

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

Thursday, July 30, 1970

No. 146

Cabinet Meets But Fails To Resolve Deadlock Created By Gahal Opposition To U.S. Plan

JERUSALEM, July 29 (JTA)--Israel edged toward a cabinet crisis today as the Meir government pressed the rightist Gahal faction to cancel its threat to quit the three-year-old coalition if the government accepts the United States peace initiative in its present form. Meanwhile, the Knesset defeated today by a large majority a motion by the ultra-rightist Free Center splinter party to place the U.S. proposals on the agenda with a view toward rejecting them. MK Uri Avneri, head of the leftist Haolam Hazeh-Koah Hadash, spoke out, on the other hand, for acceptance. At the request of deputy coalition chairman Israel Kargman of the Labor Alignment, the motion was postponed pending a governmental decision on the plan. The three Herut and three Liberal Ministers of Gahal, which holds 26 of the 120 Knesset seats, emerged late last night from a heated five-hour caucus in apparent adamancy against the U.S. plan. Herut's Ezer Weizman, Minister of Transport and Communications, a leading hard-liner who is reportedly moderating his opposition, told newsmen after the caucus that "we are already 95 percent outside." Another Minister said, "We may have to resign from the government." Several head-on verbal clashes were said to have taken place between Herut leader Menachem Beigin and Liberal Aryeh L. Dultzin, with Mr. Dultzin leaning toward acceptance and Mr. Beigin declaring, "This is no initiative for peace, but for Israel's destruction." The apparent Herut-Liberal factionalism within Gahal last night contradicted earlier reports of substantial agreement among the six Ministers on opposition to the initiative.

The cabinet met for two hours this morning, but could not resolve its deadlock and put off further deliberations until tomorrow. The meeting was held in camera, but it is known that Foreign Minister Abba Eban presented a report on the situation and that the government sought to gain at least one more day's time in which to persuade Gahal to come along. The cabinet meeting was preceded by an inconclusive conference between Gahal and a group of Labor Party Ministers. Gahal was to meet again tonight with the four Laborites--Minister of Justice Yaacov Shimshon Shapiro, Minister of Finance Pinhas Sapir and Ministers-Without-Portfolio Shimon Peres and Israel Galili. They were to convene at the Justice Ministry bureau, in an attempt to iron out intra-coalition differences and preserve governmental unity. On another front, activist circles of the National Religious Party stated that the NRP platform in last year's elections included clauses advocating Israeli settlement in the occupied Arab territories. That position, they said, cannot square with an affirmative NRP reply to the American proposals, which calls for Israeli withdrawal from such areas. The NRP holds the Ministries of Religious Affairs, Social Welfare and Interior, although the latter has been vacant since the recent death of Haim Moshe Shapiro. The party has 11 Knesset seats.

The opposition of the nationalistic Gahal to any Israeli withdrawal was mirrored in its campaign slogan last year: "Indivisibility of the Homeland." It is true that Gahal has remained in the coalition despite Premier Golda Meir's recent declaration in the Knesset that Israel endorses United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. But, a Gahal spokesman explained today, "The Security Council resolution speaks of withdrawal to 'secure and recognized' borders. In our view such borders are identical with the present cease-fire lines. We can live with that resolution as long as our interpretation is not challenged." The dominant Labor Party is, indeed, attempting to challenge that interpretation in order to maintain unity. To that end, it was reported by the newspaper Yediot Aharonot, Labor is prepared to offer Gahal the opportunity of abstaining from the vote on the U.S. plan. It is doubtful that Gahal, or at least its Herut membership, would accept such an offer, with the withdrawal issue such a cardinal point in the party's program. But a split between Herut and the Liberals on the issue is by no means being ruled out.

Dayan Seen Favoring U. S. Plan; France Backs U. S. Plan To Support De-Escalation Of Violence

Meanwhile, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan's remark last night in Tel Aviv that "we are not strong enough to permit ourselves to give up even one friendship" was seen as evidence that he favors acceptance of the U.S. plan. "If gaining friendship requires compromises," he told a student group, "we have to do it." Gen. Dayan scotched reports that he was thinking of resigning if the government accepted the U.S. initiative, which does not specifically guarantee Israeli retention of the Golan Heights and other areas deemed essential by him for national security. Despite his apparent acceptance, however reluctantly, of the initiative as a major means of assuring continuation of American support for Israel, Gen. Dayan said last night that Israel is sufficiently strong not to have to accept proposals "enforced on us" by either allies or enemies. "We are strong enough to back our position," he said. "We are not doomed to be broken. We have equipment, manpower and technology."

(In Washington, Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's ambassador to the U.S., met again yesterday afternoon in Washington with Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. No details of the meeting were disclosed, although the Ambassador, who asked for both this and Monday's meeting, presumably was seeking additional "clarifications" of the administration's terms for a temporary Middle East cease-fire. Mr. Sisco met this morning with the Swiss ambassador as part of "a regular review of Middle East developments," according to a State Department spokesman. He also met this morning with the French ambassador, but the nature of their talks was not divulged.) (Late today, the Pompidou government formally backed the U.S. initiative at a cabinet meeting in the Elysee Palace. President Georges Pompidou said his government felt it had to "support the processes of de-escalation of violence, especially in the Middle East.")

Israel Press Emphasizes Need For Unity And For Collective Responsibility

JERUSALEM, July 29 (JTA)--Editorials in the Israeli press today emphasized the necessity for unity. Davar, the Histadrut paper, said a Gahal split "would be an uncalled for and purposeless move," adding, "At this early stage of the American peace initiative there are no grounds for breaking the national unity framework. On the contrary, there is every reason for collective responsibility." Haaretz, which is non-partisan, said there was "no justification" for splitting the coalition "at this time." Although, it said, "most cabinet ministers are unhappy with the dilemma facing the government, nor do they believe that an affirmative reply to the Rogers plan would lead to a settlement," nevertheless "the Ministers realize that tactical considerations now necessitate an essentially positive response." Haaretz added: "As long as it is clear to the government where it is headed, there is no point in depriving it of freedom to maneuver."

Hatzofeh (NRP) stated: "Agreement at this stage to the Rogers plan is far from being the end of the road in the struggle for peace. All indications are that this is merely the beginning of a new and continuous struggle. It is therefore incumbent upon Israel to retain the national unity achieved with such difficulty on the eve of the Six-Day War." Al Hamishmar, representing leftist Mapam thought, declared that "precedence must be given to true concern for Israel's security and her standing among nations." Hamodia (Agudat Israel) warned that "political definitions must not be allowed to create the impression that it is Israel who is blocking peace." It added: "Israel desires true peace and must do everything to secure such peace by any means whatsoever, even if one or the other body is dissatisfied." Omer (Histadrut) said a Gahal defection would be "a grave mistake," observing, "The adoption of a version which would be a positive reply to the Rogers plan would constitute a diplomatic move aimed at extricating Israel from a difficult diplomatic situation."

Dr. Wexler; U.S. Must Be Firm With Arabs, Soviets; Arab Spokesman: Oil Is Primary

WASHINGTON, July 29 (JTA)--The B'nai B'rith and the American-Arab Association for Commerce and Industry agreed today that a Mideast peace is necessary to world peace and important to keep Europe and Japan from having to give in to the Communists in order to keep their oil supplies from drying up. That was all they agreed on, however, at the fifth hearing of the Near East Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Charles C. Bonin, president of the American-Arab Association for Commerce and Industry, outlined for the Committee the economic interests of American corporations in the Arab countries, and warned that one cannot do business with someone who is an enemy. He refused to comment on what he called the "political and military" issues of a peace settlement or the possibility of war. Although he said he personally would not like to see Israel cease to exist, he refused to commit his membership of 120 firms to that position. Dr. William A. Wexler, president of B'nai B'rith, said that the U.S. had to take the chance of continuing to alienate the Arabs until they believe that America will stand behind her words.

"There comes a time when, for survival of our country, survival of world peace, we are going to have to become a little more firm in our position," Dr. Wexler declared. He told the Committee that if the U.S. cannot protect Israel against Soviet imperialistic designs "that fan out far beyond the Middle East itself," it may be "the beginning of the end for the free world." He said the solution to the conflict could be if the Soviet Union "could be persuaded that the drive for expulsion of Western influence from the Middle East is too risky and unlikely to succeed, and if the Soviet Union would accept its current important influence as sufficient for its defensive needs." Dr. Wexler said the current U.S. peace initiative was "not by itself enough." He said Israel had to be assured of arms from the United States in case the cease-fire is violated, and the Soviet Union's role in Egypt had to be strictly delineated and decreased. He also warned that a cease-fire or peace talks that do not have agreement from the Iraqis and the Arab guerrillas were neither a cessation in fighting nor a step towards a settlement of the hostilities.

Fisher Expresses Confidence American Friendship For Israel Will Not Change

DETROIT, July 29 (JTA)--Max M. Fisher, a national Jewish leader and one of President Nixon's closest advisers, expressed confidence today that the American position of friendship for Israel will not change and that the Nixon administration will adhere to established policies which have been emphasized by the President and his closest advisers in a spirit of absolute protection for Israel. "I am certain Israel's position will be helped by what is proposed and that the President and his associates will make retention of Israel's friendship and security a matter of priority for the present administration" Mr. Fisher said.

Guerrilla Bases In Jordan, Egyptian Positions Hit By Israeli Jets

TEL AVIV, July 29 (JTA)--Israeli jets struck at guerrilla bases in Jordan and Egyptian military positions along the Suez Canal area today and yesterday military spokesmen announced today. Fighter bombers crossed the Jordan River at noon today to blast three guerrilla bases south of Jarash in Northern Jordan in reprisals for guerrilla raids. The bases were 15 to 25 miles inside Jordan. Earlier today and last night Egyptian fortifications, artillery and mortar emplacements in the northern and central sectors of the canal were attacked. All planes returned safely. An Israeli soldier was injured by Egyptian firing across the canal last night. The fire was returned. A Jordanian Army spokesman announced that 12 civilians, including a baby, were injured by a mine explosion on a main road this morning. He said the mine had been placed by an Israeli unit which crossed the Jordan in the Tel Al-Sukkar area of the North Jordan Valley about midnight. Meanwhile, Israeli spokesmen denied a Beirut report that Israeli and Russian pilots had clashed over the Suez Canal on Saturday with the loss of an Israeli Skyhawk. He said no Israeli planes were shot down on Saturday.

Jarring Ready To Resume Mission If Israelis, Arabs Observe Cease-Fire Or Big Four Agree

UNITED NATIONS, July 29 (JTA)--Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring was described today by United Nations Under-Secretary Dr. Ralph J. Bunche as "on the alert" to resume his Middle East peace mission as soon as Secretary General U Thant feels there is a basis for the resumption. The basis, Dr. Bunche told a press conference would be either an agreement by the Israelis and Arabs to observe the cease-fire as spelled out in the UN Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967, or if the Big Four would arrive at some agreement which Mr. Thant would consider "positive." Dr. Bunche neither confirmed nor denied a report today from diplomatic sources in London that Dr. Jarring plans to begin his mission next month if Israel joins Egypt and Jordan in accepting the United States peace plan. "Jarring is ready to go to work on our end of things whenever called upon to do so," Dr. Bunche said. Noting that only Mr. Thant could advise his special peace envoy when to resume his mission, Dr. Bunche added he "had no doubt" that Dr. Jarring is "constantly on the alert" for word from Mr. Thant and would come to the UN headquarters "within hours" if Mr. Thant requested him to do so.

So far, however, "the Big Four talks have not produced anything yet to convince the Secretary General that there is a basis for deciding to tell Jarring to reactivate his work," Dr. Bunche said. He added that the Secretary General's office was in daily touch with the Swedish peace envoy who is currently vacationing near Copenhagen. Referring obliquely to Mr. Thant's "no comment" stance on the U.S. peace plan, Dr. Bunche stated that this was due to Mr. Thant's feeling that it is "premature to comment at this time." The Under-Secretary said that the peace plan had been submitted to Jerusalem, Cairo, Amman and the Soviet Union and that copies of the plan had been submitted to both Dr. Jarring and Mr. Thant in Moscow "for information purposes." Dr. Bunche noted that "no response was requested or required from the Secretary General. Response was expected from the parties. Some of the parties have responded (Egypt and Jordan) and one (Israel) did not. If the parties agreed to something," Dr. Bunche continued, "the role of the UN would be easy and Jarring would be unlikely to be negative toward something the parties agreed to. Of course, if the parties do not agree the task is difficult." Dr. Bunche also stated that the UN stands ready to do "whatever is necessary for peace keeping and observance of the cease-fire" and "will deliver without delay."

Egypt's Jews In New Exodus; Aided By French, Spanish Governments; 1800 Emigres Since 1967

PARIS, July 29 (JTA)--Eighteen hundred Jews have been permitted to leave Egypt since the Six-Day War through the diplomatic intervention of the French and Spanish governments, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency has learned. The 73 permitted to leave so far this year were the last Jewish prisoners in Egypt. All or virtually all left with French passports. Thirty-six non-prisoners also left this year. Last year, 137 prisoners and 357 others were granted visas. There are 900 to 1,000 Jews still in Egypt, it was reliably reported, with only six or eight of them and Chief Rabbi Haim Dueg choosing not to leave. Most of the 1,800 emigres over the past three years have already been resettled by United HIAS Service and other agencies in Western Europe, the United States, Canada and Latin America, it was also learned. The Nasser government, which was said to have allowed the emigration as a humanitarian and conciliatory gesture, reportedly sought no publicity on its action so as not to anger more militant Arab nations. The French government mediated the releases during the presidencies of Gen. Charles de Gaulle and Georges Pompidou, neither of whom has been considered pro-Israel by Israelis.

The Jewish population in Egypt has dwindled from 70,000 after World War II to 14,000 in 1958, 2,700-2,800 in June, 1967, and now 900-1,000. There are believed to be less than 4,500 Jews in Syria and less than 2,500 in Iraq. Not only has their freedom in those lands been curtailed, but Iraq has publicly hanged Jews for no apparent reason other than their Jewishness. In Lebanon, where Jews have not met with repression, they have reportedly been emigrating constantly nevertheless in recent years. During that period, the Jewish population in Lebanon has dropped from 7,000 to 1,000 and its only rabbi has been thinking of leaving himself. The most recent wave of secret Jewish emigration from Egypt--80 inmates of Turah Prison, near Cairo--was affected by French Ambassador Francois Puaux during June 13-29, it was learned. The 80, said to be Egyptian citizens, were the last prisoners of the 400 arrested in June, 1967, and reportedly had to give up that citizenship in return for their freedom. The other 320 were released intermittently between June, 1967 and June, 1969. The American Joint Distribution Committee said almost a year after the Six-Day War that 800 Jews had left Egypt during that period and 23,400 from other Arab countries exclusive of Syria and Iraq. Elements of the study of the new Egyptian exodus have been reported sporadically by American and European news agencies during the past week.

Report That Palestinian Guerrillas Trained In Prague By Russian, East German Experts

PARIS, July 29 (JTA)--Large numbers of Palestinian terrorists are being trained by Russian and East German experts in Prague, reports today's "Le Figaro" in a detailed dispatch from its Vienna correspondent. The usually reliable French paper says that the Palestinians, carrying Egyptian passports, arrive in Prague in groups of some 30 to 40 men. They are first housed in a building situated in the Devyce area of the city near the Chinese embassy where they are given theoretical instructions in sabotage action. Their instructors, placed under the orders of Russian Major Grigoriev, are mainly Russian and East German. The translators attached to the base are former German Nazis who had found refuge in Egypt after the Second World War and thus speak Arabic. After a six to eight week stay in Prague, the trainees are taken to a camp situated near the city Kosice in Slovakia where they spent some four months undergoing practical training in sabotage, bomb manipulation, grenade throwing, mining and close combat. The French paper reports that the plans for the training had probably been arranged by El Fatah leader Yasir Arafat during his recent visit to Moscow.

Alternate Side Of The Street Parking In N.Y. Suspended On All Major Jewish Holidays

NEW YORK, July 29 (JTA)—A bill requiring suspension of alternate side of the street parking regulations in New York City on all major Jewish holidays was signed into law today by Mayor John V. Lindsay. The city has suspended for many years application of the alternate side parking regulations on major religious and public holidays but this has been done as an administrative practice. The measure provides that the parking bans, arranged to allow street cleaning by city crews, will not be applied on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two and last two days of Succot, the first two and last two days of Passover and Shavuot. In addition to public holidays, the ban also is lifted for Christmas and Easter. In signing, the Mayor said that on the religious holidays "a great number of people stay home or do not use their automobiles for religious reasons." The new law will prevent such administrative errors as that which occurred two years ago when dozens of Jews found their parked cars ticketed for violation of the ban on Shavuot. At the intervention of the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA), the summonses were dismissed. The summonses carry penalties of up to \$25 for each offense. Julius Berman, COLPA president, testified at the public hearing called by the mayor prior to signing the measure into law. Mr. Berman said the legislation demonstrated that the city administration was concerned about the needs of all groups in the city, including observant Jews.

Rabbis To Conduct Special Services To Call Attention To Plight Of Soviet Jews

LOS ANGELES (July 29) (JTA)—Southland rabbis will call attention to the plight of Jews in the Soviet Union during religious services on the weekend of August 7 at the urging of the Southern California Board of Rabbis and the Commission on Soviet Jewry of the Jewish Federation-Council of Los Angeles. All congregants will be asked to participate in the special services. The groups said that ominous developments in Russia, such as the recent wave of arrests of Jews in Riga and Leningrad, are responsible for the action. Among those arrested have been Jews who petitioned to leave the USSR for Israel. Rabbi Max Nussbaum, president of the Board of Rabbis, explained that Aug. 7 was chosen because it precedes by four days the Jewish fast day of Tisha B'av, mourning the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. "We cannot afford a new Tisha B'av of the cultural genocide of a fifth of world Jewry," Dr. Nussbaum said. "We must let the world know about the oppression and persecution going on within Soviet borders." He said that many persons have indicated they will extend the Tisha B'av fast—a hunger strike—to demonstrate their alliance with fellow Jews in Russia.

Cyrus Levinthal, chairman of the Commission on Soviet Jewry of JFC's Committee on Community Relations, also pointed out that the Moiseyev Dance Ensemble of the Soviet Union will open an engagement at the Shrine Auditorium on August 7. "While this group epitomizes cultural freedom," Levinthal said, "the Jews in Russia are experiencing genocidal cultural repression. It is anticipated that a number of people will indicate their concern for Soviet Jewry on opening night of the Moiseyev Dancers." However, Mr. Levinthal said, the Commission on Soviet Jewry concurs with the national policy of the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry opposing any activity inside the theatre or any disruptive actions outside the theatre. "Such actions are considered counter-productive to the goals of the Jewish community in helping Soviet Jewry," Mr. Levinthal said.

Rabbi Brickner Reports There Is A Growing And Active Peace Movement In Vietnam

NEW YORK, July 29 (JTA)—Rabbi Balfour Erickner, director of the Commission on Interfaith Activities of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations who recently returned from a trip to Vietnam under the sponsorship of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, reported today that a "burgeoning peace movement" is "alive everywhere" in Vietnam and is supported by all ranks of the citizenry. A long-time critic of American involvement in the Vietnamese war, Rabbi Brickner said President Nguyen Van Thieu and Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky are well aware of the growing peace movement. "Hence," he said, "they declare that anyone calling for an immediate peace will be considered a friend of the communists and all powers of the government and the law would be arraigned against such persons." Rabbi Brickner declared that those involved in the peace movement are "as militantly anti-communist as they are anti-Thieu-Ky," and that their desire is not so much a quick withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam as it is a withdrawal of U.S. support of the Thieu government. Withdrawal of American support from the present Saigon government, he said, would give the "repressed forces for peace" in South Vietnam the opportunity to "surface and form the kind of political force which will make a viable peace possible."

Rabbi Brickner also reported that his group, joined by Australians, New Zealanders and Dutchmen who also visited Saigon to investigate the Vietnamese peace movement, had visited Con Son Island with its infamous "tiger cages" and had participated in a student peace protest which was tear-gassed by the Saigon Security Police. "The incongruity of America providing tear gas to the Saigon police for use by that force to repress such basic civil rights and freedom to assemble and the right of free speech, was not lost on the Saigon students," Rabbi Brickner stated. "They wonder how a government that invades another country, in order to impose freedom and democracy, permits the repression of the very freedoms and democracies it is there to protect." Rabbi Brickner said that all efforts to meet with Saigon officials were futile, and that appointments were set and later cancelled for one reason or another. The group did meet briefly, he said, with Assistant U.S. Ambassador Samuel Berger and that his response "to our question about U.S. complicity on the matter of prisons in Vietnam was a closed and typically guarded reply."

Lubavitcher Students Will Visit Hundreds Of Jewish Communities During Summer

NEW YORK, July 29 (JTA)—For the 22nd consecutive summer more than 100 senior Rabbinical students of the Lubavitcher Yeshiva in New York will visit hundreds of Jewish communities in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Latin America, to bring the message to Jews that Torah-true Judaism should be their way of life. This "Jewish Peace Corps," created by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, is designed to reach out to seemingly isolated Jewish communities and individuals, to offer them some insight into their heritage.