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Charge Soviets Starving Prisoners in Labor Camps

LONDON, July 26 (JTA)--A Labor MP and a London University nutritionist charged today that the Soviet Union was "slowly starving to death" Jews and other prisoners in their "strict regime" forced labor camps. Greville Janner and Dr. Arnold Bender were referring to the 1,200-calorie-per-day diet in the camps which they likened to the diet provided in Nazi concentration camps during World War II. Dr. Bender said the purpose was the same, to weaken the mental and physical health of the inmates and so destroy their will to live. A sample of Soviet labor camp fare was displayed on the sidewalk outside the Soviet Embassy here. According to Dr. Bender, it represented "beyond doubt a deliberate attempt to undermine the health and strength of the prisoners." He said that "anyone on this diet would suffer abominably after a few weeks, would lose weight steadily and lose vitality." Janner said that no civilized country would submit prisoners to anything like it. "Having commuted the death sentences after the outcry following the first Leningrad trial, the Russians are now condemning them (the Jewish prisoners) to slow death by starvation," he said.

The diet on display consisted of the following: Breakfast--14 ounces of black bread (a full day's ration); one cup of hot water, no sugar allowed; one ounce of herring. Lunch--two-thirds cup of soup (cooked cabbage and a medium sized sliced potato), no fat allowed. Dinner--three and a half to five ounces of potato (no fats); one cup of raw cabbage and tomato vinagrette.

Kishinev 9 Sent To Labor Camp in Central Russia

NEW YORK, July 26 (JTA)--The nine Jews sentenced in Kishinev on June 30 for alleged anti-Soviet agitation and complicity in an alleged skyjacking plot have been sent to a forced-labor camp in Moldavia; in central Russia, it was reported here today by reliable Jewish sources. The camp is in the same region as Potma prison, to which five of the Jews convicted in the first Leningrad trial and two of those convicted in Riga were sent earlier this month, as reported by the JTA Daily News Bulletin last Friday. (The reference in that story to the prison's being in Moldavia was incorrect.) The Kishinev prisoners are David Isorovich Chernoglaiz, who received a five-year sentence; Anatoly Moiseyevich Goldfeld, four years; Hillel Zalmonovich Shur, Aleksander Galperin, Abraham Trakhtenberg, Semeon Abramovich Levit, Arkady Voloshin and Gari Kirshner, two years each, and David Rabinovich, one year.

Report Israeli Has Unofficial Contacts With Peking Diplomats In Paris

By Edwin Eytan

(Chief of JTA European Bureau)

PARIS, July 26 (JTA)--Repeated contacts between Chinese diplomats of the Peoples Republic and Eli Ben-Gal, representative of the Israeli Mapam Party, were reported here today. The last of a series of meetings between the representative of the leftwing Zionist party and the diplomats from Peking in Paris, was held this afternoon. It was reliably learned by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. Ben-Gal met various Embassy staff members repeatedly and some of these conversations were held at their own request. It was reported that possible diplomatic relations between Jerusalem and Peking were not discussed. On the other hand, Ben-Gal and the Chinese covered all the Middle Eastern problems in their talks.

In spite of the "unofficial" character of the talks, further underscored by the fact that Ben-Gal is not a diplomat, is not representing the State of Israel, or even his own party, the conversations, nonetheless, have considerable political significance. Israel recognized the Peoples Republic of China de facto as long ago as January, 1950. Since that time, however, no amelioration was ever noted in the relations between the two countries. Beginning with her stand at the Third World Bandung Conference, China has always taken up unconditionally the defense of the Arab cause and since the June, 1967 war, China has supported the Palestinian organizations by extending both ideological and material help to the more extreme guerrillas--the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Popular Front. Fatah guerrillas, too, have been trained in special Chinese camps. Since President Nixon announced his forthcoming Peking trip next spring, political observers seemed to note some improvement in Chinese Middle East politics. The contacts between Ben-Gal and the Chinese diplomats must be seen in this context.

The JTA learned from a telephone conversation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Peking that China's basic Middle East position had not changed since Premier Chou En Lai made his famous statement on the Middle East, three years ago that only a "military and revolutionary solution to the Palestinian problem" was possible. Nonetheless, one might see in the very readiness of the Chinese Peoples diplomats to talk to the JTA some change, if not of the Chinese stand, at least of their tactics. A spokesman for the Chinese Embassy in Paris, Tsa Kwei Seng, told JTA this evening that "no member of the Embassy had met Ben-Gal." To the question whether Ben-Gal might have met the Chinese diplomats outside the Embassy's premises, Mr. Seng answered: "This information is pure fabrication and a provocation. I continue to affirm that there were no talks, neither at the Embassy nor outside it, in fact, in no possible way whatever." The denial is typical of Chinese diplomatic tactics. The Chinese never acknowledge conversations, as long as no high-ranking political decisions have been taken. These tactics were used a few weeks ago, before President Nixon announced his Peking trip. At that time, Chinese-American contacts were formally disavowed by Peking.

Sec. Council Meeting On Jerusalem Unlikely Before August, If At All, Diplomats Say

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., July 26 (JTA)--A Security Council meeting on Israeli practices in East Jerusalem, reported earlier as almost certain for the end of this month, will not be held until August, if at all, Western diplomats said today. They said most of the 15 members of the Council feel that nothing "productive" can come out of such a meeting until after the upcoming re-visit to Israel by the American Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Joseph J. Sisco. It was announced by the State Department last week that Sisco would leave after July 26, but a Department spokesman declined today to disclose the exact date of departure. Diplomats here, however, said Sisco will leave Thursday for a five- or 10-day stay in Israel, meaning that he will not return to Washington until Aug. 2 at the earliest. He will then need additional time to report to his superiors.

Jordan's desire for a Council meeting has been tempered for a long time, largely by American suspicion. July had been thought to be the perfect time for King Hussein to assert himself in favor of a meeting and formally request it, since the Council president this month is Jacques Kosciuszko-Morizot of France--an envoy and a Council member sympathetic to the Arab view. But while France "didn't object" earlier to the proposed meeting, one diplomat said, she is "not enthusiastic at all now," considering Jordan's recent troubles with terrorists and the sheltering by Israel of terrorists fearing for their lives in Jordan. Even Syria, a country far more hostile to Israel than Jordan, is said to be against a Council meeting now, because of its anger at Amman for attempting to stifle the terrorists. The Council president for August will be Piero Vinci of Italy, and although Israel would rather not have the Council meeting at all, if it were unavoidable she would presumably prefer to have it under the chairmanship of the Italian rather than of the Frenchman, sources here said.

Soviet Attache's Car Fire-Bombed; JDL Mum

NEW YORK, July 26 (JTA)--The Jewish Defense League refused to comment today on any aspect of yesterday's firebombing of a Soviet attache's car--even as to how it feels about anonymous persons calling news bureaus to report such incidents and using JDL slogans. The car of Michael Glombenko was hit by a Molotov cocktail at 3:50 a.m. yesterday outside the Soviet staff's bungalow in Far Rockaway. Half an hour earlier, a caller speaking in English and Hebrew announced the impending incident and used the phrases "In reprisal for the oppression of the Jews in the Soviet Union," "Let my people go" and "Never again." This fit the pattern set in similar incidents in recent years. The JDL has always denied involvement in the incidents, but has cheered them as complementary to its avowed policy of harassing Soviet personnel in the United States to force the Kremlin to lift its structures against Soviet Jews. The League's chairman, Rabbi Meir Kahane, and various spokesmen have consistently denied any bombings by their personnel. Last week, Rabbi Kahane and two other JDL members were fined and handed suspended sentences and terms of probation after pleading guilty in U.S. District Court in Brooklyn to making explosives at the JDL's Camp Jedel in Woodbourne, N.Y.

Sapir Denies Worsening Poverty Gap

TEL AVIV, July 26 (JTA)--Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir took strong exception last night to claims that the gap between poverty and wealth was widening in Israel and that the Government was doing nothing to alleviate the severe housing shortage, particularly for the poor. Addressing a meeting of the Labor Party's central committee here, Sapir noted that a committee headed by David Horowitz, Governor of the Bank of Israel, found recently that the "index of inequalities" has dropped by ten percent since 1967 for the country as a whole and 15 percent for Jewish wage-earners in urban centers. He also reported that between 1967-70, the number of families living three-to-a-room declined from 70,000 to 54,000, a drop of 20 percent which, according to Sapir, was a world record. The Finance Minister said the Government and 15 construction companies will build 14,000 new housing units for young couples each year for the next four-five years. He said this project would operate concurrently with plans to re-house 45,000 families now living in sub-standard or overcrowded dwellings.

Soviet Emigres End Sit-In Protesting Housing Allocations

TEL AVIV, July 26 (JTA)--Four Russian Jewish families from the Georgian Republic today ended a sit-in at Lydda Airport which they began on their arrival last Friday in protest against the housing allocated to them by the Absorption Ministry. The families have gone to live with relatives pending a decision by the Ministry. The families demanded flats in Lydda township where their relatives live, rejecting alternatives offered in Nahariya, Arad, Ashkelon or Kfar Atta. A Ministry spokesman said no flats were available in Lydda at present but its alternatives are still open.

Israeli Fuel Price Upped By Govt.; Officials Deny New Tax

TEL AVIV, July 26 (JTA)--A tax on most types of fuel oil that went into effect at midnight last night sent prices soaring from ten to 140 percent on gasoline, diesel oil, kerosene, and domestic cooking gas. But Government officials insisted it was not a tax. They said the price hike was merely intended to bring prices in Israel into line with world market prices that have risen in the past year. It was disclosed however that the price rise on fuel, decided by the Cabinet's economic committee and approved by the Knesset finance committee, was withheld from the public until the Finance Minister determined that the time was ripe to announce it.

Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir said last night that the Government did not contemplate further taxes this year and denied that this implied that new taxes were under consideration for next year. Moshe Neudorfer, director of internal revenue, told reporters the same thing. "We have no plans to raise any taxes before the end of the current fiscal year, contrary to all the rumors and stories in the newspapers," he said. The new fuel "tax" has already sparked demands for higher fares in taxis and other forms of transportation. Gasoline prices have soared by ten percent and the price of kerosene nearly tripled today. The public is waiting to see if the Israel Electric Corp., the largest single consumer of fuel, would raise its rates, a development that could send prices up on almost every manufactured article.

Case For Unified Jerusalem To Be Presented Before House Subcommittee Wednesday

NEW YORK, July 26 (JTA)--The Near East subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee will hear testimony Wednesday in support of the view that the interests of Christians, Moslems and Jews would be best served if Jerusalem remains a unified city as it has been throughout its history, except for the period 1948-67 when it was divided by the Jordanian occupation of East Jerusalem. The testimony will be presented by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, director of the national interreligious affairs department of the American Jewish Committee, who was invited to appear before the Congressional body. An advance text of Rabbi Tanenbaum's remarks was provided to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency for publication today. It has also been circulated among committee members. The subcommittee is chaired by Rep. Lee H. Hamilton (D., Ind.). Other authorities invited to testify July 28 are Dr. James Kritzeck, of Notre Dame University, a theological advisor at the Second Vatican Council and Muhammed Abd al-Rauf, of the Islamic Center in New York. Rabbi Tanenbaum also serves as co-secretary of a joint Vatican-Jewish international committee and a joint World Council of Churches-Jewish Committee. The hearings before the subcommittee are part of a series devoted to the Middle East conflict that include testimony on the re-opening of the Suez Canal, borders and the Palestinian problem.

"A viable Jewish people in the land of Israel, and the restoration of Jerusalem to its natural condition as a unified city, is indispensable to the survival of the Jewish spirit and ethos in our age," Rabbi Tanenbaum will tell the House subcommittee. "The Christian interest in the Holy Land as Prof. George Williams of Harvard recently formulated it, involves religiously, solely the question of free access to the holy places, and the security and stability of the Christian populations in Jerusalem and in Israel. Once these interests are satisfied, Christians go beyond their religious competence and enter into the realm of politics in which they have no standing as ecclesiastical bodies. As groups of Christian authorities, both in Israel and the United States have recently testified, never has there been such free access to the holy places as since 1967 when Jerusalem was reunified under Israeli jurisdiction," Rabbi Tanenbaum says. "With regard to the presence of Christian communities in Israel and the charge that they are being 'suffocated' by Israeli housing projects, it is instructive to look at some statistics." Rabbi Tanenbaum notes that during the period of Jordanian occupation there was a sharp drop in the number of Christians in Jerusalem--from 25,000 in 1948 to 10,800 in 1967. "It is now evident that some 20,000 Christians emigrated from Jerusalem during that period of Jordanian occupation and that it has come to a halt in 1967. Against the background of the mounting departures of Christians from such Arab countries as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Libya, it seems that the Christian community in Israel has become one of the most stable and flourishing."

Rabbi Tanenbaum devotes a large portion of his presentation to the meaning of Jerusalem to Jews as the center of Judaism. The city's profound significance, he says, is the achievement of the Jewish people dating from Abraham and who, beginning with the Davidian era about 1000 B.C.E., transformed the city into a center of political and religious unity, later to become a shrine of the three monotheistic faiths. "In the mind of the Jewish people, as well as in actual practice," Rabbi Tanenbaum says, "Jerusalem became an integral part of the Temple and identical with it...In distinction from other religions that have invested their reverence for Jerusalem or particular localities of sites which are connected with specific events in their religious histories, Judaism has sanctified the city as such. In doing so, Judaism has kept alive the significance attached to Jerusalem in the Bible, and that has been of decisive importance for the significance attached to the Holy City in Jewish tradition until this very day." Jewish attachment to Jerusalem has been more intense and more complicated than that of other faiths Rabbi Tanenbaum says because "Jewry has nowhere established another independent national center and as is natural, Jerusalem and the land of Israel are intertwined far more intimately with the religion and historic memories of the Jewish people...Jewish religious literature is more intimately connected with the history, its climate and its soil. In the daily prayers of the Jews to this day one of the benedictions of the silent devotion is a prayer for the rebuilding of Jerusalem..."

ADL Offers Assistance In Anti-Discrimination Efforts

MIAMI, July 26 (JTA)--The Florida regional office of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith pledged today to assist the Dade County Community Relations Board in efforts to achieve an end to discriminatory membership policies of civic and service clubs in the area. "The programmatic and informational resources of the League are available to the CRB as they always have been," said William Alper, chairman of the ADL regional board. Alper complimented the CRB for its recent statement calling for the leadership of local civic and service clubs to act decisively to end discriminatory membership practices against Latins and Blacks.

Insurance Co. Changes Employment Forms Following Discrimination Complaint

NEW YORK, July 26 (JTA)--A complaint filed with the State Division of Human Rights by the American Jewish Congress has caused a New York insurance company to change its employment application form to eliminate any references to religion, the AJCongress reported today. The company was not identified. The complaint filed by Herman Brown, director of the Congress' Metropolitan Council, charged the company with discrimination in its use of an employment form which asked: "If you are dangerously hurt or ill would you want us to call a Protestant minister, priest, rabbi?" At a subsequent investigative conference of the State Division of Human Rights, a spokesman for the insurance company noted that the challenged question was to be filled out only "if employed" and was intended to benefit all employees. Stating that the employment form was a carryover from a predecessor company, he agreed with the Human Rights Division's assertion that it might be confusing because questions to be answered after the applicant was hired were on the same form as the pre-employment inquiries. The investigation brought to light other violations of the State Human Rights Law and the State Division offered its services in drafting a new employment form which the company accepted.

CORRECTION: In the second paragraph of the first story on Page 3 of the JTA Bulletin dated July 26, the date of U Thant's visit to Moscow should be June 14, 1970, not 1971.

SPECIAL NEWS ANALYSIS**BACKGROUND OF THE SISCO VISIT**

By JOSEPH POLAKOFF, Chief of the JTA Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, July 26 (JTA)--As the first year of the standstill, cease-fire along the Suez Canal nears its close, the chief official American expert on the Middle East will visit Israel this week in what a State Department authority has probably rightly described as "just one more in the process of diplomacy" for reopening the waterway. Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J. Sisco's trip follows hard on Egyptian specialist Michael Sterner's visit to Cairo. From these travels, it can be assumed that some openings are present--however slight--for bargaining and extending Secretary of State Rogers' initiative during May for agreement on the canal issue. In any case, Egypt has indicated it sanctions the American activity. Israel, too, seems to appreciate the visit since it might result in a better flow of weapons to counter Soviet hardware along the Nile as well as allow for discussion of new ideas. Sisco's visit, however, comes at a time when the Arab world has disintegrated anew by plot, counterplot, and maneuver from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. Within a fortnight, Morocco's King Hassan fought off Libyan-supported rebels; Jordan's King Hussein demolished the Palestine commandoes in a way that caused Syria and Iraq to close their frontiers with Jordan; in the Sudan, Iraq-backed military leaders first drove out their old colleague Gen. Numeiri from leadership, but in a surprising turnabout he regained power. In the aftermath of Arab killing Arab, Egyptian President Sadat warned Israel again that this is the year of decision and his editorial mouthpiece, El Ahram charged Bulgarians in Khartoum with aiding the rebellion against Sadat's ally Numeiri.

Sadat may indeed indulge in some acts of war against Israel in the new year. But some concession with Russo-American backing may be arranged to avert this risk. In the latter connection, what Sisco may seek from Israel and Sterner had possibly obtained from Egypt are commitments of "inaction" by both. Thus Israel may agree that Egyptian forces may cross the Suez into Sinai but Cairo would pledge in secret that after a parade or two to demonstrate its triumph and authority, the forces would return to their previous positions except for a token presence. Similarly, Egypt would agree to Israeli shipping through the reopened Suez but after establishing the principle by a sailing or two, Israel would cease the movement to allow time for the understanding to penetrate the Arab consciousness. In this agreement, to be outwardly positive in word but basically negative in deed, Israel and Egypt also could arrive at an understanding on the extent of Israeli withdrawal from the Suez and the indefinite continuation of the cease-fire pending the results of the first two preliminaries.

The timing and assurances in this game, if it is indeed on the chessboard, will require much exploration. The ultimate result cannot be foreseen. What is encouraging is Sadat's slap at his critics in Egypt that they act like ostriches with their heads buried in the sand because they dislike his talking with American officials. With an important Soviet delegation present for his speech, Sadat praised the Soviet for its continuing military and economic aid. The next day, Cairo's semi-official newspaper, Al Ahram, which usually sounds Sadat's views, charged that the Bulgarian Embassy in Khartoum aided the foes of Sadat's friend Numeiri and that night in Khartoum a Numeiri aid pledged the destruction of the Communist party in the Sudan. These two developments combine to indicate that the wily Sadat is serving notice on the Soviets that he and his friends accept their help against Israel but not their politics, despite a solemnly signed 15-year pact. On their part, the Soviets possibly may have used the Bulgarians in Khartoum as a notice to Sadat, who has imprisoned the Soviet's best friends in Egypt, that he may also be a target, to be replaced by more reliable pro-Soviet elements.

Meanwhile, the players in Moscow have altered their course somewhat. The Kremlin muttered about American interference with the Jarring mission for seeking to reopen the Suez Canal. Now the Soviets are said to smile benignly on the activity. Why the change of heart? One reason may be the Soviet desire to strengthen their presence without much further delay at both ends of Suez. More important, perhaps, the Soviet Navy wishes to enter the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean at the earliest opportunity. The United States, from the testimony presented by three former Assistant Secretaries of State to a House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee last week, along with their experts, is inclined at present not to challenge the entry of Soviet power in the Indian Ocean via the Suez Canal. Perhaps this is intended to placate the Kremlin in the wake of the U.S.-China rapprochement. It also may be a way of putting the Soviets and China into a tighter arena of confrontation. Some testimony at the hearing recommended that we help smaller powers bordering on the Indian Ocean, like Australia and Iran, to build modern navies. One witness, in fact, pointed to Israel's Air Force as an example of what a small but sophisticated military force can do. In this regard, the report of a billion dollar Anglo-American arms program for Iran should not be overlooked. In this complexity, the State Department's caution against great expectation from the Sisco visit is well taken. The current internal convulsions among the Arab politicians do not create a platform on which Israel can or should risk accepting a bargain with such transitory regimes that now exist in the Arab world. Thus the Department is in effect keeping the pilot light aglow for an agreement but it is really only waiting for the Arab cauldrons on the big burners to simmer down.

Jewish Labor Committee Head Re-Affirms Support For Koch Bill

NEW YORK, July 26 (JTA)--Charles S. Zimmerman, president of the Jewish Labor Committee today reaffirmed his organization's support of the Koch bill which would provide emergency visas for the admission of 30,000 Soviet Jews into the United States. He expressed "amazement" at the stand of Herman Weisman, president of the Zionist Organization of America, who has urged that the Koch bill in the House and similar legislation pending in the Senate be dropped because they might divert Soviet Jews from their real goal which is settlement in Israel. Zimmerman said, "We believe these bills are valuable additions to the campaign on behalf of Soviet Jewry." According to Zimmerman, "Mr. Weisman's statement that there is no indication of a desire on the part of Soviet Jews to come to the U.S. and other statements asserting that our present immigration law adequately provides for Soviet Jews interested in coming to the U.S. is inaccurate."