8 Leningrad Jews Arrested, 50 Homes Of Jews Raided In ‘Plot’ To Hijack Soviet Plane

LONDON, June 22 (ITA)—Eight Leningrad Jews were among 21 persons who have been arrested and 56 homes of Jews in several Soviet cities were raided and searched according to reports from Moscow reaching here today. The reports said the arrests and searches may or not have been in connection with the attempt to hijack a Soviet plane at Leningrad Airport on June 15 by a group said to include some Jews who wanted to go to Israel. The hijacking attempt came to light only yesterday when correspondents found a brief account in the back page of the newspaper Leningradskaya Pravda in the Moscow public library. The newspaper is not sold in Moscow and does not accept subscriptions from foreigners. According to the account, “a group of criminals trying to seize a scheduled airplane, was apprehended.” They were not identified. (New York Times correspondent Bernard Gwertzman in a cable report from Moscow today quoting Soviet “disident sources” said one of the alleged hijackers was Mrs. Sylva Kuznetsova, Jewish, and her husband, Edward, described as “half Jewish.”) Mr. Gwertzman’s sources said Mrs. Kuznetsova was active in Riga in trying to get permission for Jews to leave for Israel. According to the Times dispatch, seven of the Jews arrested in Leningrad in their homes or at work were identified by their last names—Kaminsky, Kornblit, Chernoglas, Butman, Drezner, Yamagam and Mogiliev. The raids and searches of Jewish homes were said to have taken place in Leningrad, Riga, Moscow and Kharkov. According to the “disident sources” quoted by the Times correspondent, the Leningrad arrests and the searches were authorized by Article 64-A of the Russian Federation Criminal Code or its Ukrainian and Latvian equivalents. Article 64-A deals with treason and lists among treasonous crimes, “flight abroad.” Punishment under the article ranges from 10 years’ confinement to death, Mr. Gwertzman reported.

Two Groups Charge Arrests Of Jews, Raids, Pretense For Repressing Emigration Demands

NEW YORK, June 22 (ITA)—Two American organizations working on behalf of Soviet Jewry today condemned the arrest of eight Jews in connection with an “alleged” Leningrad plane hijacking as a “pretense” for repressing emigration demands. Rabbi Herschel Schacter, chairman of the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, said the incident has been used “as a pretext for terrorizing and harassing Soviet Jews who are known to have petitioned the United Nations as well as Soviet authorities to leave for Israel.” One of the eight arrested, he said, “has had the audacity and courage to petition Soviet authorities on 32 separate occasions to leave for Israel.” The “only known ‘crime’” of the eight, he said, “seems to have been their desire to fulfill themselves as Jews, and not being able to do so in the Soviet Union.” The Conference on the Status of Soviet Jews called the arrest part of a “nationwide campaign of terrorization” against emigration, an “ominous decision” made at “a very high governmental and security police level.” The Conference declared: “We protest and condemn this Soviet outrage.” Protest demonstrations in front of Soviet embassies in New York, Philadelphia and several other cities are being planned.

Claim U.S. Pressuring Israel For Concessions As Condition Of Jet Sale

JERUSALEM, June 22 (ITA)—Diplomatic sources here indicated today that the United States was putting pressure on Israel for certain concessions in the interest of peace with the Arabs as a condition of the sale of more American warplanes to Israel. According to these sources, this development was the subject of a top secret cabinet meeting said to have been held here yesterday. It was also allegedly responsible for the reported postponement or cancellation of a major foreign policy speech that Foreign Minister Abba Eban was said to have prepared for delivery to the Knesset today. (The Israeli Embassy in Washington told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that it has no knowledge of a cabinet meeting in Jerusalem yesterday. An Embassy spokesman said that as far as he knew Mr. Eban was scheduled to deliver a budget speech and he had no knowledge that the speech was postponed. Washington Post correspondent Stephen Klaidman reported from Jerusalem today that Mr. Eban planned to stress in his speech that Israel was willing to hold indirect talks with the Arabs, possibly through United Nations special envoy Gunter V. Jarring, before ultimate direct talks are held. The Post reporter said the Eban speech was billed as an effort to stress Israel’s flexibility in outlining Israel’s positions on a cease-fire, withdrawal from occupied territories and possible formats for negotiations.)

Diplomatic sources here said the U.S. was trying to get Israel to agree to a cease-fire with Egypt along the Suez Canal and to withdraw from the occupied territories as part of a peace settlement. Secretary of State William P. Rogers is expected to announce this week the Nixon administration’s decision on the sale of more jets to Israel. The decision, it is believed, will encompass what has been described as America’s new diplomatic initiative toward a peaceful settlement in the Mideast. (According to the Washington Post, Mr. Rogers began to lay the ground work for his new plan at a week-end meeting with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin which was attended by Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Joseph J. Sisco. That meeting was announced but, according to the Post, a Friday meeting with Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin was not. Mr. Rogers and Mr. Sisco were supposed to have met with the Israeli envoy. The Israeli Embassy in Washington has declined to confirm that such a meeting took place.)

State Department: U.S. ‘Key Allies’ To Be Notified In Advance Of Jet Sale Decision

WASHINGTON, June 22 (ITA)—The State Department said today that America’s “key allies” would be notified in advance of the Nixon administration’s decision on Israel’s request to purchase more jet planes.
Mrs. Meir Charges Soviets With Shedding Blood Of People To Establish Mideast Control

JERUSALEM, June 22 (JTA)—Premier Golda Meir made a blistering attack on Soviet Russia today. She accused the Kremlin of shedding "the blood of other peoples—Egyptians, Syrians, Israelis—it does not matter to us" in order to "establish control over the Middle East with its oil riches." Addressing the diplomatic corps at the opening of the eighth biennial convention of the World Council of Synagogues, international representative body of Conservative Judaism, the Premier charged that the USSR was "an imperialist power." She said, "Like a thief in a crowd who wants to eaves drop and yells, 'stop thief,' the Soviet Union attaches the label of imperialism to others." Mrs. Meir also categorically rejected an Egyptian offer of a cease-fire in the Suez Canal zone limited to six months or less, in return for the withdrawal of Israeli forces. "We want a cease-fire but without conditions and without a time limit," she said. She served notice that Israel would not shrink from attacking aircraft flown by Soviet pilots.

"Running away or not running away is for us not a question of prestige," Mrs. Meir said, "it is a question of our lives. We have to control the canal zone as a matter of defense. If anyone stands in our way of self-defense, we shall not run away from him," Mrs. Meir declared. The convention was warmly greeted by Minister of Religious Affairs Dr. Zerach Warhaftig. He quoted from the Midrash which says that Jerusalem is the city that united Jews. He recalled that in the days prior to the June, 1967 Six-Day War, "Our only reliable support came from our brethren throughout the world," Chaim Chiel, chairman of the United Synagogue of Israel referred briefly to the religious controversy in this country. He declared that the Conservative movement did not want to take away adherents of the Orthodox or Reform branches of Judaism in Israel but wanted to develop among those who belong to neither camp. He said halacha—religious law—was being misunderstood. The very word, he noted, means going forward, proceeding, which indicated that it was not meant to be a rigid body of law.

Eban Says Withdrawal Prior To Negotiations Would Be 'National Suicide' For Israel

NEW YORK, June 22 (JTA)—Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban said in a filmed interview last night that "Israel would be completely off its head" to agree to withdrawal from the occupied territories prior to negotiations, as demanded by the Arab states. Such a move, he said, would constitute "national suicide" for Israel. He asserted that the Arabs' unwillingness to negotiate was unprecedented and indicated it was a hindrance to peace. The Eban interview was shown on the National Educational Television series "The Advocates" as part of an hour-long pro-Israel presentation. Last Sunday the case for the Arabs included an interview with Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. Mr. Eban reiterated that Israel was prepared to make "territorial adjustments" consistent with her security in the interest of peace, as his country has "no interest in territory as such." He added, however, that at least for the time being, Israel had to retain the Golan Heights for security reasons. He suggested that the area of special concern is the Golan Heights. "The story about the destruction of Israel was "23 years too late juridically and about 2300 years too late culturally and historically." He stated that Israel would last "for as long as history lasts." The Palestinian Arabs, rather than trying to overthrow Israel, should more probably become part of "a Jordan Kingdom or Palestinian Republic," he said.

Mr. Eban criticized the UN as a "packed court" in which an Arab resolution that "the world is flat" is automatically guaranteed a bloc of more than 40 pro-Arab votes in the General Assembly. In other filmed interviews, Israeli Premier Golda Meir said Israel was prepared to negotiate as "equals" rather than as "conquerors," and Ambassador to the United States Yitzhak Rabin said Israeli forfeiture of the cease-fire lines would be "almost suicide." In a live studio interview in Los Angeles, Gen. Y. Harkabi, former chief of Israeli military intelligence and now of the Hebrew University, said President Nasser's conciliatory remarks the previous Sunday did not square with his "no peace, no negotiation" posture at home. In another live interview, pseudonymous El Fatah leader "Abu Omar" said terrorist killings could stop only if the Palestinians "capitulate". He said his aim was not the destruction of the Jews but the "destruction of a system," "Abu Omar" alleged that Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan had denounced the cease-fire, and praised him for "moral integrity and intellectual honesty." But Gen. Harkabi asserted that "We have committed ourselves to the Security Council resolution." A studio poll following the program showed 48 favored less American military aid to Israel, 41 favored more, and 11 did not vote. Prior to the first program last week, 39 favored less aid, 31 favored more, and 50 did not vote.

Christian Denominations Differ On Attitudes Toward Israel And Zionism

AMSTERDAM, June 22 (JTA)—Differences of opinion over Israel among various Christian denominations in Holland emerged here today. The executive of the Dutch chapter of "Pax Christi," a Roman Catholic organization headed by the liberal Cardinal Bernard Alfrink, published a statement attacking Israel and Zionism. But an important Catholic newspaper, De Tijd, criticized the statement and the Protestant Synod, by a 38-10 vote, adopted a favorable report on the Jewish people and expressed its support for Israel. The "Pax Christi" statement said Israel's Law of Return should be abolished and the right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes should be acknowledged by Israel; the Palestinians should in turn recognize the existence of a Jewish entity in the Middle East.
U Thant Sees New Elements In U.S., USSR That Could Help Narrow Gap In Mideast Talks

UNITED NATIONS, June 22 (TJA)--A possible breakthrough in Middle East peace talks between the United States and the Soviet Union was reported here today. A spokesman for the United Nations said that Secretary General U Thant, during his visit last week in Moscow, "was informed of new elements in the United States and the Soviet Union positions regarding the Middle East." The spokesman said that Mr. Thant "feels that these new elements could narrow the gap" between the two major powers. The spokesman said Mr. Thant's view of this development was obtained during his talks with high Soviet officials and from a "message from the United States embassy in Moscow." Asked where the message had originated, the spokesman said, "I believe from the State Department." (A State Department spokesman in Washington declined today to comment on the "message and "new elements.""") There was no immediate indication of what was in the message or the content of the talks between Mr. Thant and Soviet officials, other than that the talks concerned the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Mr. Thant, during his visit to Moscow, also met with his special Mideast peace envoy, Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring who is the Swedish Ambassador to the Soviet Union. Informed sources at the UN said it was unlikely that Dr. Jarring would resume his peace mission in the immediate future. The Big Four meetings in New York have failed to produce a guideline for Dr. Jarring to resume his mission. Without such a guideline a peace mission would prove fruitless.

Informed sources, however, noted that several developments in the past two weeks may have served to pave the way toward narrowing the gap between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. A basic consideration appears to be a fear on the part of both big powers of an extremist takeover of the guerrilla movements which would undermine both American and Russian positions in the Middle East. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine headed by Dr. George Habash, has proclaimed as its aim the overthrow of both the Arab regimes and Israel. Dr. Habash is avowedly anti-American and only luke-warm toward the Soviet Union, preferring instead, the more extremist regime of Communist China. Another basic consideration that might bring the two major powers closer in their willingness to discuss is America's willingness to take the initiative to defuse the Mideast crisis by a more direct approach to Egypt, by hard bargaining with the Soviet Union, and by selling only a limited number of jets to Israel. (Circles in Washington this weekend, noted that the meeting Saturday between Secretary of State William P. Rogers and Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin was held at the initiative of the U.S.) Charles W. Yost, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, in his appearance yesterday on television's "Meet the Press!" program replied that more will be heard within the next few days regarding U.S. initiatives. "But the immediate effort will be to get Ambassador Jarring restarted on his negotiating mission," Mr. Yost told his interviewers.

Israeli Planes Attack Terrorist Bases On Mt. Hermon; Three Israeli Soldiers Killed

TEL AVIV, June 22 (TJA)--Israeli planes attacked Arab terrorist bases for half an hour today on the Mount Hermon slopes east of the Hatzbani River in southeast Lebanon. Israeli flyers also hit Egyptian positions along the Suez Canal for the 32nd straight day. All planes returned safely. Israeli and Egyptian forces vied with artillery and mortars across the Suez Canal last night. Israeli gunners scored a direct hit on an Egyptian mortar position in the canal's southern sector this morning and set it afire. Israel suffered three casualties over the week-end. In addition to Ptv. Chaim Rosenbaum, whose death was announced yesterday, Egyptian barrages Saturday night claimed the lives of Pts. Benzion Reuben, 19, of Even Sapir village and Ron Kislev, 19, of Raanana.

A military spokesman said Egyptian forces were changing their tactics to adapt to the continuing Israeli aerial bombardment of their positions along the Suez Canal line. He said they now concentrate their fire at a specific point on the Israeli side of the waterway and then shift to another point. Israeli authorities today returned to Egypt the bodies of eight Egyptian soldiers killed in two raids on the Israeli side of the canal last month. They were returned at Ismaeliah through the auspices of the International Red Cross. In Jordan, El Fatah today admitted hurling the grenade and firing the shots that missed a tourist bus in Hebron yesterday, inadvertently wounding two Arabs. The commando group also took credit for the Kataysha rocket attacks yesterday on Belsen and Daganaya in the North Jordan Valley. The announcement was made by a spokesman for the Palestinian Armed Struggle organization.

Dayan: Rabbi Goren Did Not Violate Military Regulations By Officiating At Conversion

TEL AVIV, June 22 (TJA)--Gen. Moshe Dayan, Israel's Defense Minister, today defended Chief Army Chaplain Rabbi Shlomo Goren against charges that he had violated military regulations by officiating at the conversion of a civilian, Mrs. Helen Zeidmann, here last week. In a letter published in Hatzofe, the religious daily, Gen. Dayan said that while military regulations prohibit extracurricular work by Army personnel, the conversion of Mrs. Zeidmann could not be regarded as work and Rabbi Goren received no payment. Gen. Dayan said that while the conversion may have provoked political consequences it was in itself a religious, not a political act.

$500,000 To UJA's Israel Education Fund; $400,000 To American Technion Society

NEW YORK, June 22 (TJA)--A gift of $500,000 to the Israel Education Fund of the United Jewish Appeal, has been announced by Charles J. Bensley, president, and Dr. Aryeh Neshur, executive director. The gift, made by Mr. and Mrs. Alan H. Ginsburg of Lansing, Michigan, has been earmarked for the construction of a multi-stage nautical school in Ceasarea, Israel. A major advance in the computer science program at the Technion--Israel Institute of Technology will be made possible by a gift of $400,000 from Henry and Joseph Taub of Clifton, New Jersey to the American Technion Society. Jacob Walter Ullmann, president of the Society, said the gift will enable the construction of an enlarged computer facility at Technion City, in Haifa. The new facility will be named "The Taub Computer Center."
AJ Congress Urges U.S. Army To Stop Using Religious Appeals To Troops In Vietnam

NEW YORK, June 22 (JTA)—The American Jewish Congress called on the Army today to stop using religious appeals to troops in Vietnam "as a means of advancing the goals of the state in carrying on the war in Indo-China." In a letter to the Department of the Army, George Soll, chairman of the Congress' Commission on Law and Social Action, rejected an Army spokesman's explanation of a Vietnam commander's Easter message to his troops that compared U.S. intervention in Vietnam with "Christ's own struggle to obliterate evil in the world." Mr. Soll said it was "highly improper for a military or other government official to take on the role of interpreting the significance of religious tradition." The AJ Congress first wrote to Army Secretary Stanley R. Resor on May 1 to protest a message to his troops in the field from Major General E.B. Roberts of the First Cavalry Division (Airmobile) asserting that "Pastors...the promise of immortality...exemplified by the resurrection of Jesus Christ nearly 2000 years ago...can sustain you in your most trying moments."

In a reply to the AJ Congress dated June 8, Colonel C.P. Benedict, chief of the Army's Personnel Services Division, defended the Easter message on the ground that the same commander had also distributed a Passover message. The Passover message drew a "parallel" between the deliverance of the Jewish people from "the slavery of the evil Egyptian Pharaoh" and "your current lives where you and your government are engaged in a struggle to assist a nation of people in its deliverance from an equally evil force." Although the AJ Congress was unaware of the Passover message at the time of its protest on the Easter message, Mr. Soll wrote Colonel Benedict in a letter dated June 17 that such a message was equally objectionable. Noting that "there are many Jews who would differ with General Roberts' interpretation of the Passover tradition," Mr. Soll wrote: "What is most disturbing is that General Roberts, and apparently the War Department, are prepared to use religion, both Christian and Jewish, as a means of advancing the goals of the state in carrying on the war in Indo-China." He added, "The messages, no matter how well intended, were an attempt to 'employ religion as an engine of civil policy.' In both aspects, they were violative of the command of the First Amendment."

JDC Assisted 323,000 Individuals in 25 Countries At Cost Of $23,832,000 In 1969

NEW YORK, June 22 (JTA)—The Joint Distribution Committee assisted 323,000 men, women and children in 25 countries at a cost of $23,832,000 last year, it was reported here by Samuel L. Haber, the agency's executive vice-chairman. A report released yesterday by the JDC stated that its program concentrated on Europe, North Africa and Israel. The agency said it was shut out of the Arab countries, but operates in Rumania and Yugoslavia where it assists more than 16,000 Jews in these two countries. Expenditures in Europe accounted for more than a third of the allocations, with about 175,000 Jews being assisted. In the Moslem countries, which accounted for nearly one-fifth of the 1969 budget, the JDC program aided almost 45,000 individuals, mostly children and young people. Its programs in Israel are carried out in institutions devoted to ill and elderly immigrants. The JDC reported it has been able to operate with little hindrance in Iran, Tunisia and Morocco. Mr. Haber reported that thousands of Polish Jews who were forced to flee their country after the Six-Day War have received help from the agency. He added that the needs "of tens of thousands of aged, ill and needy Jews" in other East and West European countries remains "just as compelling" today. Louis Broido, JDC chairman, stated in his introductory message to the report, that "1969 continued to be a year of anguish for Jews in need throughout the world."

Jewish ALD Of B'nai B'rith Praises Volpe For Stopping Funds On Road Leading To Smith Shrin

NEW YORK, June 22 (JTA)—The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith today commended U.S. Secretary of Transportation John Volpe for stopping the expenditure of federal funds on a road project leading to a shrine operated by "the notorious anti-Semite, Gerald Smith" in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Mr. Volpe announced today that after reviewing the proposal he had withheld approval because the expenditure of the required federal funds "was not supported by the road service that would be provided." After announcement of the federal grant was made last December the ADL sent a telegram to President Nixon urging him to direct Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans and Transportation Secretary Volpe to withdraw government financing. The Eureka Springs project includes a seven story high statue of Christ, a "Passion Play" and a "Christian Only" art center. Only with the Foundation. The League, which maintains a regional office in the area, was particularly critical of the Smith-Sem version of the "Passion Play" which it said conveys the message that the Jews as a people are guilty of detestable.

Dr. Cecil Roth, Authority On Jewish History, Dies Of Cancer At The Age Of 71

JERUSALEM, June 22 (JTA)—Dr. Cecil Roth, regarded as the outstanding contemporary authority on Jewish history, died here of cancer yesterday at the age of 71. At the time of his death Prof. Roth was engaged in the publication of a new Encyclopedia Judaica of which he became editor in 1965. He said then that it would encompass "the totality of Jewish knowledge and scholarship." The encyclopedia will be released shortly. Dr. Roth was born in London and received his Ph.D. from Oxford University, where he was a reader in Jewish studies from 1939 to 1964. His first published work was on the Florentine Republic but afterwards he concentrated on Jewish history, publishing hundreds of articles and more than 30 books, including "The History of the Jews in Venice," "The History of the Marranos," "A Short History of the Jewish People," "Life of Benjamin Disraeli" and "Personalities and Events in Jewish History." In 1965 he published "The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Historical Approach," in which he challenged the assumption by other scholars that they were the work of the Essenes, a pacifist pre-Christian sect of Judaism. Dr. Roth contended that the scrolls were produced by the Sicarii Zealots, a warlike sect that led the Jewish revolt against Rome in A.D. 66. Dr. Roth lived most of his life in Britain, but after leaving Oxford he divided his time between Jerusalem and New York, where he taught at Queens College and, during the past year, at the Stern College for Women of Yeshiva University. He once said that he considered it his greatest achievement to include the late Winston Churchill on a list of the first 500 persons to be arrested when they landed in Britain.