

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. XXXVIII - Fifty-Fourth Year

Thursday, February 18, 1971

No. 33

Eban: No Return To Pre-1967 Borders; They Were Neither Recognized Nor Defensible

JERUSALEM, Feb. 17 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Abba Eban declared in the Knesset today that Israel would never return to the borders that existed between the 1949 armistice and the 1967 Six-Day War because they "were neither recognized borders nor defensible ones." He said the crucial question in the Middle East now is when and how Egypt will reply to Israel's demand to know whether it is ready to conclude a contractual peace treaty. Egypt's sincerity will be tested by whether they give serious study to Israel's proposals for parallel discussions of peace and of plans to re-open the Suez Canal, Eban said. The Foreign Minister addressed the Knesset in reply to motions submitted by three opposition factions questioning the Government on United Nations mediator Gunnar V. Jarring's latest moves. The issue was Jarring's letter to Israel last week which reportedly posed the question of withdrawal to its pre-June, 1967 borders. Eban however maintained the Government's silence on the Jarring move and refused to refer to it even indirectly before the Knesset. The motions were submitted by Gahal, the State List and the pro-Moscow Rakach Communists. The letter was rejected by the Knesset and the other two were referred for further deliberation to the foreign affairs and security committee. Eban declared that Israel had the same right as any other country to recognized and defensible borders.

He said Israel stands by its position that its future borders must be drawn up within the framework of a peace treaty that eliminates all forms of warfare from the region. Until then, he said, Israel will continue to hold the present cease-fire lines. Eban referred to recent statements by Egyptian leaders, including President Anwar Sadat's interview published in Newsweek magazine this week. "Our ears are open to any echo, any whisper from Egypt, but peace is not achieved through interviews," the Foreign Minister said. He observed that one interview is replied to by another interview and furthermore, experience has shown that after every positive statement made for publication, there come contradictions and reservations that annul the positive ideas. Eban was contemptuous of a statement attributed yesterday to Egypt's Ambassador to the United Nations, Mohammed H. el-Zayyat, who reportedly said his country was ready to accept Israeli sovereignty if the Israelis stopped admitting Jewish immigrants from all over the world. (Dr. Zayyat today told a JTA reporter at the UN that the statement attributed to him was "nonsense." See separate story.) Eban said statements such as Dr. Zayyat's remove the whole issue from the realm of serious discussion. He said it was as if Israel were to demand that Egypt practice birth control.

Jarring Sends Israel Egypt's Reply; Zayyat Repudiates Published Story Of His View

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Feb. 17 (JTA)--Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, Yosef Tekoah, announced today that Israel has been informed of Egypt's reply to its latest note through UN mediator Gunnar V. Jarring and was examining the content of the reply. Tekoah who met with Jarring today, told newsmen afterwards, "The Government of Israel issued a statement following its Cabinet meeting last Sunday that we are awaiting the Egyptian reply to questions submitted by us through Ambassador Jarring. We have now been informed by Ambassador Jarring of the United Arab Republic's views on the situation and we shall examine these views in the light of our questions submitted through Jarring." Tekoah did not elaborate. Israel's latest note to Egypt inquired as to whether Israel was included in Cairo's stated readiness to conclude peace with and recognize the sovereignty of all countries in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed H. el-Zayyat described as "nonsense" today a published report attributing to him endorsement of a Jewish State of Israel provided Israel limited Jewish immigration. The account, in yesterday's New York Post, was said to be based on an interview with Dr. Zayyat in which he backed the sovereignty of such a state -- with the addition of a Palestinian state -- as the most logical and pragmatic arrangement, as two adjoining states would be more amenable to peacemaking than a state combining Jews and Palestinians. The burly envoy, questioned about the report by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, said he had chatted with the Post correspondent over coffee in the delegates' lounge but had not given him the story that was published. Dr. Zayyat declined to elaborate, but repeated that the report was "nonsense." He appeared irritated by the whole subject, and in fact, volunteered his comment to the JTA reporter before being formally asked.

Report Czech Authorities Order Halt To Soliciting Fees From Czech Refugees

LONDON, Feb. 17 (JTA)--Czechoslovakian authorities have ordered a halt to the practice of some lawyers to solicit fees from Czech refugees against whom criminal proceedings have been brought for "illegal sojourn abroad." Gustav Husak, leader of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party said that neither he nor Premier Lubomir Strouhal had been aware of the practice. A spokesman for the Council of Jews from Czechoslovakia disclosed here yesterday that a number of Czech Jews who fled to Israel following the Warsaw Pact invasion of their country in 1968 had received notices of criminal proceedings along with a demand for fees for "defense counsel" to be paid in foreign currency.

Soviet Jewry Conference Assailed By Russians; Departure Of Jewish Families Held Up

BRUSSELS, Feb. 17 (JTA)--The Belgian Communist Party and the Soviet Embassy are planning a mass demonstration here Monday night against the world conference on Soviet Jewry which opens here at that time, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned today. According to the report, participants will include a number of prominent Soviet Jews, among them the vice-president of the Soviet Bar Association and Col. Gen. David Dragunsky, the highest ranking Jewish officer in the Russian armed forces. Meanwhile preparations for the conference were nearly completed. About 500 delegates from 50 countries are expected, among them former Premier David Ben Gurion of Israel. The conference will take place from Feb. 23-26. As the first delegates began to arrive today, the Soviet Union let loose a propaganda blast against the gathering and retaliated by holding up the departures of at least two Jewish families who had received exit visas and had planned to leave Moscow for Israel this week.

(Jewish sources identified the families as Mr. and Mrs. Viktor Fedoseyev and the family of David Drabkin, the latter an activist who has been agitating for months for emigration rights. The Fedoseyevs reportedly complied with an official request to return their exit documents until next week but Drabkin was said to insist on holding on to his. Authorities indicated that he could keep his papers as long as he didn't try to leave the country before the conference in Brussels ends, Jewish sources said.) The Soviet blast at the Brussels conference was attributed to Moscow's concern that it would mobilize anti-Soviet opinion in Western Europe over the issue of the treatment of Jews. The Kremlin was reportedly anxious to keep Russian-Jewish activists away from the conference which was said to account for the delay of the departures of the Drabkins and Fedoseyevs. The delay was also seen as a warning that anti-Soviet activities by Jewish groups abroad could rebound against Jews seeking to leave Russia. The Soviet press carried no news of the forthcoming Brussels conference. But the two Soviet news agencies, Tass and Novosti, denounced it yesterday.

Tass commentator Yuri Kornilov, said it could "only be regarded as another anti-Soviet provocation." He said the recent anti-Soviet incidents in the United States by the militant Jewish Defense League were "part of the program of preparations for the Brussels gathering worked out by Tel Aviv." Most of the American Jewish organization participating in the Brussels conference have strongly condemned the tactics of the JDL. Richard Cohen, an official of the American Jewish Congress in New York who is acting as press officer for the Brussels conference said there would be no non-Jewish participants except for Belgian Premier Gaston Eyskens who will extend official greetings to the gathering. Cohen said the agenda called for a series of eye-witness reports on the opening day from Jews who have left the Soviet Union recently. At the official opening of the conference on Tuesday evening, the keynote addresses will be delivered by Justice United States Supreme Court Justice and Former United Nations Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg and by the French Nobel Laureate, Prof. Rene Cassin. The closing session will be addressed by Ben-Gurion and by Dr. Joachim Prinz, of Newark, N.J., Cohen said.

Dayan: Better To Hold Sharm el-Sheikh Without Peace Than Peace Without This Area

TEL AVIV, Feb. 17 (JTA)--Defense Minister Moshe Dayan told a group of Israeli Army veterans last night that he would prefer to hold Sharm el-Sheikh without peace than to have a peace settlement without an Israeli military presence at the Sinai strongpoint. Sharm el-Sheikh, at the southern tip of the peninsula, commands the Straits of Tiran and access to Israel's port of Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba. Indications that Israel expects the Suez Canal to be reopened in the not too distant future with navigation rights for Israeli shipping were seen in a decision by the Zim Lines yesterday to shelve plans to operate a passenger liner service from Eilat to East and South African ports. The plan was based on the supposition that the Suez Canal would remain closed for a long time. Once the waterway is reopened there would be no need for the planned service from Eilat. In the early 1960s, the Zim Lines operated a passenger service from Eilat to East Africa, employing a chartered Burmese vessel. The service was suspended when the charter expired. Freighters and tankers of Israeli and other nationalities call regularly at Eilat but the port's foreign trade would suffer if the Suez Canal is opened to Israeli and other shipping.

Egypt Reported Ready To Move SAMs Across Canal When Israel Withdraws Its Forces

LONDON, Feb. 17 (JTA)--Diplomatic sources here said today that Egypt was preparing to move Soviet SAM-2 and SAM-3 anti-aircraft missiles across the Suez Canal the moment Israel withdraws its forces from the east bank of the waterway. The sources said that Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's proposal to reopen the canal in six months if the Israelis pulled back to a line east of El Arish indicated that Egypt does not regard the Suez Canal as an international waterway in the sense that it is understood by the United Nations. The sources said that Sadat made clear in his interview published in Newsweek magazine this week that he considered the canal Egyptian territory and that Israel had no business discussing its future. They said that at the same time Sadat made a clear distinction between the canal and the Straits of Tiran which connect the Gulf of Aqaba with the Red Sea. According to the diplomatic source, Egyptian diplomacy recently has been more effective than Israeli diplomacy. They said the constant arguments in public between Israeli ministers over peace terms weakened Israel's diplomatic position.

Fire In Shalom Tower Causes \$350,000 Damage; All Evacuated Safely

TEL AVIV, Feb. 17 (JTA)--A fire last night caused an estimated \$350,000 damage to Israel's tallest building, the 30-story Shalom Tower in downtown Tel Aviv which serves as an office building and a hotel. Firemen fought the blaze for several hours before bringing it under control. But they safely evacuated all of the hotel guests and other persons in the building. The fire broke out in the textile goods department of a supermarket on the third floor and threatened the upper floors which are occupied by the hotel.

Document Shows Jews Played Significant Role In Lithuanian Partisan Forces

JERUSALEM, Feb. 17 (JTA)--A document attesting to the very significant part played by Jewish partisans in the struggle against the Nazis in Lithuania has been published here for the first time in a doctoral dissertation on "Jewish Participation in Lithuania in the Struggle Against the Germans During the Second World War" delivered at the Hebrew University by Dov Levin. The document, written in Russian, gives personal details on each of the 76 men and women partisans in the "Struggle" Brigade. Cited are details not only on the military activities of the Brigade's members, but also on their nationality, their civilian occupations, their education. Dated August 7, 1944, it is signed by the Brigade's commanding officer, a Ukrainian Jewish captain, whose Jewish origins were known only to some of those who served under him, and by the assistant to the Chief of Staff of the Lithuanian partisan movement, Dr. Levin received the document some years ago from a former partisan, today an Israeli citizen who wishes to remain anonymous, who brought it with him from Russia. In analyzing this information, Dr. Levin himself a former partisan -- found that 80 percent of the Brigade was Jewish, with almost all the other members being Russian. The proportion of Jewish women involved was eight times larger than that of the non-Jewish women, while Jews had also served the longest within the Brigade's ranks. However, only three of its eleven officers were Jewish, since the Jewish members had little experience in military training as compared with their non-Jewish colleagues.

JTA Daily News Bulletin

Kollek Defends East Jerusalem Housing Plan Against U.S. State Department Attack

JERUSALEM, Feb. 17 (JTA)--There was no immediate comment from national leaders to the United States State Department's criticism yesterday of Housing Minister Zeev Sharef's endorsement of the controversial East Jerusalem housing plan. But Mayor Teddy Kollek said in a television interview last night that Israel had "a right that cannot be shaken" in carrying out the plan, which envisions new housing for Jews in the surrounding hills to assure a Jewish majority for the city. Kollek remarked that Israel was "trying to build a good city for all the citizens of Jerusalem regardless of any future boundaries and as befits good city planning," and that "Whoever introduces politics brings an alien element into the question." The section involved is formerly Arab territory captured in the Six-Day War that is subject to negotiation in the Jarring talks. State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey had said in Washington yesterday that the plan, which has been criticized by some architects as aesthetically undesirable, constituted "unilateral action" by Israel that would precipitate "change the status of the city." Meanwhile, Israeli Arabs in East Jerusalem and Ramallah, whose lands are among those requisitioned, greeted the McCloskey statement with joy. They have been hoping for sufficient American pressure on Israel to effect the return of their land.

Israel has requisitioned around 3,500 acres of Arab land in East Jerusalem since the June, 1967 war, most of it during the past six months, but only a handful of the former owners have applied for the compensation due them, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency has learned. Informed sources said they feared the scorn of fellow Arabs for dealing with "the enemy." Some Arabs have resorted to selling their land rights to Jews who have then sought the compensation as reimbursement. In many cases, the sources said, determination of ownership is impossible, as plots have been divided and subdivided many times over generations and may have dozens of registered "owners." One small plot, in fact, was found to have 1,000 such "owners." (In New York today, a United Nations spokesman said Secretary General Thant has been maintaining contact with Israel on the new-housing question "for some time, with a view towards Israel's compliance with Security Council resolutions." He would neither elaborate nor comment on Sharef's statement. He did say, however, that the last time Thant had contacted Israel regarding new building in captured areas was a few weeks ago.)

Anti-Semitic Acts Attributed To Zionist Agents To Further Its Own Propaganda

PARIS, Feb. 17 (JTA)--The Soviet news agency Novosti today accused "Zionist agent provocateurs" of deliberately committing anti-Semitic acts to further Zionist propaganda. In an eight-page French language commentary dated Feb. 8 but received here only today, Novosti said that "agents of the Zionist secret service set fire to synagogues, violated Jewish cemeteries and committed other ignoble provocations which are now being exploited by the Zionist propaganda machine." Novosti carries news of the Soviet Union for foreign consumption. Its dispatches are not published inside Russia. The news agency claimed that the "same technique has been used by the Zionists in Iraq, Egypt and Morocco and even in the United States and Argentina. Observers here believe the Novosti charges were published to counteract the forthcoming world conference on Soviet Jewry which opens in Brussels next Monday. It quoted out of context items from the Israeli press and past statements by Dr. Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress, to the effect that "the appearance of anti-Semitism is the Zionists' best weapon." Novosti claimed that Dr. Emil Goldstucker, a prominent Czech Jewish refugee who fled the 1968 Soviet invasion of his homeland "wrote anti-Semitic letters to himself."

B'nai B'rith Women Moved By Racially, Religiously Mixed Choir Of Young Addicts

WASHINGTON, D.C., Feb. 17 (JTA)--Seven hundred members of the B'nai B'rith Women were emotionally overwhelmed today by a performance by a racially and religiously mixed choir of heroin-addicted youngsters from Odyssey House, the New York drug-treatment center. The performance closed the organization's four-day triennial international convention. The women wept openly when a black youngster sang the solo part of the closing number, the theme from "Exodus" and gave a standing ovation to the choir of 18 boys and girls aged 13 to 17, who were making their first public appearance as a singing group. The choir director, Martin Sussman, is a former Odyssey House patient. Mrs. Judianne Densen-Gerber, founder and executive director of the clinic, was one of six women honored by the BBW. The others were Mrs. Joan Ganz Cooney, producer of television's "Sesame Street"; Katherine Graham, president of the Washington Post; Elizabeth Duncan Koontz, the first Negro director of the Labor Department's Women's Bureau; Judge Lenore Underwood Mills, 82-year-old retired jurist who was the first national president of the BBW, and Sally Priesand, the 24-year-old prospective woman rabbi studying at the Reform Seminary in Cincinnati.

At yesterday's session Dr. William Korey, director of the United Nations bureau of the B'nai B'rith, told the delegates that Soviet Jews had sent 294 emigration-aid petitions to date to the UN and various national governments. The signers, he said, were mostly employed in the sciences and the humanities and were mostly from Riga, Moscow, Tbilisi (cq) and Kutisi, the latter two cities in the Georgian SSR. "The petitions," Dr. Korey said, "reflect the burgeoning Jewish pride of these young Jews. They mention Jewish heroes -- the Maccabees and those of the Warsaw Ghetto -- and the unity of the Jewish people and the love of Israel. In the American idiom, the petitions would read 'Jewish is beautiful.'" Last night Mrs. Nathan Holstein of Pittsburgh was installed as the BBW's 16th international president, succeeding Mrs. Michael Shapiro of Washington. As president-elect, to succeed Mrs. Holstein in 1974, the convention elected Mrs. Milton T. Smith of Austin, Texas.

1,277 Sabotage Acts In Gaza Strip Since Six-Day War; VD On The Rise In Israeli Army

JERUSALEM, Feb. 17 (JTA)--There were 1,277 acts of sabotage in the Gaza Strip between the Six-Day War and this past Sunday, resulting in death to 250 persons and injuries to 1,345 others, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan told the Knesset today. The dead included 12 Israeli soldiers and 11 Israeli civilians, and the injured included 167 Israeli soldiers and 57 Israeli civilians, he said, the remaining majority being Arabs. Dayan also disclosed that venereal disease is on the rise in the Israeli Army. He said there were 360 cases last year compared to 285 in 1969 and 189 in 1968. He said that in 1968 there were only 98 cases but a year later there were 141.

