

JTA daily news bulletin

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc. 660 First Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

Contents copyright: Replication only by previous arrangement.

Vol. XXXVII - Fifty-Third Year

Thursday, October 22, 1970

No. 204

Mrs. Meir Reaffirms Israel's Willingness To Continue Truce Indefinitely

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 21 (JTA)--Premier Golda Meir of Israel announced in the General Assembly today that her government is "prepared to continue the present cease-fire (in the Middle East) without a time limit." She urged "the leaders of the Arab countries of the Middle East and especially... the new leadership of Egypt to recognize once and for all that the future of the Middle East lies in peace and this must be achieved by Israelis and Arabs themselves." A spokesman for the Israeli UN Mission stressed afterwards that Mrs. Meir had used the word "continue" in connection with the cease-fire rather than "extend," which could carry the implication of a cut-off date. Mrs. Meir made her remarks in the course of an address to the 25th anniversary commemorative session of the General Assembly in which she stressed the sanctity of international agreements, rebuked the United Nations for giving "equal status" to the victims of aggression and those who commit it, and re-emphasized Israel's position that a genuine, lasting peace in the Mideast can be achieved only by direct negotiations between the parties without interference or imposed solutions from outside. The 73-year-old Prime Minister was attired in a dark blue suit and single strand of white pearls. She spoke slowly and deliberately, never raising her voice during the address, which lasted a half hour.

Mrs. Meir accused Israel's Arab neighbors of the "cynical flouting of solemn agreements" for the past 22 years, commencing with the violation of the UN Charter by their invasion of Israel in 1948. She cited Arab violations of the 1949 armistice agreements, the 1957 arrangements and the cease-fire resolution of 1967, the latter by embarking on a "war of attrition" against Israel. "And now Egypt is undermining the American peace initiative by violating the cease-fire standstill agreement," Mrs. Meir said. Her omission of the word "flagrantly" before "violating" was the only significant change in the prepared text of Mrs. Meir's address, which was distributed to newsmen only minutes before she spoke. "It is these violations which have halted all progress toward peace, despite Israel's earnest commitment towards its quest," Mrs. Meir said. "Agreements can only be reached if those making them enter upon them in mutual trust and in the assurance that they will be honorably executed," she went on. "Until the situation obtaining at the time when the cease-fire went into effect is restored, Israel cannot be expected to take part in the Jarring talks. Israel seeks to resume negotiations; it wants the Jarring talks to be fruitful, but it cannot renew its participation in them, until it is demonstrated that agreements that have been concluded are faithfully observed," Mrs. Meir said.

Israelis And Arabs Must Make Mideast Peace; Outside Intervention Scored

"In an atmosphere in which a callous breach of faith between nations is touted as a virtue, and aggression against a peaceful neighbor is acclaimed as a sacred cause, no hope for peace can prosper," she added. "Yet despite what has happened, we still trust that for the sake of all our people, the Arab leadership will join with us one day in guiding our area from the present turmoil to the horizons of peace." Mrs. Meir said she spoke "not in rancor but in sorrow." She said, "I am convinced that all of us in the Middle East will continue to exist as sovereign states. None of us will leave. But we may choose whether we will continue in the sterile course of mutual destruction, whether we will go on hurting each other to no one's benefit, or whether we will venture on a constructive course, and build our lands separately and together." During the course of her address, Mrs. Meir chided the UN for its inability to help achieve a lasting peace. But the "most serious" weakness of the UN, she declared, "is the fact that those who commit aggression and those who are its victims have equal status in the United Nations--and even on the Security Council." Israeli sources said Mrs. Meir was not suggesting any purge but merely emphasizing what Israel considers a major obstacle in the way of settling the Mideast crisis. She also praised the UN's efforts toward eliminating "colonialism" and promoting "national liberation."

Mrs. Meir also observed that the question of whether or not Israelis and Arabs alike will "forfeit our right to decide our own destiny" will only be resolved "in the measure that the people of the Middle East succeed or fail in making peace among themselves and by themselves without hindrance of intervention of any outside power." She added that recent events in the Mideast "have proven yet again that resort to substitutes and alternatives for direct peaceful solution of the conflict creates fertile ground for breaches of promise and mutual suspicion." This appeared to be a reaffirmation of Israel's insistence on direct talks between her and the Arab states rather than the indirect talks favored by the Arab states in the efforts to settle the Middle East crisis. It was also seen as a veiled rebuke of the Soviet Union's intervention with military muscle and personnel to beef up Egyptian military forces against Israel. Mrs. Meir's address was delivered in the shadow of a scheduled General Assembly debate on the Middle East next week. Israel has stated that she is prepared to deal with any attempt by the Soviet-Arab bloc to "tamper" with Security Council Resolution 242. Mrs. Meir was greeted with a burst of applause at the conclusion of her address. Many delegates went to her delegation desk to shake her hand.

Over 1000 Attend Meir Reception; Israel Braces Itself For Assembly Debate

NEW YORK, Oct. 21 (JTA)--As Golda Meir was shaking more than 1,000 hands last night at a reception in her honor, her Israeli government was bracing itself for what authoritative sources called "a very tough job ahead of us" in staving off any anti-Israel resolution in next week's General Assembly debate on the Middle East. Political circles said that such a resolution, especially if phrased in extreme terms, would be the first act of "tampering" with the provisions of Security Council Resolution

242 of Nov. 22, 1967. The adding of any new "elements" to the terms of Resolution 242 through a new resolution would result at best in an impasse and at worst in a "complete collapse" of United Nations authority in the Mideast, the sources said. Israel realizes, it was understood, that if the Assembly decides to apply a two-thirds vote rule, a resolution could be blocked by one-third plus one; however, the Arab bloc might seek to obtain a simple majority vote. The sources said Egypt proposed the debate apparently in order to be able to show a face of activism on the political front.

Behind the scenes, sources said, Egyptian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Riad has been "going around telling different things to different people." The sources emphasized that the Egyptian violations were as much American and General Assembly problems as an Israeli problem because the credibility of international agreements is at stake. At the reception in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, the long line of guests shook hands with Mrs. Meir; Yosef Tekoah, Israel's UN ambassador; and Mrs. Tekoah for two hours. Also on hand was Yitzhak Rabin, ambassador to the U.S. Among the other dignitaries attending were Prime Minister Edward Heath, Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home and UN Ambassador Sir Colin Crowe of Britain; Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann of France; Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, UN Under-Secretary General for Special Political Affairs; U.S. Ambassador Charles W. Yost; Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller, Sen. Charles E. Goodell, Rep. Richard L. Ottinger and gubernatorial candidate Arthur J. Goldberg of New York; labor leader David Dubinsky, American Jewish Congress leader Dore Schary, and officials of virtually all UN member nations, including Africans in flowing robes.

If Truce Continues Beyond Deadline So Must Standstill Of Missiles

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 21 (JTA)--If Israel and Egypt voluntarily continue their cease-fire after its Nov. 5 deadline, the standstill provisions of the truce will be considered by the United States to be still in effect, authoritative U.S. sources said today. The sources said a decision was nearing on a formal American proposal for an extension of the U.S.-initiated 90-day truce. They said they continued to hope that the standstill will continue formally past Nov. 5 and that there will be no more violations. One source said that "We hope that a rectification satisfactory to the Israelis can be achieved." That was seen as further evidence that the U.S. is on Israel's side in the matter of standstill violations, inasmuch as Secretary of State William P. Rogers said several weeks ago that the U.S. sought rectification "satisfactory to the Israelis and the Egyptians." Administration circles, reviewing recent meetings on the Middle East with the parties and with other foreign leaders, conceded that there has been no significant progress toward the resumption of the Gunnar V. Jarring peace talks, which Israel is boycotting pending Egyptian missile rectification. They said the Israeli and Arab positions remained steadfast. The sources declined immediate comment on today's General Assembly speech by Israeli Premier Golda Meir. (At the United Nations, a British spokesman also declined immediate comment. Secretary General U Thant normally does not comment on Assembly addresses.)

U.S. Sees Signs Both Sides In Mideast Conflict Want Truce Extension

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21 (JTA)--The United States sees indications that both sides in the Middle East want the Suez cease-fire extended and would like to see their conflict ended, State Department spokesman John King said today. Mr. King said the U.S. was discussing these indications in "diplomatic channels," one of which he identified as the recent talks between Secretary of State Rogers and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. Mr. King said that U.S. efforts were aimed at achieving rectification of the standstill cease-fire violations "that will satisfy both parties and will get the (Jarring) talks started." He again declined to define what the U.S. means by rectification beyond that statement. Mr. King also had no comment on the accusation by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in a New York Times interview today that the U.S. was "using" Israel as an instrument of its policies in the Mideast.

According to the New York Times correspondent C. L. Sulzberger, President Sadat reiterated several times during the interview that the Mideast conflict could be settled swiftly and peacefully if the U.S. stopped supporting Israel. Mr. Sadat was quoted as saying: "If the United States were not behind the Israeli expansion drive, the whole question of the Arab-Israeli conflict would be solved by the Jarring mission within 24 hours." One observer of the Mideast scene noted that if the Soviet Union were not behind the Egyptian drive against Israel the conflict would be solved by the Jarring mission within 12 hours. Mr. King also said he had no information on reports from Beirut that a plan for re-opening the Suez Canal has been submitted to Washington by Egypt. He said, however, that re-opening the waterway, closed for the past three years, was one of the elements of Mr. Rogers' peace initiative. John K. Cooley, The Christian Science Monitor correspondent in Beirut, wrote today that the plan, which envisages the re-opening of the Canal to ships of all nations including Israel, was recently sent to Washington for possible consideration at the highest level in the Big Power and Jarring talks.

Soviet Jewish Writers Urge Other Jewish Writers To Aid Arab-Israeli Amity

LONDON, Oct. 21 (JTA)--A group of Soviet Jewish writers have called upon Jewish writers in other countries to help further Arab-Israeli friendship and have expressed satisfaction with the cease-fire now in effect in the Middle East. The public commentary on a foreign policy matter, rare for ordinary Soviet citizens, appeared in the current edition of Sovietskii Heimland, an officially authorized Jewish periodical, which arrived here today. The writers said, "We call upon Jewish writers the world over to help create an atmosphere of friendship between Israel and the Arab nations. Millions of men, women and children have a vital interest in peace in the Middle East and they include Jews as well as Arabs." The writers said they supported the cease-fire because it "opens the way for a just peace between the Arab countries and Israel based on the Security Council resolution of Nov. 22, 1967." Among the signers were such well known members of the Soviet Communist establishment as Aaron Vergelis, Abraham Gontar, Motel Grubian, Shika Griz and Sonia Frei. The group also included Meir Yellin, Hillel Alexandrov, Mark Razumny and Z. Wendroff who are not involved in politics.

U.S. Believed To Have Written Off Chances For Immediate Mideast Settlement

JERUSALEM, Oct. 21 (JTA)--Well informed sources here believe that the United States has written off chances of a Middle East peace settlement in the near future and now aspires only to a cease-fire as "the next best thing." According to the sources, the U.S. realizes that a cease-fire cannot be maintained indefinitely without concurrent political discussions about a final settlement and may therefore try to persuade Israel to enter into such discussions without Egyptian cease-fire violations being corrected. The sources point out that there are several levels on which political discussions could be carried out--the United Nations General Assembly, the Security Council, the Four Powers, the Two Powers and the peace mission under Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring. The latter is the most convenient instrument from the U.S. and Israeli points of view. The American reasoning is that the Jarring talks can drag on and "as long as there is no shooting war, we can live with it and so can Israel," the sources said.

However, Israel has committed itself not to return to the Jarring talks until there is a restoration of the cease-fire status quo ante of Aug. 7, and the U.S., which has been demanding rectification by Egypt and the Soviet Union, is in no position to force Israel to change its stand. The sources say that the Israel government is fully aware that there is a wide gap between what the Americans mean by "rectification" and Israel's demand for "restoration" of the pre-Aug. 7 military situation in the canal zone. The Israelis also fear that the U.S. may reduce the scope of its demand for rectification and thereby face Israel with a new and difficult situation for its government to solve. According to one source, "When the Americans say to us 'you are 100 percent right in your demand for rectification,' somehow we feel that at the back of their mind there hovers the question, 'but what percentage will you settle for.'"

Letter By Georgian Soviet Jew Delivered To General Assembly President

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 21 (JTA)--An embittered and impassioned letter from a Soviet Jew denied the right to emigrate to Israel was delivered to General Assembly President Edvard Hambro today. It appealed for his help "to use my human rights and settle in a country which I have selected by my own free will." The writer identified himself as Abraham Buzukashvili of Tbilisi, in the Georgian Soviet Republic. He claimed that when he and other Jews go to the local visa office to press their petitions for exit permits, "We are struck with fists and thrown out by the chief, Comrade Major Kiknadze, with shouts: 'Don't ever come here again for any Jewish business! That's what we have been ordered by the higher authorities.'"

The letter, the first from a Soviet Jew addressed to the General Assembly President, was delivered to Mr. Hambro with a covering letter from Rabbi Herschel Schachter, chairman of the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry. Rabbi Schachter said the Buzukashvili appeal was brought out of Russia by a recent traveler and was similar to 124 other petitions "signed by literally hundreds of Jews in the Soviet Union which have been submitted to the UN over the course of the past 12 months." Rabbi Schachter asked the Norwegian diplomat to "give this petition your personal attention."

Mr. Buzukashvili wrote that he had received a visa from Israel in July, 1969 and submitted it with other necessary documents to the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs Office of Foreign Travel. "I have received no answer at all to any of my applications," he said. He said he sent copies of his request to Premier Alexei Kosygin, Communist Party chief Leonid Brezhnev, Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny and to other Kremlin leaders. "But no one pays any attention to us," he said. He said, "The simple reason is that some anti-Semites are trying, even now, to destroy our nation, to scatter its people all over the world and compel the Jews to be subjugated to others and be tortured like our ancestors in the Egypt of the Pharaohs." He wrote, "Let the Soviet government use any of its usual methods, including hanging, they will not dissuade me and I will always ask to leave this country and settle forever in Israel. This right is given to me by the Constitution of the Soviet Union and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Charge That Yiddish Weekly Changed To Daily Is Exercise In Propaganda

LONDON, Oct. 21 (JTA)--A recent Jewish visitor to the Soviet Union has branded as a "propaganda exercise" an announcement by Russian authorities that the Yiddish weekly, Stern, published in Birobidjan, was being changed to a daily. He said the intent was to show that contrary to Jewish claims, Yiddish language organs were not forbidden but actually encouraged in the USSR. The observer said there were actually few Yiddish readers left in Birobidjan which was established as an autonomous Jewish Republic in Soviet Asia during the 1920s. He said Jews elsewhere in the Soviet Union ignored Stern because it was an official mouthpiece.

Zionist Movement's New Membership Drive Doing Well In Canada, Argentina

JERUSALEM, Oct. 21 (JTA)--The Zionist movement's new membership drive is doing well in Canada and in Argentina, the head of the Jewish Agency's organization and membership department has reported here. Avraham Shenker said, at a meeting of the Zionist executive this week, that 35,000 Canadian Jews have signed up already for membership in the Zionist Federation of Canada while the membership drive in Argentina is expected to yield 40,000 signatures out of a Jewish population of 450,000. Mr. Shenker said other membership drives expect to sign up 60,000 Jews in Great Britain, 45,000 in France and 20,000 in South Africa. He said the stress was being placed on recruiting young members. Mordecai Bar-On, head of the Jewish Agency's youth department said a membership drive would begin among youth on completion of a series of ideological seminars in the United States, Australia, Brazil, Argentina, Britain and France. He said the membership drive of the World Union of Jewish Students was meeting with difficulties.

Another Soviet Jew Arrested For Seeking Right To Emigrate

NEW YORK, Oct. 21 (JTA)--The arrest of another Soviet Jew for distributing "Zionist" material was reported to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today and was confirmed to the JTA by authoritative foreign sources. It was the second such arrest reported in the past two days. According to Rabbi Herschel Schachter, chairman of the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, the latest victim was Michael Shepshelovich, 24, of 42 Juglas St., Apt. 5 in Riga, Soviet Latvia. He was said to have been arrested on Oct. 16. Rabbi Schachter told the JTA that Mr. Shepshelovich and Miss Ruth Alexandrovitch, 24, also of Riga, were among nine Jews arrested in Riga since last June's alleged attempt to hijack a Soviet airliner at Leningrad airport. Miss Alexandrovitch's arrest, reported by the JTA yesterday, was also confirmed by authoritative foreign sources.

Rabbi Schachter said that all of those arrested had requested permission to emigrate to Israel and had signed petitions to that effect. He said that Mr. Shepshelovich's arrest brought to 33 the number of Jewish political prisoners in the USSR. A Hassidic rabbi in Brooklyn claimed today that Sen. Charles Goodell, the Republican Senatorial candidate in New York, was instrumental in arranging the release from prison and the emigration of more than 100 Jews from Iron Curtain countries. Rabbi Eliezer Portugal, known to his Hassidic followers as the Scholener rabbi, said the Senator had carried out his efforts in secret to assure them success. He said that details of the operation cannot be revealed because negotiations with certain foreign governments are continuing.

Israeli Diplomat Refutes Charge Of Discrimination Against Arabs

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Oct. 21 (JTA)--Netanel Lorch, Israel's representative to the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee of the UN today denied a Lebanese charge that Israel practiced religious discrimination against Israeli Arabs. The Lebanese delegate, Yahya Mahmassani, had charged that Arabs in Israel had the choice of either "leaving their homes" or becoming second-class citizens. He said that racial discrimination in Israel had been legislated through the Israeli Nationality Law (Law of Return) which permitted any Jew to become a citizen once he stepped on Israeli soil, but denied the "right of return" to one million Arab refugees, "the rightful owners of the land." The refugees in Lebanon, Mr. Mahmassani said, want to return to Israel, not to become Lebanese citizens. In replying to Mr. Mahmassani's charges, Mr. Lorch stated categorically that there was no discrimination in Israel, and pointed out that the Deputy Speaker of the Knesset was of Arab descent. He said that Israel had come into being to solve the problem of Jewish refugees and added that Israel could not permit the unlimited return of Arab refugees to Israel since "they were among the people most determined to exterminate Israel." Stating that Arabs in Israel had freedom of speech, something they do not have in Arab lands, Mr. Lorch challenged Mr. Mahmassani to point out any discriminatory law in Israel and invited him to visit Israel to see for himself that Israel practices no discrimination against Arabs or anyone else and that all citizens had equal rights.

Day Of Prayer For Soviet Jews; Streets Closed For Simhat Torah

BROOKLYN, N.Y., Oct. 21 (JTA)--Brooklyn Borough President Sebastian Leone has ordered streets adjoining Orthodox synagogues closed to vehicular traffic tomorrow to accommodate Jews observing Simhat Torah. The celebration traditionally includes singing and dancing in the streets outside of the houses of worship. Mr. Leone has also proclaimed the day a "Day of Prayer and Meditation" by Brooklyn Jews for the Jews of the Soviet Union. He is scheduled to deliver the proclamation in person to Jewish celebrants on a closed off block in the Flatbush section tomorrow night. The proclamation designated Oct. 22 "as a day that Jews all over the world together with all free people, symbolize and express their sympathy and solidarity with Jews living in the Soviet Union." It said, "We implore the Soviet government to permit these people to leave that country if that be their desire or permit all the people of the Soviet Union to practice their religion as all free men do anywhere else in our world."

700 Orthodox Youths And Adults Studied In Israel During 1970

NEW YORK, Oct. 21 (JTA)--Seven hundred orthodox youths and adults participated in study program in Israel this year under the auspices of the Torah Education and Culture Department of the Jewish Agency, it was announced by Dr. Emanuel Rackman, Jewish Agency Executive member and chairman of the Torah Department's Advisory Committee. Mr. Zvi Assael, Director of the Torah Department in North America, said that 400 students, educators and rabbis participated in the Department's Summer Programs and 300 High School students and graduates and college students left for either half-year or full-year courses of study at Israeli institutions for higher Jewish learning.

Three Stern College Alumnae In 1970 Edition Of Outstanding Young Women Of America

NEW YORK, Oct. 21 (JTA)--Three alumnae of Stern College for Women, the undergraduate college of liberal arts and sciences for women of Yeshiva University, have been selected for inclusion in the 1970 edition of "Outstanding Young Women of America," it was announced by Abraham Avrech, director of the Alumni Office. The three graduates were among some 6,000 outstanding individuals between the ages of 21 and 35 honored for their achievements by the publication. Those cited are Dr. Eva Kahana of University City, Missouri, research associate in the Social Science Institute, Washington University; Esther Levenberg of N.Y.C., graduate student at New York University; and Mrs. Audrey Lookstein, of N.Y.C., member of Yeshiva University Alumni Fund Cabinet and chairman of Stern College Alumnae Fund.

Israeli, EEC Representatives To Discuss Methods Of Cooperation

BRUSSELS, Oct. 21 (JTA)--Representatives of Israel and the European Economic community will meet here Friday to discuss methods of administrative cooperation between their customs authorities and proposals for the functioning of the mixed commission composed of delegates from Israel and the EEC.