

JTA daily news bulletin

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

Contents copyright: Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

Vol. XXXVIII - Fifty-Fourth Year

Thursday, June 24, 1971

No. 129

Shur Goes On Hunger Strike To Protest Charges Against Him

NEW YORK, June 23 (JTA)--Hillel Zalmanovich Shur, the Soviet Jewish defendant in Kishinev who reported yesterday that he had been offered a "judicial bribe" by the prosecution, went on a hunger strike today to protest the charges of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda against him, Jewish sources here reported. The authorities summoned the 35-year-old Shur's mother and uncle to persuade them to convince him to discontinue his hunger strike, the sources said, but it was not immediately known if the plea was successful. Shur was reported by Riga friends yesterday to have declared his intention not to participate in the trial because "my case is not under the jurisdiction of the Kishinev court" and "not a single witness from Kishinev has been questioned in regard to my case." The Jewish sources said that on the second day of the trial today, defendant Anatoly Moiseyevich Goldfeld testified that most of the allegedly anti-Soviet materials he had had in his possession had been approved by the glavlit, the publication-censorship unit of the Soviet government. Gari Kirschner, accused of reproducing "anti-Soviet" material from Israel, did not deny the act, the sources said, but contended that the material was not "anti-Soviet" and was used only for private educational purposes.

Abraham Trakhtenberg was said by the sources to have asserted he studied the material in question for educational and cultural reasons. Defendant Simeon Abramovich Levit testified that his only intention was to study Hebrew, the sources reported. (Tass said yesterday that Shur was the only defendant to plead not guilty. Tass said Goldfeld, Kirschner, Aleksander Galperin and Arkady Voloshin knew the Jews who were convicted earlier in Leningrad for allegedly trying to skyjack a Soviet airliner.) Per Soviet custom, the Kishinev trial is closed to other than specially invited guests, but even so the police are searching entrants and forbidding them to bring packages into the courtroom, according to Jewish sources. In addition, in order to discourage crowds at the building, the authorities have closed down the nearby bus stop and situated it elsewhere. Meanwhile, Jewish sources here confirmed that Russian Jewish professor Mikhail I. Zand has had his emigration application approved again, but they did not know if Dr. Zand would actually be allowed to go to Israel or would again have his visa suspended. There was no immediate word as to whether or not the trial of Roiza Palatnik, scheduled to have started today, had actually begun.

ADL Denounces Government Wiretap Of JDL Leaders

NEW YORK, June 23 (JTA)--Seymour Graubard, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, denounced today the action of the U.S. Attorney General in employing wiretaps on conversations of Jewish Defense League leaders without first obtaining a court order. Graubard said that while the ADL, along with most other responsible Jewish agencies and organizations, is on record as vigorously opposing the unlawful violence employed by the JDL, "we do not believe that the outrageous tactics frequently employed by the JDL warrant disregard by the U.S. government of the constitutional rights of the Jewish Defense League, its members or its leaders." Graubard added: "We will continue to denounce the JDL so long as it continues to use violence and other tactics that violate the law. But we likewise denounce the action of the Attorney General of the United States in employing wiretaps not authorized by a court of law. ADL is just as opposed to disregard of Constitutional rights as it is to unlawful violence."

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported yesterday that the conversations of 10 of the 13 JDL leaders currently facing gun conspiracy charges had been overheard by wiretaps not authorized by court order. The government contended that the wiretap was necessary and essential "to protect the nation and its citizens against hostile acts of a foreign power and to obtain information against foreign intelligence activities deemed essential to the security of the United States." The U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, where the disclosure was made last Friday, ordered the government attorney to give the transcripts to the defendants. He was given until Friday to comply with this order. Graubard stated that earlier this year, the ADL unanimously adopted a resolution protesting infringement upon civil liberties by agencies of the federal government charging that such infringements form a substantial danger to the preservation of the American democratic way of life.

Israel Bond Organization Workers Return To Jobs; New Contract Signed

NEW YORK, June 23 (JTA)--The 500 professional and clerical employees of the Israel Bond Organization returned to work across the country this morning after agreeing yesterday afternoon to a new two-year contract on the 39th day of their walkout. Under the terms of the contract, according to Erik Strong, spokesman for Local 1797 of the Community and Social Agency Employees Union, AFL-CIO, the professionals will receive \$1,000 increases the first year and \$800 increases the second year and the clerical workers will get \$10 a week more the first year and \$8 a week more the second year. Strong said the union also won a cost-of-living increase and an additional \$100,000 in premiums for insurance and health benefits, and will not lose vacation, sick leave or seniority.

The union spokesman added that management withdrew its demands for the right to set arbitrary working hours; to transfer professional workers arbitrarily, to set salary ceilings, to require retirement at age 65 without adequate pension, to reduce sick leave and severance pay, and to grant new employees the right to pay union dues without having to join the local. A management spokesman declined to confirm or deny the reported terms, saying comment would serve "no useful purpose," but would "continue the kind of divisive spirit" prevalent during the walkout. He said only that there was "compromise on both sides." In a joint statement, management and union said they were "highly gratified that a fair and honorable settlement has been reached" that reflects "an agreement achieved through compromise and good will in order to serve the higher interests of Israel." They added their confidence

that "as in the past, the coming days will see the continuation of solidarity between our staff and our volunteers in the common interest and purpose of maximum results for the welfare and the further development of Israel."

Jewish Agency Assembly Told About Israel's Urgent Housing, Military Needs

JERUSALEM, June 23 (JTA)--The urgent needs for more housing and the maintenance of Israel's military strength--two problems related by the vast expenditures that each demands--were the focus of attention at last night's sessions of the reconstituted Jewish Agency Assembly. They were addressed by speakers at plenary sessions and committee meetings, among them Foreign Minister Abba Eban, Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and Gen. Haim Bar Lev, Chief of Staff of Israel's armed forces. Eban said the maintenance of Israel's arms balance against the rapidly increasing military might of the Arabs--principally Egypt--has become the most important principle of Israel's foreign policy "and we ask the nations of the world to help us in this respect." Dayan, replying to questions at a closed committee meeting, praised the stance of President Nixon who, he said, has stood firm on all undertakings he has given Israel for military support and on the political front. Sapir said that Soviet military assistance to Egypt has reached \$2.7 billion. He added, "In order for you to understand how much this burden weighs heavily upon us it is enough to point out that 25 percent of our gross national product is directed toward this (defense) purpose, a proportion greater by almost three times that of the United States which is fighting in Vietnam and four to six times greater than in countries of Western Europe." Sapir observed that despite the defense burden, Israel must provide 15,000 flats annually if it is to admit 50,000 immigrants a year. "All this represents an annual investment in the neighborhood of \$150 million. From an economic viewpoint there is nothing like investment in housing for the creation of inflationary pressures."

"From the viewpoint of absorption, there is no investment that is more important. This again is an example of the fact that we are often forced to live by contradictions," Sapir said. Joseph Sharon, director general of the Housing Ministry, told a meeting of the Assembly's housing committee that Israel has 111,000 families in need of adequate housing and to satisfy only half of them would cost \$350 million. He said that even if the funds were available it would be difficult to speed up the rate of housing construction because of the shortage of skilled labor. Sharon denied that the government was "turning a blind eye" to the housing needs of young couples with large families. He observed however that his ministry's budget was based mainly on the housing needs of new immigrants. He asked the committee's assistance in obtaining new appropriations for non-immigrant housing. Eliezer Shmueli, deputy director of the Education Ministry seemed to imply in remarks to the Assembly's education committee that lack of proper schooling rather than the housing shortage was responsible for such phenomena as the Black Panthers, Jerusalem slum youths who have been demonstrating against squalid living conditions. Shmueli observed that the Panther movement did not occur in the new development towns. He attributed this largely to "the network of comprehensive schools" set up and funded by the Jewish Agency.

Replying to questions put to him at a closed meeting, Dayan said Israel did not object to a partial agreement with Egypt to reopen the Suez Canal but he saw no need for Israel to pull back from the canal banks in order to restore the waterway to operation. The canal, he said, was Israel's most effective military line. Dayan, in effect, seemed to disavow by these remarks the proposal said to have originated with him months ago that Israel would be willing to withdraw some distance from the canal's banks under terms of an interim arrangement with Egypt. Dayan also took a hard line on Sharm el-Sheikh. He said the attack on the Israel-bound Liberian tanker Coral Sea in the Straits of Bab el-Mandab two weeks ago, confirmed once more "the imperative necessity for Israel to hold on to Sharm el-Sheikh." He said that as long as Israeli forces occupy that strong point, "we need not fear for the situation at Bab el-Mandab." Sharm el-Sheikh provides Israel with its closest base to the narrow straits between South Yemen and Ethiopia which provide the only channel between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Reviewing the military situation, Gen. Bar Lev said that if fighting was resumed the main objective of Israel's forces would be to hold the present lines and create such military pressure as to convince Egypt that it could gain nothing by military means. Eban said there was full agreement between Israel and the U.S. on the necessity to maintain the arms balance in the Middle East, although there are some differences of approach. He said there was no reason to assume that the term, "balance of arms" has lost its credibility.

UAR Envoy Hints U.S.-Egyptian Diplomatic Relations May Be Restored

PARIS, June 23 (JTA)--Egypt's Ambassador Abdullah El Erim indicated yesterday that Egypt still maintains close contact with the U.S. and continues to rely on American pressure on Israel to "enable us to reach a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict." Speaking at a luncheon of the Diplomatic Press Association, El Erim also hinted, but refused to confirm, that Egypt and the U.S. were considering the resumption of diplomatic relations which were broken by Egypt during the Six-Day War. In response to questions, he said Egypt would have no objections to the resumption of diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR if it meant that Israel would adhere to the UN charter and carry out Security Council resolutions including the withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories.

Pincus Elected Agency Chairman; 22 American Members On Board of Governors

JERUSALEM, June 23 (JTA)--Louis Pincus was elected chairman of the Assembly of the reconstituted Jewish Agency today and Leon Dultzin was elected treasurer. Also elected was a 40-member Board of Governors, including 21 Americans, which will govern the Jewish Agency's activities between meetings of the Assembly and possess full power to set policies. The American members, in alphabetical order, are: Albert Adelman; Victor Carter; Melvin Dubinsky; Rabbi Leon Feuer; Max Fisher; Edward Ginsberg; Prof. Ben Halpern; Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg; Mrs. Charlette Jacobson; Morris Levinson; Joseph Meyerhoff; Rabbi Israel Miller; Dr. Emanuel Neumann; Rabbi Emanuel Packman; Sam Rothberg; Robert Russel; Avraham Schenker; Louis Stern; Dewey D. Stone; Jack Weiler; and Paul Zuckerman.

Allon Tells Presidents Conference New Initiatives Required To Avert New War

NEW YORK, June 23 (JTA)--Israeli Deputy Premier Yigal Allon told 150 Jewish leaders here yesterday that Egypt's insistence on regaining every inch of her captured territory, encouraged by pro-Arab sentiments around the world, was making Egypt more stubborn and Israel more worried. In a 50-minute statement followed by 40 minutes of answers to questions, Allon advised representatives of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations that new initiatives were needed to solve the territorial problem and avert another shooting war. But he did not say who should come up with such initiatives. Allon arrived here last night on a speaking tour for the Israel Bond Organization that will take him to Milwaukee, Wis.; Newark, N.J.; back to New York; and then to San Francisco and Los Angeles. The Israeli official said at yesterday's private meeting that the 15-year treaty between Moscow and Cairo represented a Soviet legal claim on Egypt and that Egypt was nearing the status of a Soviet satellite.

The presence of Soviet troops on Egyptian soil, however, will become a provocation to the proud Egyptian populace, Allon suggested. The Kremlin's promise of further, massive military aid to Egypt has tilted the balance of power and requires immediate and permanent restoration by the United States, Allon said. He explained that Israel was now inferior to Egypt in terms of weaponry, "hardware" and manpower. But he warned that an Egyptian attack would result in another Israeli victory. Repeating an offer made over the weekend by Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban, Allon said Israel was willing to resume diplomatic relations with the Kremlin, but he added that the Soviets have not indicated their interest. Allon criticized the use of violence in demonstrations for Soviet Jewry as counterproductive, calling it a "double-edged sword." He contended that poverty in Israel was decreasing and that the government was implementing programs to eradicate it.

Tekoah Rejects Charge That Israel, Zionists Fabricate Plight Of Soviet Jews

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., June 23 (JTA)--Yosef Tekoah, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, yesterday rejected charges by the Soviet envoy to the UN that "Zionist circles in the United States and a number of other countries have been carrying on a malicious and slanderous anti-Soviet campaign in connection with the so-called 'Jewish question' in the USSR, deliberately fabricated by them." Tekoah condemned this allegation by Yakov Malik in a letter the Soviet ambassador sent to UN Secretary General U Thant on June 15. "The Soviet letter," Tekoah wrote to Thant, "suggests that the general concern for the plight of Jews in the Soviet Union is a politically motivated anti-Soviet campaign inspired by Israel and Zionism. The truth is too well known to be dismissed in so cavalier a fashion." The Israeli ambassador stated that "no ulterior motives are necessary to sympathize with the suffering of Soviet Jewry." Actually, Tekoah observed, the struggle of Soviet Jews for their elementary rights and for the right of those who desire to reunite with their families and their people in Israel, "is one of the most stirring human rights struggles of our time." He noted that this struggle has "evoked the sympathy of men of good will, Jews and non-Jews alike, in all parts of the world," including Communist Parties in other lands and Soviet intellectuals.

Malik, in his letter, asserted that one of the forms of the "hostile anti-Soviet campaign" is the organization by "Zionist centers" dispatching to various institutions, including the UN, "of letters deliberately fabricated by them in advance and containing so-called 'protests.'" As proof of his allegation, Malik cited a request by Congregation Beth Shalom, the location of which he did not identify, that its members and friends send one letter a week for a month to Malik and to Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Soviet ambassador to the United States, urging the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate. Malik reproduced what he claimed were sample letters the synagogue suggested be sent out. Challenging Malik, Tekoah wrote that "it is characteristic of the Soviet attitude" that Malik's letter to Thant "should mask its attack on a Jewish synagogue congregation's efforts to express such concern in a manner normal to democratic society, with an assault on Israel and Zionism, the Jewish people's national liberation movement." The target of this assault, Tekoah stated "is clear. It is the Jewish people and its fundamental rights."

SPECIAL TO JTA

Israeli Officials Rule Out Possibility JDL Wiretap Involved Israel

WASHINGTON, June 23 (JTA)--Israeli officials here ruled out the possibility that the object of the wiretap involved in the JDL gun conspiracy trial in New York is an Israeli telephone. The Justice Department brief, as reported by the JTA yesterday, justified the wiretap on the basis of foreign policy considerations. Israeli officials say that there is no need for the American government to tap Israeli phones in that the U.S. and Israel are "all part of a family." Said one official, "If they really think it is necessary to tap Israeli phones, let them do it. Employees of the Israeli government are loyal to the laws of the U.S. and to the Israeli government." The official defined loyalty to Israel as complete compliance with statements by Golda Meir condemning by implication the Jewish Defense League. He maintained that no Israeli employee either officially or unofficially maintained contact with the JDL enough to fill several hundred pages of logs.

Israeli officials could not rule out the possibility that some Israeli who privately supports the JDL and is sent here under some government exchange program on a civilian but not official assignment, could be helping the JDL and be a subject of U.S. phone taps. According to sources close to the case, this is a possible explanation. They say that the judge would be more hesitant to find, as he did, that "there was a substantial probability that the tap was illegal," if it was indeed the tap of an official Embassy phone. They say that there is some possibility that the JDL organization phone is involved, but wonder why all 13 instead of just 10 were not overheard. The Justice Department Public Information Officer John Wilson said that he could not define the usage of the term "direct surveillance" as used by the government brief except to say that the JDL conversations overheard were "on someone else's phone, either that they called or someone who called them." Wilson also said that the praeology in the government brief referring to a "hostile power" and to intelligence activities is "unusual" even in wiretap cases involving the national security, and "not frequently used." In response to a JTA question, Wilson said that he did not know of any other instances where the phrases were used.

CCAR Expresses Shock At Government Effort To Ban Vietnam Report

ST. LOUIS, June 23 (JTA)--The Central Conference of American Rabbis agreed in principle today that it was "shocked" at the federal government's attempt to ban publication of a classified Pentagon report on the Vietnam war and thus to "abrogate the basic principle of the First Amendment, jeopardizing freedom of the press." Referring to the secret study published in part by the New York Times and since then by other newspapers, the Reform rabbis agreed that the study was "part of our nation's history" in that it detailed growing American involvement in the "infamous war in Vietnam." The American people, said the rabbis, "have a right to know what their government is doing." They added that "the only way to end the war"--which they called a "useless, wasteful, bloody conflict"--"is to end it quickly." They suggested a Dec. 31 deadline for an American pullout. The CCAR, meeting in convention here, also agreed in principle to bid President Nixon to establish a special committee, to include clergymen, that would consider new guidelines for the classification of government documents. The convention will vote on the formal texts of the resolutions tomorrow.

The convention, after considerable internal argument, tabled a resolution endorsing bail and a fair trial for Angela Davis, the militant black Communist who charges that her continued incarceration on gun conspiracy charges and complicity in murder is unlawful. The rabbis decided that the section on bail--contending that denial of it to Miss Davis violated the Eighth Amendment's ban on "cruel and unusual punishment"--was a legal matter that they were not competent to comment on. The convention also decided not to take a position on the question of a volunteer army. The convention also reaffirmed its 26-year-old stand against public aid to private schools, adding that it favored the establishment of Reform day schools as a base for future Jewish leadership. The only Reform day school in the country is Rodeph Shalom Congregation in New York. Rabbi Charles Kroloff, chairman of the CCAR's church-state committee, explained: "The Jewish community is sufficiently viable to pay the bills for the education of its own children in the day schools." But he chided the Jewish community for not making Jewish education a higher priority.

Biaggi Offers To Aid 15 Arrested For Handcuffing Themselves To U.S. Mission To UN

NEW YORK, June 23 (JTA)--Rep. Mario Biaggi, Democrat of New York, yesterday became co-counsel with the National Committee on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA), an Orthodox Jewish lawyers group, in the defense of the 15 persons who were arrested and charged with criminal trespass on June 14 after they had handcuffed themselves to the U.S. Mission to the UN to protest alleged State Department failure to take "meaningful" action to aid Soviet Jewry. The 15--12 rabbis, 2 Jewish professors, and the national coordinator of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry--were yesterday also charged with disorderly conduct for the June 14 affair when they appeared in Manhattan Criminal Court. They entered a plea of not guilty and the case was adjourned until tomorrow. Biaggi said he had entered the case because he felt the rabbis were focussing attention on a very important problem and said he hoped U.S. Ambassador to the UN, George Bush, would respond favorably to the three demands made by the rabbis when they were arrested. The rabbis then had demanded a "strong statement" by President Nixon on the plight of Soviet Jews and on the Kishinev trial; the institution by the Voice of America of Yiddish and Hebrew broadcasts to Soviet Jews; and the issuance of 30,000 emergency visas to Soviet Jews. He said he hoped Bush would give special attention to "the nature of the accusations" against rabbis who felt that they had a point to make.

City University Students To Study Talmud On Two-Way Video

NEW YORK, June 23 (JTA)--City University of New York students will have an unprecedented opportunity to study the Talmud via television next semester as the university further expands its offerings in Judaic studies, according to Dr. Timothy Healy, vice-chancellor for academic affairs. The course in Talmudic literature will be taught via CUMBIN (City University Mutual Benefit Instructional Network) by Dr. Emanuel Rackman, CUNY professor of Judaic studies and consultant to the chancellor on Judaic studies. CUMBIN is the university's unique closed-circuit television system which offers two-way video and audio classes to CUNY students. Students will be able to take the Talmud course at any one of the campuses where CUMBIN is presently received--City, Hunter, Brooklyn and Queens colleges and the University Graduate Center. Dr. Rackman, who in addition to being the rabbi of the Fifth Avenue Synagogue in Manhattan is also an attorney, expects to relate the study of Talmud to contemporary law for comparative purposes. Some of the topics with which Dr. Rackman expects to deal in the two-semester Talmudic literature course include capital punishment (which was virtually abolished in Jewish law thousands of years ago), right to privacy, property rights, family law, trade regulations and laws of business competition and monopolies.

Rather than studying a single tractate (volume) of the Talmud, Dr. Rackman intends to examine a separate, interesting selection each week. Instruction will be by the traditional Talmudic method of textual analysis and dialectic. Dr. Rackman is anxious to have a good deal of active student participation and discussion. CUMBIN is uniquely suited to this sort of discussion because of its talk-back capability. Although Dr. Rackman will be teaching at the Graduate Center, students in CUMBIN receiving rooms on other campuses can interrupt him at any time by using their telephone handsets. All questions will be heard by all students at the various CUMBIN campuses. From interest already expressed, Dr. Rackman expects the class to be full at all the CUMBIN outlets. Instruction in Talmud has generally been available only at night or on weekends, according to Dr. Rackman.

Dobrynin Says VOA Yiddish Broadcasts Will Neither Help, Harm U.S.-USSR Relations

WASHINGTON, June 23 (JTA)--Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the United States, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that he did not think Voice of America broadcasts in Yiddish to Jews in Russia would neither help nor harm Soviet-American relations. In a conversation with the JTA on the admission of newsmen to trials of Soviet Jews, the Ambassador said that news correspondents already in the Soviet Union can attend trials the judge declares to be open, but that admitting additional newsmen widens publicity the trials do not merit.