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Legislation Planned To Give Jews Right To Vote In Protestant School Board Elections

MONTREAL, March 24 (JTA)--A Quebec Education Ministry official announced yesterday that legislation is planned to give 40,000 Montreal Jews the right to vote in elections for the Protestant School Board of Montreal whose schools are attended by many of their children and whose costs are supported by their property taxes. Dr. Victor Goldbloom, Minister Without Portfolio attached to the Education Ministry, announced yesterday that legislation to enfranchise the Jewish parents will be introduced in the Quebec Assembly in time for passage for Jewish participation in the forthcoming June elections to the board. Some 20,000 Jewish children, about 75 percent of all Jewish children of school age, attend the Protestant schools. There are no non-sectarian public schools in Quebec. Schools are under Catholic and Protestant sponsorship. Some Jewish children attend privately-sponsored Jewish day schools. Taxes on property paid by all resident property owners, Jews included, finance operations of the Protestant and Catholic schools. No Jewish children attend the Catholic-sponsored schools, the JTA was informed. Dr. Goldbloom said the measure would "put an end to an anachronistic situation where there was taxation without representation." The Canadian Jewish Congress, which has long sought such a change, said the measure would end "blatant discrimination."

Uncle Of Three Jews Sentenced In Leningrad Appeals For Justice

LONDON, March 24 (JTA)--Abraham Zalmanson, the uncle of three of the Jewish prisoners sentenced in Leningrad, appealed here today "to the British, the Soviet Embassy and the British Communist Party for a just answer to the unfounded accusations against my relatives." He spoke at a press conference after his attempts to present his case were rebuffed at the Soviet Embassy, where he tried to submit a petition. Zalmanson, who left Riga in 1959 and is now a film projectionist in Tel Aviv, said he was shocked by the rebuff. "I was wounded three times serving in the Red Army, and this is the way they treat me now," he said. He offered thanks to "the people of Britain and the rest of the world for raising their voices against the death sentences imposed in Leningrad. His nephew Lt. Wolf Zalmanson was sentenced in Leningrad to 10 years in prison, his niece Silva Zalmanson Kuznetsov to 10 years and his nephew Isak Zalmanson to eight years. (Mrs. Kuznetsov's husband, Edvard, received a death sentence that was later commuted to life imprisonment.) Abraham Zalmanson and several officials of the World Union of Jewish Students, which sponsored today's press conference, said they had tried to present his case today to a diplomat at the Soviet Embassy, but that the diplomat called the police.

"I have never seen anyone who was so annoyed and hostile," said WUJS representative Colin Shindler of the Soviet official. "He was really red in the face with rage." Shindler added that before the press conference he telephoned John Gollan, secretary general of the British Communist Party, to ask him to raise the issue of Soviet Jewish rights before the Soviet Communist Party congress next week. "As soon as I mentioned the Universities Committee for Soviet Jewry, he put the phone down," Shindler said. The WUJS official also reported that the nine Jews sentenced at Leningrad had been split into two groups, some being held in that city and some being sent to Siberian labor camps. Zalmanson read from letters sent him by his niece Silva, one of them disclosing that the director of the factory she worked in had refused to give her a character reference that would have enabled her to leave the country before the date of the alleged hijacking attempt. Zalmanson said he has written to Prime Minister Edward Heath for an appointment to ask him to intervene on behalf of the convicted Jews.

The text of the petition to the Soviet Communist Party by 18 relatives of arrested and convicted Jews who were refused admittance to the Central Committee building last week was made available here today. They wrote, in part: "Exactly nine months ago, on June 15 (1970), our sons, friends and husbands were arrested in Leningrad. Today it is exactly nine months since our sorrow and theirs began. We are convinced that innocent people are kept under guard... The fact that no trial has been conducted in the space of nine months means that it has become clear to all that there is nothing to try these people for. In such a case the accused should be released immediately. We cannot imagine that the highest organs of authority are deliberately delaying the trial in order to hold it after the 24th congress of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union)." The writers charged that their relatives had been imprisoned for seeking to make use of "the lawful right" to migrate to Israel. "We hope that you will deal with our request with understanding and will not force us to take extreme measures out of desperation," they concluded, adding that they had come to Moscow specifically to pursue their cause "and we shall have enough patience to wait as long as it will prove necessary to attain our aim."

Italian Jews Win 22-Year Struggle For Exemption From World War II Property Taxes

ROME, March 24 (JTA)--Italian Jews won a 22-year struggle today for the same exemptions from World War II property taxes granted "citizens of the united nations" by the Italian government in 1948. They were the only Italians not included in that category, and sought a return of the property confiscated under Mussolini's racial laws. The Foreign Affairs Commission, endorsing the Senate's new interpretation of Article 78 of the peace treaty between the Allies and Fascist Italy, agreed today to exempt Italian Jews from the confiscations retroactively.

Rogers To Address Senate On Mideast Views; Split In Senate Developing

WASHINGTON, March 24 (JTA)--Secretary of State William P. Rogers will appear before the full Senate tomorrow afternoon to present the State Department's position on the Middle East situation, State Department spokesman Charles Bray reported today. This is believed to be the first time in

American history that a Secretary of State will have made such an appearance. "The Secretary is anxious to give the facts of the situation, the facts of the American position and the facts of the parties as we understand them, to the Senate," Bray said. He denied that Rogers is seeking concurrence with the Senate on a Big Four peace-keeping force in the Mideast. The spokesman refused to be drawn into a discussion as to whether the State Department position is being supported by a majority of the Congress. In response to a question whether it was Senator J. William Fulbright, Republican of Arkansas, and chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, or New York Republican Jacob Javits who was interested in the Secretary's appearance before the Senate, Bray replied, "My understanding is that the interest was first expressed by the office of the Senate Majority Leader" Mike Mansfield, Montana Democrat.

Bray said he thought the decision for Rogers' appearance had come before yesterday's debate in the Senate in which Democratic Senators Henry M. Jackson, Hubert H. Humphrey and Abraham Ribicoff and Javits joined in opposing the Rogers' plan calling for Israel's withdrawal to its pre-1967 borders and the deployment of Soviet troops in a peace-keeping force in the Middle East. Fulbright's defense of Rogers' proposal was supported by Senator George D. Aiken, Republican of Vermont. Fulbright was summoned to the Senate floor from a committee briefing by Aiken as Jackson and Javits denounced Rogers' proposal. Fulbright said he agreed with Rogers that security gained by the retention of territory was "illusory." He urged Israel to reaffirm its support in principle of the United Nations Resolution 242 and charged that the Israelis were "hardening" their position on withdrawal because they believe that the U.S. and the Senate "will be completely at their disposal" no matter what position they take. Israel should not "take the United States so much for granted," Fulbright warned.

Meanwhile, the State Department refused to comment today on a report appearing in the New York Times that a "campaign" had been organized in the Senate against Rogers' proposal. Observers here however, expressed their puzzlement as to why the Secretary felt it was necessary to appear before the Senate after he had testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on the Middle East situation only two weeks ago. At the same time, Bray declined to comment on a report appearing today in the Chicago Sun-Times stating that President Nixon has ruled out the stationing of any Russian troops on Israel's borders as part of a UN peace-keeping force in the Middle East. According to the report, reliable administration sources had disclosed that an exhaustive top-level study is under way to determine how best to deploy Russian, U.S. and other troops within the peace-keeping force.

Report U.S. Prepared To Agree To Some Form Of Israeli Control Of Sharm el-Sheikh

JERUSALEM, March 24 (JTA)--Reliable sources said today that the United States is prepared to agree to some form of Israeli control over the Sharm el-Sheikh stronghold in southern Sinai, short of permanent sovereignty. The sources said that in essence, the differences between Washington and Israel over the future Egyptian-Israeli borders have been reduced to the form of control over Sharm el-Sheikh and a land connection between it and Israel proper. The problem was discussed at a meeting last night by Premier Golda Meir and U.S. Ambassador Walworth Barbour. The U.S. reportedly favors a long term leasing of Sharm el-Sheikh to Israel and concedes that an area of undetermined size adjacent to Ellat should be annexed to Israel for security reasons. The U.S. however is not convinced that a land bridge between Israel and Sharm el-Sheikh is vital. Mrs. Meir's meeting with Barbour followed Foreign Minister Abba Eban's report on his meeting in Washington last week with Secretary of State William P. Rogers and White House national security affairs advisor Dr. Henry Kissinger. Mrs. Meir agreed to the request by the American officials that Israel supply the U.S. with more concrete details of the principles that would guide Israel's territorial claims once actual peace negotiations get under way.

Mrs. Meir took pains to scotch rumors that she gave Ambassador Barbour a territorial map. Her political secretary, Simcha Dinitz, phoned newspaper editors last night stressing that no maps of any kind had changed hands. There was no indication whether the U.S. has or will support Israel's claims to control of Sharm el-Sheikh at the Big Four meetings in New York, although some observers claim that the American stand is responsible for the continuing impasse in the Four Power deliberations. It was not known whether Egypt has been sounded out by the U.S. on the possibility of leasing Sharm el-Sheikh to Israel. Nor was it known whether such an arrangement is, indeed, acceptable to Israel. Reliable sources said there were differences in the Cabinet over the extent of the projected land bridge between Israel proper and Sharm el-Sheikh. Ministers described as "minimalists" in their demands, were said to be satisfied with a land connection running from Ellat at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba to Sharm el-Sheikh, along the eastern shore of the Sinai peninsula. Others, said to include Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, want a much broader connection. They envision a line running from a point near El Arish on the Mediterranean coast to Sharm el-Sheikh. Dayan himself reportedly is undecided on the location or shape of such a line. The difference between a straight line from El Arish to Sharm el-Sheikh and a curved line could involve a difference of some 10,000 square miles.

Sadat Says He Is Ready To Accept International Force At Sharm el-Sheikh

PARIS, March 24 (JTA)--President Anwar Sadat of Egypt said in an interview published today in Le Figaro that he was ready to accept an international force at Sharm el-Sheikh but not throughout the Sinai Peninsula. He added that Egypt would not accept the demilitarization of the Sinai "unless a similar demilitarized zone is created on the other side of the border, in Israel." Sadat repeated that Egypt was "ready to conclude peace with Israel" on condition that "all the (occupied) territories be returned," but cautioned that even then there could not be a lasting peace "unless the Palestinian issue is solved." The interview was also broadcast last night over French television.

Soviet Jews Contend There Is No Anti-Semitism, Denounce Zionism

LONDON, March 24 (JTA)--A Jewish member of the Red Army Ensemble which is performing here, told a press conference that anti-Semitism does not exist in the Soviet Union. Sergeant Kari Kapian,

a singer in the troupe, told newsmen that he felt "no different from his non-Jewish colleagues of the ensemble." His words were carefully noted by several youthful members of Herut-Hatzohar who attended the press conference. They reported that several other Jewish members of the troupe appeared at the conference mouthing the same denials, but all of the Soviet Jewish artists, the Herut members disclosed, had admitted that they were not "practising Jews." Meanwhile, Jewish sources in Russia and abroad see the forthcoming World Communist Party congress in Moscow as an event that will determine the future course of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. Some believe that the recent easing of policy on the granting of exit visas to Jews stemmed from a desire to avoid embarrassing incidents when the Soviet Communist Party plays host to Communist delegations from all over the world next month. They fear that once the congress adjourns, Soviet authorities will revert to the old restrictive policies on emigration. One observer in Moscow told Western newsmen yesterday that the Soviets may "postpone" additional emigration to Israel until the furore created by Jewish emigration demands dies down in the West.

An attempt to advance the impression that a majority of Russian Jews do not want to emigrate was believed to be the purpose behind yesterday's meeting in Moscow's Great Synagogue. Some 60 rabbis, cantors and Jewish lay leaders from all over Russia asserted the well-being of Soviet Jewry and denounced Zionist interference and the "dirty slander from abroad." Aspects of the meeting indicated that it was "staged" for the benefit of Soviet domestic news media and the external propaganda agency, Novosti. Western newsmen were not informed of the meeting but were alerted to it by unofficial sources. When they arrived at the synagogue they found the doors closed but were eventually admitted after some deliberation. One observer described the gathering as a "mini-Brussels conference" in reverse. In addition to rabbis and religious functionaries from Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa, and Baku, Jews attended from more than a dozen remote cities and provinces in the Ukraine, Caucasus, Central Asia and Siberia. Newsmen reported that most speakers, including Moscow's Chief Rabbi, Yehuda Leib Levin, read from prepared texts and that all but three of the delegates appeared to be over 50 years old. Outside the synagogue a group of 40 Jews who want to emigrate to Israel protested to newsmen that those inside did not speak for Soviet Jewry.

AJCongress Urges Rockefeller To Veto Bill Permitting Silent School Prayers

NEW YORK, March 24 (JTA)--The American Jewish Congress called on Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller today to veto a bill passed yesterday by the State Senate to permit "silent prayer or meditation" in public schools at the beginning of each school day. In a telegram to the Governor's mansion in Albany, Theodore J. Kolish, chairman of the AJCongress New York Metropolitan Council urged Rockefeller to veto the bill. "This bill is an obvious attempt to circumvent the U.S. Supreme Court's sound decision holding that it is not the business of the State through the public schools or otherwise to foster religion," Kolish stated. "Preservation of our religious heritage is the responsibility of the home, the church and the synagogue. There is no reason to believe that they have failed in that responsibility. In any case, religion and religious freedom are the inevitable losers when the government ventures into this field."

Complaint Lodged Against Operation On The Sabbath Of Cable Car

JERUSALEM, March 24 (JTA)--Knesset member Shlomo Lorincz of Agudat Israel lodged a formal complaint in the Knesset today against the operation on the Sabbath of a recently completed cable car connection from the Dead Sea shore to the top of the ancient Jewish fortress of Masada. Demanding a debate on the issue, he exclaimed, "The heroes of Masada have fallen in vain!" Lorincz continued: "The defenders of Masada died because they refused to give up their rights to practise their religion. What the Roman legions failed to do two thousand years ago, has now been achieved by the Israelis. In reply to his charges, Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon stated that the matter was entirely out of the government's control. The cableway, he said, had been built and was being run by a foreign investor's company under an irrevocable contract with the National Parks Authority, an independent body under the law. The Parks Authority, he continued, had leased the site from the National Lands Administration for 49 years, and nothing could be legally done before the year 2018. Allon added that if the government would interfere, it would be guilty of breach of contract, and therefore, he concluded, it would be pointless to debate the motion or refer it to a committee for study.

Effort To Kidnap Former Nazi Officer Confirmed By Public Prosecutor

COLOGNE, March 24 (JTA)--The public prosecutor has confirmed that an attempt had been made Monday to kidnap a former Nazi officer, Dr. Kurt Paul Werner Lischka, 61, who had been in charge of the Jewish department of the Reich security office in 1942-43, and also at the Paris headquarters of the Gestapo towards the end of the war. In 1950, Lischka was sentenced to life imprisonment by a Paris court in absentia. The prosecutor declined to comment on a claim by Mrs. Beate Klarsfeld that she and some helpers had tried to capture Lischka and would try again. In 1968 Mrs. Klarsfeld attacked the then Chancellor Dr. Kurt Kiesinger at a public meeting and slapped his face.

Resolution Urges Administration To Support Israel's Border Positions

WASHINGTON, March 24 (JTA)--Rep. Joshua Eilberg has introduced a Congressional resolution calling on the administration to support Israel's border positions in the current Middle East negotiations. "Developments of the past week have raised serious questions," the Pa. Democrat said, "about the commitment of this administration to the Israeli position in the talks." Rogers' statements of last week, he stated, "suggest that the administration may be compromising both Israel's first opportunity for a real peace treaty as well as its capability to defend itself." For Israel to accept the Rogers' position, Eilberg continued, "would mean little more than a retreat to the pre-1967 positions which led to war." The old boundaries and a peace-keeping force at Sharm el-Sheikh were insufficient to keep the peace in 1967, he said. "To think that such conditions would preserve the peace now is foolish and dangerous," Eilberg's legislation, a "sense of Congress" resolution, urges the President to take immediate steps to end the full support of the U.S. to Premier Golda Meir's publicly stated positions on Mideast borders which she outlined last week in her address to the Knesset.

