

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

Tuesday, May 5, 1970

No. 85

Two Israeli Soldiers Wounded By Egyptian Gunfire; Israeli Forces Kill 21 Guerrillas

TEL AVIV, May 4 (JTA)—Israel Air Force jets attacked Egyptian military targets in the central and southern sectors of the Suez Canal zone for 45 minutes today and returned safely to their bases. Two Israeli soldiers were wounded by Egyptian gunfire in the southern section of the canal zone this morning. An Israeli policeman and a local Arab were injured when a hand grenade thrown at a car exploded in a Nablus street this morning. Security forces closed off the area and searched it for the grenade thrower. Israeli forces killed 21 El Fatah guerrillas in an ambush followed by a fierce gun-battle in the Jordan Valley last night. The action took place near Nahal Meholah. A military spokesman said the casualties were the heaviest ever inflicted on a guerrilla force in a single battle. There were no Israeli casualties.

Benjamin Kester of Chicago, an American student enrolled at an Ulpan at Tirat Zvi, suffered slight wounds in an artillery attack on the settlement last night. Mr. Kester did not require hospitalization. The gunners, believed to be Iraqis based in Jordan, fired on Israeli positions in the Beisan Valley again this morning but caused no casualties. A military spokesman describing last night's battle in the Jordan Valley said an unusually large band of guerrillas was detected crossing the river to Israel-occupied territory. An Israeli patrol opened fire at close range. Many of the guerrillas were felled by the first volley and the rest scattered in an attempt to escape. After a heavy exchange of fire, 21 bodies were found scattered over a wide area. They were wearing El Fatah uniforms. Many hand grenades, explosives, rifles and first aid kits were found near the bodies. The guerrillas were believed on a mission to commit sabotage during Israel's Independence Day celebrations next week.

Heaviest Israeli Battle Casualties In April; 31 Soldiers Killed, 660 Border Incidents

TEL AVIV, May 4 (JTA)—April was one of the costliest months for Israel in terms of battle casualties, especially on the Egyptian front, a military spokesman disclosed today. He said 31 Israeli soldiers were killed compared to 16 in March and there were 660 incidents along the Egyptian line in April compared to 516 the month before. The spokesman said that intensified fighting on all borders in recent days and increased infiltration attempts by saboteurs were due in part to the approach of Independence Day. Israel will celebrate the 22nd anniversary of its founding next Monday. Last week 17 Israeli soldiers were killed, 14 on the Suez Canal front, two along the Jordanian border and one on the Lebanese border.

The spokesman revealed that Israel Air Force jets carried out 28 attacks on Egyptian targets during April along the Suez Canal and as far as 20 kilometers inside Egypt. The deepest penetrations were at Mansour, Salahiyyeh and Helouan. There were six Egyptian air attacks on Israeli positions during the month and the Egyptians lost six planes, the spokesman said. Egyptian artillery attacks increased sharply. A number of Israeli positions absorbed as many as 1000 shells fired within an hour or an hour-and-a-half. The spokesman reported a decrease in incidents on borders other than the Suez. They were down to 380 in April compared to 474 in March.

Dr. Wexler: Immediate U.S. Arms To Israel; Dulczin: Russians In Mideast Threat To World

NEW YORK, May 4 (JTA)—The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations called on the Nixon administration today to sell Israel jets and other arms in response to the "direct involvement" of the Soviet Union in stepping up the Middle East war. Dr. William A. Wexler, chairman of the group, condemned the Soviet Union for "provocative action" in installing a network of missile bases in Egypt, dispatching thousands of troops there and "sending planes and pilots to fly operational missions in Egypt." He claimed that the USSR had thereby created a "dramatic change" in the military balance in the Middle East.

"By this action, the Soviets have not only hardened the Arab refusal to make peace but have provided the military force necessary for Egypt to undertake intensified operations," Dr. Wexler said. "Our government's pledge that it will be in a position to supply additional aircraft and other supplies to Israel if the situation requires, should be redeemed now," Dr. Wexler said. He observed that the Presidents Conference was "gratified" by President Nixon's order of an immediate and full review of intelligence reports of growing Soviet involvement in the Middle East. "We trust that an early decision to sell Israel the defense material she has requested will be forthcoming," Dr. Wexler said.

Leon Dulczin, treasurer of the Jewish Agency and Minister-Without-Portfolio in Israel's Cabinet, said today that President Nasser's answer to the "indisputable" Israel charge that Russian pilots are now operating actively in Egypt was "a Michievellian ploy to evade the issue by neither denying nor confirming it." He warned "the government and people of the United States not to underestimate this immediate development." Mr. Dulczin, here on a three week speaking tour for the United Jewish Appeal of New York, said that "The escalation of the war in the Middle East by the Russians represents a threat not only to Israel, but to the rest of the free world. Israel is not asking for soldiers, or for personal sacrifices, but for sufficient arms so that we can continue to defend ourselves. For Israel this is not a fight over borders or territories, but for the very right to existence and peace."

Stewart Turns Down Proposal That Government Raise Soviet-Pilot Issue In UN

LONDON, May 4 (JTA)--Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart reiterated today that the government is "urgently examining the prevailing (Middle East) situation in light of Israeli government claims that Soviet pilots are flying operational missions from the UAR." But he turned down recommendations made today by Labor MP Sir Barnett Janner that the government cease supplying Arab nations with arms immediately and raise the Soviet-pilot issue in the UN Security Council. Mr. Stewart, referring to his April 30 remarks on the development, replied that "I do not consider either of the courses of action proposed by you to be appropriate." Mr. Stewart, replying to a query from Labor MP Stanley Henig, said he had "no plans" for an official visit to Israel. In response to another Janner inquiry, Under-Secretary of State Maurice Foley said the government was formulating a plan for international action in cases of "violence against aircraft," to be presented at the International Conference of Airline Organizations, to be held in Montreal in June.

Israel Reported Concerned Fall Of Cambodian Regime Will Encourage Russians In Mideast

NEW YORK, May 4 (JTA)--Time magazine, in a release to the news media, reported today that an unnamed "high Israeli diplomat" has "hinted" in a statement to the magazine that the government of Israel is gravely concerned about the outcome in Cambodia fearing that the fall of the new Cambodian regime would encourage the Russians to increase their activity in the Middle East. Time quoted the diplomat as saying: "If the U.S. lets (Cambodian Premier) Lon Nol down, the Russians will conclude that the Americans have gone soft. It will also be very bad news for us." Time also reported that there is speculation Mr. Nixon intended some of his remarks in his speech to the nation on Thursday on Cambodia as a coded message to the Soviets regarding their increasingly active role in the Middle East conflict. According to Time, the speculation involves these words by the President: "Any government that chooses to use these actions as a pretext for harming relations with the United States will be doing so on its own responsibility and on its own initiative, and we will draw the appropriate conclusions." Time did not say who is speculating about the intent of this statement but noted that "the Israelis, at least, hoped" that this was Nixon's intention.

Dr. Goldmann Says U.S. Involvement In Cambodia Stymies Its Involvement In Mideast

TEL AVIV, May 4 (JTA)--Dr. Nahum Goldmann said today that American involvement in Cambodia does not make it easy for Americans to intervene in the Middle East where the Soviet role is becoming increasingly more serious. Dr. Goldmann spoke at a press conference prior to his departure for Zurich where he will attend a meeting of the European executive of the World Jewish Congress. He plans to remain in Europe for several months. The veteran Zionist leader who is president of the WJC, aroused a political storm in Israel that has not yet abated over his aborted plans to meet Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, in Cairo and his sharp criticism of the Israel government's approach to peace with the Arabs. Dr. Goldmann appeared at his farewell press conference to be more concerned over the expanded Soviet involvement in Egypt than with politics. He said he foresaw it 18 months ago but nobody can say what will happen tomorrow or the next day. He expressed the hope that America would react but added, no one can be sure because America's involvement in Cambodia made it more difficult and the Russians are taking a tougher position.

Dr. Goldmann warned Israeli youth not to misinterpret his article in the April issue of Foreign Affairs Quarterly in which he criticized the Israel government. He never said the government was against peace but questioned only its policies and methods to achieve peace, Dr. Goldmann said. He said the article expressed the "genuine ideal" of Zionism, adding, "because we are a unique nation we must have a unique character." His article was strongly denounced by the World Zionist Executive last week in a resolution disassociating itself from Dr. Goldmann's views. The Zionist leader was also the target of bitter personal attacks by some of his former colleagues. Dr. Goldmann replied today that the Zionist Executive has no authority to decide who is a Zionist and who is not and what Zionism is and what it is not. "They cannot teach me what Zionism is," he said.

ZGC: Zionism Is Jewish National Liberation Struggle; Part Of General Liberation Movement

JERUSALEM, May 4 (JTA)--The definition of Zionism as the national liberation movement of the Jewish people and part of the world-wide struggle for the liberation of mankind in general, has been adopted by the Zionist General Council's permanent committee here. According to Deputy Education Minister Aharon Yadlin, chairman of the committee, the broader definition of Zionism represents the thinking of student and youth groups which make up 50 percent of the permanent committee's membership. The question of ideology was tackled at the committee's meeting last week. The reconstituted Zionist Council will hold its second plenary session here beginning tomorrow. It hopes to avoid the polemics of its first session last year at which Zionist youth representatives created a furor by threatening a boycott unless they were given a role in the decision-making process. Some of the youngsters branded the movement obsolete and its leadership outmoded.

The decision to divide the permanent committee's membership evenly between the youth groups and their elders was an acknowledgement that the absence of a strong youth contingent would defeat the main purpose of the Zionist Council which is to link Israel and diaspora Jewry. The committee itself was established by decision of the last World Zionist Congress. It is composed of representatives of 90 organizations in Israel and claims to speak for 90 percent of the population. The basic principles of the Zionist movement were laid down at the committee meeting. They were defined as the unity of the Jewish people; the State of Israel as a center for the entire Jewish people and the "ingathering of the nation's exiles," Zionist terminology for the migration of Jews to Israel.

Mrs. Meir Declares Israel Will Not Run If Confronted By Soviet Military Intervention

LONDON, May 4 (JTA)--Premier Golda Meir of Israel declared tonight that "We won't run" if confronted with direct Soviet military intervention in Egypt. Mrs. Meir appeared on the BBC world affairs

program, "Panorama." If Israel has to fight the Russians, she said, "it is their choice, they have decided far away from their borders to join a fight that has nothing to do with them. Anybody who stands there against us and wishes to destroy us, whatever his nationality, is an enemy facing us in battle and we won't run," she said. Mrs. Meir was interviewed by Alan Hart whose provocative questions were frequently met with acerbic replies from the 72-year-old Premier. Asked by Hart if it were not Israel's "bullying" tactics that brought Russian intervention by humiliating not only the Egyptians but the Russians by destroying so much of the equipment they supplied to Egypt, Mrs. Meir replied, "Poor Russians! They gave Egypt all that hardward knowing exactly what they wanted to do with it."

She accused Russia of major responsibility for the Six-Day War, adding, "We refused to lose the war which would have meant death to this people. We fought back to stay alive." When Mr. Hart suggested that continued Israeli attacks on Egypt might lead to a Big Power confrontation in the Middle East, Mrs. Meir replied, "That may be true, but what is Israel supposed to do to avoid humiliating the Russians and Egyptians and save the Big Powers from embarrassment? Conveniently pass out of this world? If that's expected our friends had better understand that the people of Israel have no intention whatsoever to accommodate anybody by giving up its life or its sovereignty."

She said Israelis did not go to Russia to fight Russian pilots, it is Russians who are stationed in Egypt. "This is not a war fought between Russia and Israel but between Egypt and Israel and anybody on Egyptian, Jordanian, or Syrian soil who fights us, we shall fight back," Mrs. Meir said. Asked if Israel could count on American aid, Mrs. Meir said, "We don't think any country will send an army just for our survival. The problem of the Russians in the area is not only an Israeli problem. The powers will have to solve their problems themselves. What Israel asks from friendly governments are the means of self-defense."

Tekoah Scores Israelis Testifying Before UN Committee Probing Condition Of Arabs

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., May 4 (JTA)--An Israeli citizen, identified only as a member of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, will be a star witness before a special United Nations committee investigating the condition of Arab civilians in the Israel-occupied territories when it resumes hearings here June 14-21. Keith Beavan, an official of the UN Office of Public Information who accompanied the inquiry committee during its month-long tour of European and Middle East cities, told a press briefing that the Israeli had responded to an advertisement which the committee placed in several newspapers asking for witnesses. The Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights was described as an affiliate of the League of the Rights of Man in New York.

Ambassador Yosef Tekoah, Israel's chief representative to the UN claimed in a statement issued following the press briefing that "the Israelis who have chosen to appear before the committee belong to an insignificant group supporting the Arab aim of Israel's destruction as a sovereign state." Mr. Tekoah's statement added that "This type of shizophrenics is not unknown in the history of nations, including the Jewish people." He added, "The press briefing was another example of Arab propaganda of which the committee is a tool. No one who seeks an objective evaluation of the situation would attack any credence or significance to the committee's work. The fact that the world press almost completely ignores it is the best proof of that." Mr. Tekoah said, "Israel is not prepared to cooperate with this instrument of Arab belligerency." The Israel government has barred the committee from its territory because it refuses to conduct a parallel investigation of the condition of Jews in Arab countries.

Mr. Beavan said the committee expected to have its report ready some time in August when it will be presented to UN Secretary General U Thant. Mr. Thant is expected to forward it to the General Assembly for discussion. The report will contain the testimony of witnesses heard between March 30 and May 1 and the additional testimony to be taken in June. Many of the witnesses who testified did not give direct evidence but related what they had heard from second parties. Some witnesses, were discredited as paid propagandists of the Arabs or as members of Matzpen, an ultra left-wing anti-Zionist movement in Israel. A document charging Israeli maltreatment of Arabs was presented by a Syrian witness in the name of the World Council of Churches. It was promptly repudiated by the WCC.

Eytan In Jerusalem To Discuss Ways To Improve Franco-Israeli Relations

PARIS, May 4 (JTA)--Israeli Ambassador Walter Eytan has returned to Jerusalem to consult with the Foreign Ministry on French "feelers" for improving Franco-Israeli relations "in all fields" and on an Israeli decision whether to accept reimbursement of its \$50,000,000 instead of pressing for the 50 French Mirage jets it had bought. France has maintained an embargo on the planes' delivery to Israel, despite pre-payment, while selling 125 jets to Libya. (In Jerusalem it was reported that Israel has again refused a request from the French government that it accept a refund of the money deposited for the jet fighter planes. Foreign Minister Abba Eban, at a meeting last week with French Ambassador Francis Hure, renewed Israel's request for delivery of the planes but diplomatic sources were not optimistic about the prospect.

Israeli Soccer Team And New York All Stars In Match In New York On May 10

NEW YORK, May 4 (JTA)--The Israeli National Soccer team, one of the sixteen teams invited to compete in the World Cup finals in Mexico City early in June, will arrive in New York on Thursday, May 7th, where they will play the New York All Stars in an Israel Independence Day game on May 10th at Randall's Field. This is the first time, the Israel soccer team has made the World Cup finals, the Davis Cup of international soccer. The New York game, jointly sponsored by the United States Soccer Football Association and Olam Hadash Magazine, the national Hebrew children's magazine, will bring the Israeli team here for the second time. The first was three years ago. To prepare for playing in the high altitude of Mexico City, the Israeli booters spent two weeks of preparatory training in Addis Ababa playing with the Ethiopian national soccer team on their home grounds where the altitude and climate is comparable with Mexico City.

AJCongress Study Shows Taxpayers Being Tapped To Support Financing Parochial Schools

NEW YORK, May 4 (JTA)--A nationwide survey by the American Jewish Congress has found that groups seeking public funds for parochial schools are stepping up their demands to the point of asking for "parity"--the same financing for sectarian schools as for public schools. The study, made public yesterday, cited these developments: In Missouri and California, identical Federal lawsuits have been filed asking that both states be compelled to finance non-public schools with Federal, state and local tax money to the same extent as public schools and demanding that the provisions in the state constitutions forbidding the use of tax moneys for sectarian schools be declared invalid under the Federal Constitution on the ground that they discriminate unfairly in favor of public schools; in Pennsylvania, a 1968 law giving \$4.8 million in direct aid to religiously-affiliated schools was amended this year to give \$23 million for the coming school year. In Michigan, a "purchase-of-services" bill costing the state \$22 million during the first year of operation will cost \$40 million in the 1971-72 fiscal year; in Ohio, a 1969 law underwriting part of the cost of salaries of lay teachers in parochial schools will cost taxpayers \$45 million during the current school year. This amounts to \$50 for each child in Ohio's non-public schools. In New York, the Legislature passed a bill giving non-public schools public funds--amounting to \$28 million--for the first time. The declared purpose of the measure was to defray the cost of keeping attendance and other records required by the state.

In a statement commenting on the demand for "parity," the American Jewish Congress declared: "No one doubts that the public schools are in trouble today. Starved for funds, they are criticized both for being too progressive and for not moving with the times. Not infrequently they are charged with promoting racial segregation; no less frequently they are accused of failing to give sufficient recognition to the rights of minorities to distinctive cultural expression and group responsibility. Saddled with responsibility for dealing with more and more problems having little or nothing to do with education, our public schools need more funds, not more competition for public support...Private and parochial schools have a place in American education and a free society. But they have no call on the public purse for support. The 'parity' they are now demanding means the destruction of public education as we have known it in this country."

Agudath Israel Asks Jewish Groups To Drop Court Action Against State-Aid School Bill

NEW YORK, May 4 (JTA)--A call to ten Jewish organizations to drop their announced plan to bring legal action against the Mandated Services Bill which the New York State Legislature passed last month to provide limited financial assistance to non-public schools, was issued today by Rabbi Moshe Sherer, executive president of Agudath Israel of America. The organizations, which belong to PEARL, a group which opposes government aid for religious schools, were asked by Agudath Israel to "place our educational interests--the only guarantor for Jewish survival--above outworn extreme application of the church-state separation dogma to every minimal form of government support for Jewish day schools." Among the Jewish organizations to which Agudath Israel appealed to drop their announced court action are the American Jewish Congress, American Jewish Committee and B'nai B'rith. Agudath Israel has estimated that New York's Yeshivos will receive \$1.50 million annually from this Act. In his statement Rabbi Sherer declared, that the appeal to the Jewish groups stems from "Our concern (that) the 'Chilul Hashem' (desecration of God's name) caused by Jewish organizations fighting obstinately against even minimal aid to religious schools, and the flames of anti-Semitism which they are unnecessarily fanning by their widely-publicized position."

Rabbi Brickner Says Jewish Community Should Join Others In Condemning Vietnam War

NEW YORK, May 4 (JTA)--An American rabbi castigated the organized Jewish community today for "failure to join with others of the greater society" in condemning the Vietnam war and its recent expansion by the United States into Cambodia. Rabbi Balfour Brickner, director of interfaith activities of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in New York, said the failure of organized Jewry to participate in the anti-war movement "jeopardizes the credentials of the Jewish community with its own youth who reject a parochial approach to the issues of war and peace in the world." Rabbi Brickner was interviewed today by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency following his arrest in Washington, D.C. yesterday, along with 74 other clergymen and laymen who were holding an anti-war prayer service across the street from the White House. Rabbi Brickner and the others were charged with disorderly conduct and failure to move on. They were released on bail.

The Reform rabbi recited the benediction that opened the service. He did not attend as a representative of the UAHC but as a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Clergymen and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam. Rabbi Brickner said the Vietnam war and its escalation was a "life or death" issue for America and possibly the world. "It should not be considered an issue with which everybody but Jews concern themselves," he told the JTA, adding that "Jews have a tendency to view the world situation in a myopic way, through the prism of the Israeli glass." Rabbi Brickner said he rejected an analogy between support for American policies in Vietnam and Cambodia and support for Israel. He said "the failure of representatives of the Jewish community to associate themselves with those protesting the horror of escalation give truth to the lie that the two situations are analogous." Rabbi Brickner warned that this could lead Americans to say that Jews are concerned only about Israel and will give credence to the anti-Semitic canard that Jews hold dual loyalties. He did not speak for UAHC.

JFC Underwrites Dramatic New Program Aimed At College Youth

LOS ANGELES, May 4 (JTA)--An historic step to help insure the continuity of Jewish life was marked by the Jewish Federation-Council board of directors when it approved a special allocation of \$61,700 for new programs to involve Jewish youth on campuses and in the community, it was announced by Bram Goldsmith, JFC president. A pilot program, planned by JFC's Committee on College-age Youth and Faculty, will provide Jewish youth a greater identity with their background and with the community. The program was adopted after consultation with students and faculty.