."

Mr. Richardson held his brief news conference immediately after addressing the Second National Convocation on the Challenge of Building Peace, held in the New York Hilton Hotel by the Fund for Peace, a three-year-old educational corporation designed to "develop a national constituency for peace." In that speech he cautioned the Soviet Union that the United States would "take notice and react" to its military involvement in the Middle East. But while warning Moscow against "stirring up a wider conflict" in the region, he indicated that the U.S. eschewed the use of its power there. "Where persuasion fails, coercion is not an acceptable option," Mr. Richardson said.

He cited no specific instance of Soviet military involvement in the Mideast, including today's reports that Russian pilots are flying missions over Egypt. He said "The Soviet Union should realize that any immediate gains it might make in attempting to take advantage of the troubled Middle East situation are far outweighed by the danger of stirring up a wider conflict." He added, "When in such an area one of us--in this case the USSR--involves itself militarily, it is inevitable that the other will take notice and react." He said that under the Nixon Administration, the U.S. is "being more exact in the delineation of those U.S. interests which, when threatened, must call for response." The Soviet speaker at the Convocation, Mikhail D. Millionshchikov, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic and Vice President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, referred only briefly to the Mideast. He said the situation there was getting "more tense." Two top Soviet diplomats scheduled to appear did not attend the Convocation. Yakov Malk, Russia's Ambassador to the United Nations, was reported ill, and the Soviet Ambassador to Washington, Anatoly F. Dobrynin, had been recalled to Moscow.

## Four Israeli Soldiers Killed, 18 Wounded, In Massive Egyptian Artillery Barrage

TEL AVIV, April 29 (JTA)--Four Israeli soldiers were killed and 18 were wounded yesterday and today in massive Egyptian artillery barrages across the Suez Canal. Three of the fatalities were inflicted yesterday and the fourth occurred this morning. The victims were identified as Lt. Haim Ben Ari, 24, of Sdeh Warburg; Corp. Zeev Rimon, 21, of Givatayim; Pvt. Yaacob Berg, 19, of Ashkelon, and Pvt. Shalom Cohen, 20, of Jerusalem. The Egyptian bombardment, described as one of the heaviest since the June, 1967 war, reached a peak at seven p.m. local time yesterday and was resumed today. A military spokesman reported that one Israeli position absorbed 1000 shells and another was hit by hundreds. According to Israeli sources, the escalation is a direct result of Soviet operational support which has freed Egyptian troops and aircraft to mount an offensive against Israeli positions. An Israeli soldier, Shlomo Hirsch, 31, was killed today in a clash with Arab terrorists near the Lebanese border north of Yuval settlement. One of the Arabs was also killed, and two Israelis were injured. Israeli planes attacked Egyptian positions and targets in the Suez Canal area and along the Gulf of Suez shores for three hours today. Israel also hit two terrorist bases on the southwestern slopes of Mt. Hermon on the Lebanese border. All planes reportedly returned safely. An Israeli Army spokesman denied an Egyptian claim that UAR soldiers had raided the Israeli-held side of the Suez Canal, attacking an Israeli patrol.

## AJ Committee Urges Sale Of Planes To Israel; Conference Of Presidents Meeting On Crisis

NEW YORK, April 29 (JTA)--The American Jewish Committee warned today that the "most recent intervention" in the Middle East--the presence of Soviet pilots in Egypt--could indicate a shift in the balance of power there. It therefore urged President Nixon to give "new and serious consideration" to the Israel government's request for authorization to buy more Phantom and Skyhawk jet planes in the United States. "Just last month, Secretary of State Rogers stated that if steps were taken that might upset the current balance of power in the Middle East, the President would not hesitate to reconsider sending additional planes to Israel," Philip E. Hoffman, Committee president, declared. "Despite the restraint shown by our government," he noted, "the Russians have chosen to escalate their penetration in the Middle East and their most recent intervention could indicate a shift in balance." A special meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations is scheduled in New York tonight to consider the situation. Dr. William Wexler, president of B'nai B'rith and president of the Conference, flew up from Washington to preside over the deliberations.

## Schumann Proposes Permanent UN Peace-Keeping Force Between Israel And Arab States

PARIS, April 29 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann proposed last night that United Nations peace-keeping forces be permanently stationed in demilitarized zones between Israel and its Arab neighbors, "not to be withdrawn without the agreement of the Security Council and without adequate forewarning." M. Schumann's proposal was made in the course of a foreign affairs debate in the French National Assembly. M. Schumann said that according to the French plan, the UN forces would be stationed along "just and lasting borders" which would be "more or less" the same borders that existed before the June, 1967 Arab Israeli war. The Foreign Minister reiterated that France believes in Israel's right to exist and its right to "just and recognized borders." However, he said, France believes this situation cannot be achieved unless Israel agrees to withdraw from the occupied territories."