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Riga Trial Reported Begun; Tsukerman Gets Visa, Svichinsky Still Waiting For His

NEW YORK, Jan. 21 (JTA)--The trial of four Jews in Riga reportedly began yesterday in total secrecy, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned today from highly reliable sources. The complete news blackout on the trial from the Latvian capital was seen by these sources as a move by Soviet authorities to forestall the kind of protest that erupted last month around the trial of the Leningrad 11 which forced the commutation of death sentences handed down against two Jewish defendants. The JTA had reported Tuesday from Jerusalem that the trial in Riga would begin on Wednesday. This could not then be immediately confirmed and Jewish sources said today that it was still not absolutely certain that the Riga trial had actually started. The Riga defendants have been charged with anti-Soviet activities but the specifics of these alleged activities have never been publicly released by the Soviet authorities. At the same time, the JTA learned that Boris Tsukerman, a prominent Jewish activist in Moscow, finally received his exit visa yesterday and is expected to leave the Soviet Union on Jan. 25. The exit visa for the second Jewish activist, Vitaly Svichinsky, is still being held up but, according to the sources, "there are hopes the Soviet authorities will give him his exit visa by the end of this month." The sources explained that both men had merely been promised by Soviet authorities that they would be given exit visas but had not actually received them. The sources said it was still not certain why Svichinsky's exit visa was being held up. It had been reported earlier that he was scheduled to leave the Soviet Union on Jan. 23.

Tsukerman, a physicist who became an expert in Soviet law and who has been challenging the Soviet regime in its own courts on issues involving government censorship of private mail, has been described by sources as a liaison between Jews who want to leave the Soviet Union and Jewish and non-Jewish scientists and intellectuals who have been chafing under official repression. Both Tsukerman and Svichinsky and their families intend to emigrate to Israel, according to sources. Meanwhile, according to information reaching London from Riga, Margarita Shpilberg, the wife of Arkady Shpilberg who is one of the four Riga Jews on trial, has given birth to a daughter which was named Yocheved. Since the birth of the daughter, Mrs. Shpilberg has been desperately trying to secure permission to see her husband to show him their child but all of her appeals to date have been rejected. She is not even certain whether or not he knows about the birth of their daughter. Shpilberg, 23, an engineer, had applied for permission to emigrate to Israel. The other three Riga Jews on trial are: Mikhail Shepshelevich, 27, a bachelor; Nadi Aleksandrovich, 29, a nurse; and Boris Maitster, 22.

Pompidou Reaffirms Israel's Right To Exist: Calls For Withdrawal From Occupied Territory

PARIS, Jan. 21 (JTA)--President Georges Pompidou asserted today that France's Middle East policy is constant and has not changed and is based on two principles: Israel's right to existence behind safe, secure borders and Israel's withdrawal from all of the captured Arab areas. Pompidou, speaking at a press conference, said that "those who think that they can discern a change in France's policy have, either through passion or through lack of attention, failed to listen carefully." The French leader, commenting in reply to a question by the Paris correspondent of the Egyptian newspaper Al Mussawhar, added that any settlement must be agreed to by Israel, Egypt and Jordan and that the Palestinians must be granted self-determination at the "proper time." In response to another question, Pompidou stated that the Mediterranean remained an integral and crucial factor in France's over-all foreign policy.

Meanwhile, visiting Israeli Cabinet official Shimon Peres, Minister of Transport, Communications and Posts, today described his contacts with French authorities here as "friendly, relaxed and confident." Peres, partaking in the first Franco-Israeli ministerial meetings since late 1968, called them helpful. He said he had raised with Robert Galley, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, the possibility of laying a new underwater cable from Marseilles to Haifa, the existing one being saturated. The Israeli said he had also discussed with Galley the possibility of joint research in telephone-exchange installations and electronic equipment, and had talked with Transport Minister Jean Chamant about the expiring El Al-Air France agreement.

Israeli Political Circles Charge Egypt Is Double-Dealing On Peace Proposals

JERUSALEM, Jan. 21 (JTA)--Israeli political circles virtually accused Egypt today of double-dealing on Middle East peace proposals, charging that its note yesterday to United Nations mediator Gunnar V. Jarring and to the Security Council was different and less moderate than its still-secret statement to Israel through Dr. Jarring. The Israeli circles also pointed out that Cairo, which had accused Israel of foot-dragging on peace moves, had taken nine days to reply to the Israeli note delivered through the Swedish negotiator. And, they added, Israel is unhappy over what she considers Arab leaking of the Israeli note to the Arab-oriented Paris weekly Jeune Afrique, which published it Monday. Foreign Ministry officials have advised the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Israel had committed herself to secrecy on the progress of the peace talks, believing quiet diplomacy to be the most effective means to obtain a settlement, but that Egypt was undermining that policy and Israel does not know how long she can now maintain it. The Foreign Ministry feels, in addition, that the Egyptian message is actually a Soviet attempt to prepare the ground for a special meeting of the Security Council before the cease-fire ends Feb. 5.

The contents of what Israeli political circles termed the more moderate Egyptian reply has not been disclosed, but the announced Egyptian statement does not, as had been expected in some quarters, specifically seek a special Council meeting. It also does not mention the timetable for Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories that Egyptian President Anwar Sadat has called a prerequisite for another cease-fire extension. The Egyptian memo, however, also does not endorse Israel's call for a

formal peace agreement; the closest it comes is to recommend that "any settlement...should contain the necessary elements to make it lasting." The announced Egyptian statement makes only these points about the Council: That it "may decide upon the necessary arrangements which would provide security to all states in the area," possibly including Big Four participation in a UN peacekeeping force and creation of demilitarized zones; that it "should exercise its responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security," and that it "adopt all adequate measures" to implement its Resolution 242 and the Jarring mission based on it.

Egyptian Plan Repeats Previous Demands; Jordan's Plan Similar To Egypt's

The Egyptian document, submitted in New York by Ambassador Mohammed H. el-Zayyat, charges that Israel "continues to procrastinate in an attempt to escape the carrying out of its obligations," "seeks to dictate its conditions by relying on force and on the status quo," and "submits notes containing nothing but mere repetition of its previous positions." Such an Israeli attitude, the message goes on, "continues to escalate the explosive situation in the Middle East" and "constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security." Egypt requires, the note says, Israeli "withdrawal from the Arab territories" captured in 1967 and "a just settlement for the Palestine refugees," both within the context of "scrupulous implementation" of Resolution 242 and "all other relevant United Nations resolutions." In order to reach those goals, Egypt continues, Israel must cease her "aggression" and withdraw to her June 4, 1967 lines: Israel must "repudiate" her "policy of territorial expansion...repeatedly expressed in the statements made by Israeli leaders"; there must be a "termination of...belligerency" and a guarantee of freedom of navigation; there must be "respect for and acknowledgment of" territorial sovereignty, integrity and independence "within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force," and there must be a "guaranteeing of peace and the territorial inviolability and political independence of every state in the area."

Dr. Zayyat said yesterday that his government's note to Dr. Jarring and to this month's Security Council president, Sir Colin Crowe of Britain, had been made public because Israel, he charged had publicized her own 14-point position in the French weekly *Jeune Afrique*. Spokesmen for the weekly claimed that the disclosure of the Israeli proposals had been given them by a correspondent in Great Britain but the correspondent declined to disclose the source of his information. There was a strong suspicion that the Israeli proposals had been "leaked" by the Arabs. Meanwhile, Jordan's reply to Israel's peace plan arrived in the Israeli capital last night. Reliable sources said it had been drafted in close cooperation with Cairo, and that it parallels the Egyptian stance in all essential points--except that in regard to specifically Jordanian-Israeli matters it makes hardly any concessions to Israel, insisting on June 4, 1967, borders and on restoration of East Jerusalem to Jordan. The Amman statement adds that free access to the holy places is to be guaranteed to persons "of all religions," the sources said, but they noted that such an agreement was also included in the 1948 armistice but was abrogated by Jordan when it occupied Jerusalem from then until June, 1967.

Rabin: Real Issue Between Israel, Arab States Is 'Security Not Territory'

NEW YORK, Jan. 21 (JTA)--General Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's Ambassador to the United States, told a meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations that "security--not territory--is the real issue between Israel and the Arab states." Ambassador Rabin spoke at a meeting this week at which Dr. William A. Wexler of Savannah, Ga., president of B'nai B'rith, was unanimously reelected chairman of the Presidents Conference. Dr. Wexler will serve a second one-year term. Rabin rejected the idea of Four Power "guarantees" or troops of other nations to keep the peace as "meaningless and without substance. The only peace that can come to the Middle East," he declared, "is a peace between the parties. The problem of the Jarring mission is to eliminate the conflict between Israel and her neighbors, not to interpose barriers between them." He said that Israel could not expose herself to attacks by an enemy made strong by outside intervention and thereby encouraged to resume hostilities. "Israel," he said, "must have borders that it can reasonably defend."

Rabin also charged that the Palestine refugee issue was a "false" one. "Egypt," he said, "is not interested in the refugees. Indeed, by violating the cease-fire and inaugurating gun battles along the Suez Canal, Egypt created more homeless refugees within its own territories than Israel can conceivably be responsible for." The Israeli diplomat also told the Presidents Conference meeting that his country was committed to full support of the Jarring mission and would do everything possible to promote its success--although he did not have great faith in the outcome of the present talks. Rabin pointed out that in order to help the Jarring talks get under way, Israel had made four major concessions; that the negotiations could consist of indirect talks at the outset; that a limited cease-fire could go into effect; that the talks could be held outside the Middle East; and that the principle of withdrawal was agreed upon even before the talks were to begin. On the issue of the Palestinian refugees, Rabin said there was agreement between the U.S. and Israel that no solution of the refugee problem would require any change in the Jewish character of the State.

Weizman Ready To Talk To Arafat, Habash If They Seriously Want Political Settlement

TEL AVIV, Jan. 21 (JTA)--Gen. Ezer Weizman, chairman of the Herut Executive, offered yesterday to sit down and talk with Yassir Arafat or Dr. George Habash if either declared that his guerrilla group, El Fatah or the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, truly wanted a political settlement of the Middle East crisis. Weizman, addressing a large student audience at Bar-Ilan University, went so far as to say he would rather talk with Arafat than with King Hussein of Jordan as the latter, he contended, has no real affinity for Palestine. Reports yesterday in the semi-official Egyptian newspaper *Al Ahram* said the central committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization had agreed to seek a political solution in the Mideast. The reports were denied, however, by some Palestinian leaders. Weizman, the former Air Force commander and former Gahal (Herut-Liberal) Minister of Transport and Communications, warned against the concept that giving up occupied Arab territory would bring peace. Return of the territories is central to Palestinian thinking, Weizman stressed that Israel "must not enter into negotiations while the Egyptians are holding a gun to our head."

Terrorists From Lebanon Penetrate Into Upper Galilee; Set Explosives Which Rocks Home

TEL AVIV, Jan. 21 (JTA)--A two-story private home in the Upper Galilee was rocked by an explosion today which was caused, according to authorities, by explosives placed under the structure by terrorists penetrating from Lebanon. None of the residents were at home during the time of the explosion, which was reported to have seriously damaged the interior of the home. Police reported that the terrorist attack was one of the deepest penetrations by saboteurs from Lebanon. A resident of Raffah in the Gaza Strip was reported injured last night by an Israeli patrol, after he ignored the call to halt and started to flee. The injured resident was hospitalized. Meanwhile, another Arab, Fayek Aduwan, was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment by a military tribunal in Nablus for heading an arms-smuggling ring which provided terrorists in the Samaria district with arms. Aduwan reportedly smuggled pistols with silencers in watermelons whose interiors he carved out, and smuggled explosives in taxis and cars.

UAR Diplomatic Offensive Reaches Argentina; UAR Mission Meets With Nation's Leaders

BUENOS AIRES, Jan. 21 (JTA)--Cairo's diplomatic offensive intended to promote Egypt's point of view in the Middle East conflict, reached Buenos Aires this week. A five man Egyptian mission, headed by Minister of State Hussein Zulficar Sabri, held a press conference following two days of meetings with Argentine leaders, including President Roberto Marcelo Levingston and Foreign Minister Luis de Pablo Pardo. Argentina is one of the new non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. Sabri said he found "much understanding" of Egypt's position among Argentine leaders. He said his country accepted the Security Council's Resolution 242 but claimed that Israel rejected it. He said Egypt would not extend the current cease-fire in the Suez Canal zone because "it would mean accepting the occupation of our territory" by Israel. He said however, the Egypt will "maintain, for the time being, a defensive position" indicating that Egypt does not intend to resume warfare when the cease-fire expires on Feb. 5. Asked if Egypt would establish diplomatic relations with Israel within the framework of a peace agreement, he replied, "It is not possible. We accept Israel as an imposed state."

AZF Leader Says Soviet Jewry Tragedy Warrants Top Priority On World Community Agenda

NEW YORK, Jan. 21 (JTA)--The tragic situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union warrants top priority on the agenda of the world community, Rabbi Israel Miller, president of the American Zionist Federation, said last night. Presenting his views to the AZF executive council, he stated that the trials in Leningrad and the death sentences which were handed down but later commuted "are but one manifestation of a ruthless program by the Soviet government to obliterate the Jewishness of three million of its citizens." Declaring that Jews who desire to leave the Soviet Union must be permitted to emigrate from the USSR, their land of birth, to Israel, the land of their historic heritage, must not be considered a reasonable act. The AZF leader also expressed the view that a differentiation must be made "between our concern for Soviet Jews and the methods which some feel will help alleviate the situation." He referred specifically to the tactics of harassing Soviet officials and their families which he said was counter-productive and expressed the hope "that such manifestations of protest will not recur." Although Rabbi Miller did not mention the Jewish Defense League by name, it was that group headed by Rabbi Meir Kahane which was engaged in harassing Soviet officials.

On Tuesday, Rabbi Kahane announced that JDL was calling an "indefinite moratorium" on further harassments but warned that it would revert to that policy "if we don't see any results." In another statement yesterday Rabbi Kahane said the JDL will conduct a consumer boycott against products of American companies doing business with the Soviet Union and would conduct "non-violent actions" against organizations engaged in cultural exchange programs with the Soviet Union. Rabbi Miller observed that the "most unhappy consequence of violent tactics" is that it aids the Soviet Union "in diverting attention away from the fact that Jews of all political and ideological persuasions--as well as numerous Christians--are actively denouncing the Soviet persecution of Jews." It permits, he added, the Soviet authorities "to act as if only Zionist thugs and hoodlums are involved instead of being forced to face the reality that the entire Jewish community is involved, as well as millions of non-Jews throughout the world including leading Communists, in a unified denunciation of the Soviet Union." Rabbi Miller also denounced the references to Zionism in the government-controlled Soviet press and attempts to make Zionism "the scapegoat for all that is wrong with Soviet policy. Their attacks on Zionism becloud the true issues, and to perverted minds encourages attitudes and acts of anti-Semitism. To them, anti-Zionism has become the code word for anti-Semitism."

Israeli, Survivor Of Auschwitz, Calls For Establishing Jewish-Arab Dialogue

LONDON, Jan. 21 (JTA)--The need for a Jewish-Arab dialogue was stressed here by Mrs. Nina Di-Nur, a survivor of Auschwitz, and a noted public figure in Israel. Mrs. Di-Nur, who was addressing a gathering of the Anglo-Israel Association, appealed for the establishment of a British movement to encourage Arab-Jewish cooperation. She said that in her campaign for the establishment of such movements in various countries, she had encouraging support from Jews and Arabs as well as others. Mrs. Di-Nur added that on the campus of Haifa University there was now an institute for the study of Jewish-Arab relations which is headed by noted scientists, and experts in the behavioral sciences. This institute had been designed to prepare source material in order to help those engaged in the actual work of rapprochement between the two peoples.

Japanese Youths See Israeli Kibbutzim As Answer To Their Own Social Problems

TEL AVIV, Jan. 21 (JTA)--Forty young Japanese men and women have completed a two-week seminar on cooperation at the Afro-Asian Institute here and will go to work in four Israeli kibbutzim. This was the ninth special seminar conducted by the Institute for Japanese groups who come to Israel every year under the auspices of the Japan Kibbutz Movement. The kibbutz movement in Japan is comprised of some 20 kibbutzim. Most of them are a spontaneous outgrowth of efforts at cooperative farming, in part prompted by a shortage of land and its division into tiny plots. The Japanese students said Israel's kibbutzim can offer some solutions to satisfy their longing for social change.

Nun Teaches Languages In Jerusalem To Improve Jewish-Arab Relations

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 21 (JTA)--A Catholic nun who teaches Arabic to Israelis and Hebrew to Arabs hopes that her work will replace with love the hate in the Middle East. She is Mother Aline Batut, Mother Superior of Ecco Homo Convent of the Order of Notre Dame de Sion in Old Jerusalem, and a recent visitor to Los Angeles under the auspices of the American Jewish Committee and the Commission on the Middle East of the Jewish Federation-Council's Community Relations Committee. Mother Aline recalled that after the Six-Day War, she felt something had to be done--despite risks--to promote friendship between all peoples in the Middle East. "Since teaching languages seemed like the most neutral and uncompromising ground, we planned to establish a modest class to teach Hebrew to Arabs, and, if possible, another class to teach Arabic to Israelis," the vivacious, diminutive nun said. "What looked like pure madness then found, however, two madmen and a madwoman to implement it," she continued. "I was the madwoman. My two partners were Father Bruno, a Dominican, and Dr. Kalman Yaron of Hebrew University, director of adult education." Dr. Yaron offered to teach the first class in Hebrew if 10 Arabs who wanted to learn could be found. Instead, 36 showed up at the school's opening in the convent in Jerusalem.

So successful has the program been in the past four years that nine classes with 350 students have been organized. Last June, 150 Arabs and 50 Israelis were granted diplomas for proficiency in languages. Apparently, it is easier for Arabs to learn Hebrew than for Israelis to learn Arabic. Mother Aline noted. The school has outgrown its present quarters in Old Jerusalem and will move to the new Martin Buber Center now under construction on Mt. Scopus in association with the Hebrew University. The center will house not only classrooms, but space for social, artistic and folkloric activities. "More than a thousand students have passed through our classes and have joined us in our effort to promote peace," Mother Aline said. "They have brought their friends and relatives to our social events and thus have included them also in our friendship program." She said the center, criticized at the outset, is now accepted and appreciated by the community. Regarding the Middle East, Mother Aline said she was "very optimistic," explaining: "If the rhythm of achievement can be maintained, I am sure that peace will be implemented in daily life before it is signed on a piece of paper." Mother Aline, a Sorbonne graduate, is on a year-long sabbatical visit to the United States. Her order maintains convents in Kansas City, Washington and New Jersey that are mainly concerned with interfaith activities and the promotion of mutual understanding between Catholics and Jews.

Stone: If USSR Permits Jews To Emigrate Half The Population Would Convert To Judaism

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21 (JTA)--I.F. Stone, an independent left-wing publicist, likened the situation of Jews in the Soviet Union to that of the separatist nationalities in Franco Spain. He predicted in his bi-weekly newsletter that if the Kremlin should ever allow Jews free emigration, "half the population (of Russia) would convert to Judaism." Stone, long a bitter critic of Zionism and Israeli policies, claimed that the commutation of death sentences of Jews in Leningrad and of Basques in Burgos, have similar backgrounds. "Both occurred in slowly decaying dictatorships, one Communist, the other Fascist," he wrote. "Both will be followed by new trials, in Russia of more Jews accused of Zionism, i.e. of national deviation; in Spain, not only of Catalans as well as Basques but of other Spaniards accused of 'subversion.'" Stone said that "rebellious Basque and Catalan separatists have become focal points for general animosity to the senescent Franco regime. Kremlin fears of similar repercussions in the Soviet Union may explain why no national publicity was given the Leningrad trial until after it was over. Perhaps the Soviet bureaucrats feared other rebellious minorities or Great Russian dissidents would be sympathetic to the Jews and might try hijackings of their own to get out." According to Stone, "Russia is again what it was under the Czars, 'a prison house of nations.'"

Aaron Zeitlin, Hebrew Poet And Dramatist, Named Recipient Of Literary Award

NEW YORK, Jan. 21 (JTA)--Aaron Zeitlin, Hebrew poet and dramatist, has been named the 1970 recipient of the Irving and Bertha Neuman literary prize awarded annually by New York University's Institute of Hebrew Studies. NYU President James M. Hester will make the presentation at a reception in Zeitlin's honor on Jan. 26. The prize, which consists of a citation and a cash award of \$1,000, was established in 1962 by Neuman, a New York realtor, and his wife to encourage Hebrew letters. This is the first time that the prize will be given to an American citizen and that the ceremony will take place in this country. Zeitlin, who lives in New York City, is being honored, not for any one piece of work, but for his entire literary output--"more than a half century of creative contributions to Hebrew literature." The son of a world-renowned Hebrew scholar and writer, Hillel Zeitlin, Aaron Zeitlin was born in White Russia and was graduated from Warsaw University. His entire family was exterminated in the Nazi holocaust. Zeitlin emigrated to the United States in 1939. From 1950 to 1964, he served as associate professor of modern Hebrew literature and language at the Jewish Theological Seminary. In 1959 he was given an honorary doctorate by that institution. Zeitlin has written extensively in Yiddish as well as in Hebrew, and he is a frequent contributor to the Yiddish press. He has also translated many works from English, Russian, Polish, French, Spanish and German into Hebrew.

Soviet Anti-Jewish Moves Indicate Real Attitude, Says Axel Springer

BERLIN, Jan. 21 (JTA)--The fact that Soviet Jews are refused the right to travel, that they have been sentenced for attempting to escape, and that the life of the State of Israel is endangered with the help of Russian rockets and Soviet diplomats is more indicative of the true nature of the Russians than the illusion that real bridges can be built between the West and the East. This caution was addressed to his countrymen by Axel Springer, a leading German publisher in his newspaper, Die Welt, in spelling out the dangers in the arrangements being made by Chancellor Willy Brandt with the Soviet government and its satellite Eastern governments. The Soviets and their satellites, he concludes, can be judged best by their deeds, not by their promises. Springer added: "German ears most of all should have burned when the cry for help rang out for resistance to the trials of Russian Jews whose only crime was attempted escape in despair at an inhuman ban on their emigration."