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MRS. MEIR 'ABSOLUTELY RIGHT' IN CALLING FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT PRE-CONDITIONS. STATE DEPARTMENT SENIOR OFFICIAL SAYS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9 (JTA)--A senior State Department official told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that Premier Golda Meir is "absolutely right" in asking that the parties to the Middle East conflict enter negotiations without pre-conditions. "We think that's fair to both sides," the official said. His remark was a re-assertion of a statement by chief State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey at yesterday's news briefing that "both sides have the right to enter negotiations without conditions."

Mrs. Meir stated repeatedly at her four news conferences last week in Washington that Israel asks only for a "fair chance" in the negotiations and that no pre-conditions be established before they begin. Today's remark to the JTA emphasized US support of the Israeli position and indicated that the State Department is in full accord with Jerusalem on how negotiations should begin. The official said there has been no reaction so far from Cairo to McCloskey's statement yesterday.

Israeli representatives at the UN and in world capitals meanwhile are trying to line up additional international support for negotiations without pre-conditions. Reports from Jerusalem today confirmed this and noted that Israel was seeking to avert a General Assembly resolution that would call on Israel to reply affirmatively to Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring's Feb. 8 memo asking Israel for a commitment to withdraw to the pre-June, 1967 boundaries. Several Latin American, African and European states are trying to reach an agreement on that kind of resolution to reactivate the Jarring mission.

Israeli representatives have asked them, in effect, if they wanted renewal of the Jarring mission or "just another resolution on the books." Israel has made it clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that it will not return to the Jarring peace efforts on the basis of the Feb. 8 memo. The African presidents investigating the Middle East impasse on behalf of the Organization for African Unity recommend renewal of the Jarring mission without conditions. Egypt, however, has been exerting pressure on the African delegates to alter their stand and according to Israeli sources, some of them seem to be wavering.

LONGEST NAZI WAR CRIMES TRIAL ENDS

Three Released, Six Receive Sentences From 18 Months To 7 Years Imprisonment

BONN, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The longest and most expensive Nazi war crimes trial in history has ended here with the release of three of the nine defendants on grounds of health. The remaining six defendants received sentences ranging from eighteen months to seven years imprisonment. The defendants were charged with murder and complicity in the deaths of hundreds of Jews killed in Latvia during World War II.

The trial lasted more than two years, cost the State over \$1 million and heard testimony from 181 witnesses and five technical experts. During the trial the jury made special trips to Israel and the US and four trips to the Soviet Union to gather testimony and trial documents.

Three of the defendants were released Tuesday by the court because of their "incapacity to stand trial" for medical reasons. The other six were found not guilty of murder but guilty of complicity in murder. Sentenced on those counts were Karl Strott of Wiesbaden, 68, a hotel owner, seven years; Erhart Grauel, 61, a senior civil servant and departmental director from the Saar, six years; Otto Reiche, 65, a Justice Department official from Baden Baden, five years; former police Major Georg Rosenstok of Hanover, 2 1/2 years; senior detective Gerhardt Kuket of Cuxhaven, 63, two years; and Paul Fahrbaach of Cologne, 65, 18 months.

The Federal Supreme Court in Wiesbaden meanwhile has confirmed the sentences imposed by a lower court in Stuttgart on two former SS battalion leaders found guilty of complicity in the murders of hundreds of Jews on the Eastern front during the war. A 4 1/2 year sentence was handed down on March 13, 1969 against Sturmbandfuhrer Hans Sohns. His co-defendant, Hauptsturmbandfuhrer Fritz Zeltlow was sentenced to 2 1/2 years. Both appealed the sentences on grounds that they were too harsh.

Two former SS officers who participated in killings at the notorious Auschwitz death camp in Poland will go on trial in Vienna next month. The trial will be the first in Austria relating to events at Auschwitz where many guards and camp workers were of Austrian origin. The accused, Sturmbandfuhrers Walter Dejaco and Fritz Ertl, are charged with murder and complicity in murder in the deaths of tens of thousands of Jews. They are also charged with theft. More than 50 witnesses are expected to testify in the trial which will last about six weeks.

MOSCOW JEWS TO DEMONSTRATE

NEW YORK, Dec. 9 (JTA)--Many Moscow Jews are scheduled to observe Human Rights Day tomorrow by demonstrating at the United Nations information center in the Soviet capital, the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry reported. The demonstration will include a 24-hour hunger strike. The Jews' emphasis will be on Article 13, Section 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which reads: "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."

SADAT MUTES WAR CRY; EGYPT

IMPLICATED IN TAL'S ASSASSINATION

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The likelihood of any overt move by Egypt that could lead to a renewal of hostilities with Israel appeared to diminish today. President Anwar Sadat's speech last night to the Central Committee of the Arab Socialist Union, Egypt's only legal political party, was described here by political analysts as nebulous and muted though he had been widely expected to repeat his recent bellicose pronouncements and even announce a new deadline for the Suez ceasefire.

Cairo's apparent backtracking was viewed here as partly the result of the Indian-Pakistan war which has shifted world attention away from the Middle East conflict and partly due to new strains in the fabric of Arab unity.

Even as Sadat was delivering his speech, rumblings increased in Jordan over alleged Egyptian complicity in the assassination of Premier Wafael el Tal who was gunned down by Palestinian terrorists outside of his Cairo hotel on Nov. 28. El Fatah, the Palestinian guerrilla organization, claimed yesterday in Beirut that the Sadat regime had known about and approved the planned assassination of Tal by members of the "Black September" terrorist group which Fatah directs.

El Fatah charged that at the last minute Cairo reneged and arrested the four assassins who allegedly had been promised safe conduct to their base. The El Fatah allegations were ignored at first by Amman. Last night, however, the full version of the charges against Egypt was repeated on Jordanian radio and television broadcasts in Arabic and other languages. There was no official comment from Amman but it appeared that any Egyptian move toward war at this time would not have the desired effect of rallying the Arab world behind Cairo.

A communique issued after Sadat's latest speech said only that the Central Committee had decided on "proper measures" against Israel. The communique stressed that the measures would be contingent on an overall military evaluation to be made. While diplomatic circles here did not rule out the possibility of limited Egyptian operations in the Suez Canal zone, they pointed out that Egyptian Army commanders themselves have admitted that they cannot hope for a military victory over Israel. Egypt will not risk military action at a time when it would not have the desired political effects because world attention is focussed elsewhere, they said.

CEMETERY SYSTEMATICALLY VANDALIZED

AMSTERDAM, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The Jewish cemetery in Warsaw is being systematically vandalized by professional criminals for profit, the Dutch daily "Avro" reported today. According to correspondent Link Van Bruggen who is touring Poland, protests by the Jewish congregation in Warsaw have been fruitless. Van Bruggen reports that every night intruders penetrate the cemetery through an unattended gap in the fence and steal tombstones. These are later polished to remove the inscriptions and sold for the production of new marble gravestones. According to the newspaperman, the Jewish cemetery is already largely in ruins.

GEORGIAN JEWISH EMIGRES REJECT TEMPORARY HOUSE OF WORSHIP

TEL AVIV, Dec. 9 (JTA)--Jewish emigres from Soviet Georgia, apparently incited by religious zealots, refused today to accept the keys to a temporary house of worship in Ashkelon that was put at their disposal by the Absorption Ministry until a permanent synagogue can be built. Ministry officials and the rabbi of the Georgian community in Ramleh went to Ashkelon for the presentation ceremonies.

They were greeted by angry Georgian Jews who refused to enter the temporary sanctuary claiming that if they did, a permanent one would never be built. Youngsters, believed to be from an ultra-Orthodox sect, were reportedly seen exhorting the emigres not to take the key. The Absorption Ministry said it would ask the police to find out who the agitators were and what group was behind them.

Orthodox elements in Israel and the US have recently attacked the government for allegedly not providing for the religious needs of Georgian Jews who are strictly observant and insist on living in large clans with easy access to a synagogue.

Meanwhile, members of the Maoz society, a

group of activists on behalf of Soviet Jews, began today a 24-hour fast at the Western Wall in Jerusalem in support of Jewish emigration rights from the USSR. They said that despite assurances to the contrary, Jewish immigrants here have been receiving letters from families in Russia whose visa applications were rejected. They cited letters from the six-member Eligulashvili family in Kutaisi, Soviet Georgia and the four members of the Korenfeld family in Moscow. Korenfeld, an engineer, reportedly lost his job and his daughter was expelled from college after the family applied for exit permits.

LABOR ALIGNMENT UNHAPPY OVER KNESSET PROBE METHODS OF BANKRUPT AUTO FIRM

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The Labor Alignment admitted last night that it was unhappy over the way the Knesset finance committee is conducting its probe into the affairs of the bankrupt Autocar Company. The committee, chaired by Avraham Schechterman of the opposition Gahal faction, was taken to task by coalition leadership chairman Moshe Baran for acting like an official committee of inquiry.

Baran said on a radio interview that the Knesset group lacked the authority to swear in witnesses. He said persons appearing before it could not defend themselves against charges and there was no provision that they may be represented or even accompanied by legal counsel.

The finance committee is sifting charges of mismanagement, bribery and false book-keeping on the part of Autocar, the Israeli affiliate of the British Leyland Motor Co., which went into receivership last month and is heavily in debt to the government. Schechterman opened the hearings to the public at the request of Shmuel Tamir, an MK of the opposition Free Center faction.

Labor Alignment members of the committee did not oppose the move and some have said they would not bow to pressure from above, hinting that Party leaders have expressed displeasure over the way the hearings are going. Two Alignment MKs, Adi Amoral and Mordechai Zar, said in a radio interview that the inquiry had reached a stage where closing it to the public would have an adverse effect.

Sapir: No Attempt To Dodge Issues

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir sought to assure members of the women's section of the Labor Party that "there is no attempt to dodge the issue" with regard to the Autocar probe or the alleged scandal in the affairs of Netivei Neft, the government-owned oil company operating oil fields in the occupied Sinai peninsula. Speaking to the group in Tel Aviv last night, Sapir said the government had granted loans to Autocar on the strength of the name and reputation of its parent company, Leyland Motors, which guaranteed the loans. He said the Israeli partners in the defunct firm, the Histadrut-owned Koor Ltd. and the Central Corp., would also be held responsible for the company's debts.

Sapir refused to endorse a demand by the Labor women for the resignations of Justice Minister Ya'acov Shimshoni, Shapiro and Deputy Finance Minister Zvi Dinstein whose names have been mentioned in connection with the Netivei Neft affair. Shapiro was accused of dragging his feet in opening a probe of the firm and Dinstein was accused by other principals in the case of attempting to block an investigation. Sapir said a grave injustice was being done to Shapiro who, he said, acted when complaints against Netivei Neft were referred to him. Sapir rejected demands for Dinstein's resignation "now."

RALPH J. BUNCHE DIES AT 87**Mrs. Meir, American Jewish Leaders
Pay Homage To UN Peace Mediator**

UNITED NATIONS, Dec. 9 (JTA)--Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, UN Under-Secretary General for Special Political Affairs and a principle architect of the 1949 Middle East peace settlement, died this morning at the age of 87. Upon learning of his death, Israel's Premier Golda Meir, who is in the US, cabled condolences to the late diplomat's wife, Mrs. Ralph (Joan) Bunche.

Mrs. Meir said she was "shocked at the tragic death of your husband who has devoted his life to the cause of peace. There is hardly anybody outside of Israel who was so intimately connected with the State of Israel from its emergence and who has contributed so much in bringing to a close the first outbreaks of Arab hostility against Israel. His wisdom, objectivity and ability are sadly needed in the troubled world of today. His passing is a great loss to all who are interested in peace. Please accept my participation in your great sorrow."

Dr. Bunche, who had been in poor health and was scheduled to retire next year after 14 years as Under-Secretary General, won the 1950 Nobel Peace Prize for his mediation of the Rhodes agreement on Palestine in 1949. Those negotiations, which lasted from January to July, led to armistices between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Dr. Bunche was placed in charge of the negotiations after the assassination in 1948 of Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden. He also organized and supervised the 3,000-man United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) during the Suez Crisis of 1956-7.

Dr. Bunche, who was born in Detroit on Aug. 7, 1904, was the recipient of the Spingarn Medal (1949), the Four Freedoms Award (1951) and the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1963), in addition to the Nobel Prize and numerous additional awards.

Devoted To Cause Of Peace

American Jewish leaders reacted with sorrow today and recalled Dr. Bunche's peace-keeping efforts. Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld, president of the American Jewish Congress, declared that "Ralph Bunche was a living symbol of man's devotion to the struggle for peace among men and nations. Both in the United Nations' service and in the quality of dignity, courage, and gentleness that characterized his personal life, he won the respect of all men of good will."

Dr. William Wexler, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said: "The deep understanding, moral integrity and devotion to peace that Ralph Bunche represented in his life and work will be sorely missed in the forum of the United Nations and in every effort that seeks to build a life of justice and dignity for every member of the human family."

Dr. Emanuel Neumann, chairman of the World Zionist Organization, American Section Executive, stated: "In the death of Ralph J. Bunche, the world has lost one of its most distinguished citizens. He made invaluable contributions to the cause of world peace. A friend of Israel and architect of the peace that ended the War of Independence in 1949, he earned the thanks of Israel and the American Jewish community. He will always be remembered with gratitude."

Rabbi Israel Miller, president of the American Zionist Federation, said "The American Zionist movement mourns the passing of a great and accomplished statesman. Ralph Bunche was a man of pat-

ience, understanding and good will. It is for Israel and the Arab countries to now complete what he started and mutually to negotiate the peace and the boundaries longed for at the conclusion of his efforts."

Philip E. Hoffman, president of the American Jewish Committee, recalled Dr. Bunche's "monumental efforts to bring an end to the fighting that erupted during the earliest days of the State of Israel. Today when fighting again threatens that troubled area, we earnestly hope that these efforts of Ralph Bunche will be recalled, and that his dedication, skill and conscientiousness will serve as a model to others concerned with the cause of peace." Seymour Graubard, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, paid homage to Dr. Bunche for his "never ceasing quest for world peace, for interracial justice and for equality of all men."

Eban: Bunche Was Pioneer In Peace-Keeping Efforts

Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban recalled Dr. Bunche's role in pioneering UN peace-keeping efforts and "one of those whose voice aroused the conscience of mankind against racial discrimination in any place or in any form. He gave it not only his labor and devotion, but also the mark of a creative and original personality. Beyond all these things I knew and cherished him as a man and a friend."

Continuing, Eban stated: "I knew and honored Ralph Bunche during all the years of Israel's membership in the United Nations where he was not only the ornament but a massive pillar. In Israel, which occupied so much of his thought and work since 1947, his death will cast a particularly long shadow."

**JEWISH THEATRICAL TROUPE
PROTESTS CONFINEMENT TO KOVNO**

LONDON, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The Jewish theatrical troupe in Kovno, Lithuania's second largest city, has refused to give further performances in protest against being confined to the environs of Kovno, Jewish sources in the Soviet Union reported today. According to the sources, Soviet authorities have not for the past year permitted the players to visit other USSR cities with Jewish communities.

Soviet authorities are making life difficult for Kovno Jews in other ways, the sources reported. They closed down Hebrew classes in the Kovno synagogue on grounds that the teacher had no license. When local Jews hired a new teacher with the proper credentials, the authorities still refused to reopen the classes. They claimed that Hebrew classes were permitted only where 50 percent of the students have applied for visas to go to Israel. In Kovno less than half of the pupils have made such applications, the sources said.

\$500,000 PIONEER WOMEN'S CENTER

TEL AVIV, Dec. 9 (JTA)--Ground-breaking ceremonies were held here yesterday for a \$500,000 Pioneer Women's Center for overseas members. The ceremonies marked the end of a week-long bi-annual meeting of the World Executive of Moetzet HaPoalot--Pioneer Women--attended by 30 leaders from nine countries. Among those attending were Mrs. Esther Zackler of Chicago, president of the Pioneer Women in the US, and past presidents Clara Leff and Blanche Fine. The new center will serve immigrants and visitors to Israel. The meeting adopted a series of resolutions on behalf of Soviet and Syrian Jews, and also launched a program to train new leadership and expand Jewish education. It sent a cable of support to Premier Golda Meir, a former Pioneer Women leader.

ZOA CHARGES AZF CENSORING ELECTION PLATFORM...

NEW YORK, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The Zionist Organization of America said today that it is planning to participate in the 28th World Zionist Congress and that it abides by the decision of the Congress Tribunal in Jerusalem upholding mail ballots although it had opposed that method of elections. A ZOA spokesman told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that there was "absolutely no truth" in reports from Jerusalem that the ZOA had refused to abide by the Tribunal's ruling.

At the same time, however, the ZOA accused the American Zionist Federation of trying to censor part of the ZOA platform that is being mailed together with ballots to all eligible voters in the forthcoming election of American delegates to the Zionist Congress. According to the ZOA spokesman, the AZF was censoring out of its platform a sentence referring to a decision by the Congress Tribunal in Jerusalem voiding a pre-election deal on the allotment of Congress seats between three other American Zionist parties. The deal was the subject of a complaint to the Tribunal last month by the ZOA and the United Zionists-Revisionists of America.

The censorship allegation relates to a paragraph of the platform which states that "ZOA is the only major Zionist organization to denounce on moral grounds a deal 'reached in the night' by Hadassah, Labor (Socialist) Zionists and Mizrahi concerning distribution of American delegates to the Zionist Congress. Following a trial in Jerusalem, the Congress Tribunal throw out that deal, saying: 'We declare that the inter-party agreement is of no effect and we instruct that it should not be followed.'" A ZOA spokesman told the JTA that the last sentence of that paragraph was being censored by the AZF. Herman L. Welsman, ZOA president, called the censorship attempt "intolerable."

Welsman: Participate In Mail Elections

In an open letter to "Dear Fellow Zionists" sent out this week by the ZOA urging a vote for its slate and platform, Welsman called for "participation in the mail election" of American delegates to the World Zionist Congress. Referring to a remark made recently by Secretary of State William P. Rogers that Israeli society was "breaking up" under the strain of defense burdens, Welsman repudiated this contention and stated: "If Jewish unity didn't break up under the unspeakable conditions of the ghettos and persecution in Europe and elsewhere, there will be no break-up of society in the State of Israel."

One plank in the ZOA's election platform reaffirms its support "for a progressive society in Israel, concern for the welfare of all Israelis, the centrality of Israel in Jewish life and the unity of the Jewish people." Another plank states that the ZOA expresses the point of view of those "who are the mainstream of the middle-of-the-road American men and women in every walk of life."

...AZF SAYS THERE IS NO CENSORSHIP

NEW YORK, Dec. 9 (JTA)--Rabbi Israel Miller, president of the American Zionist Federation, said today that there was no censorship of the platform of the Zionist Organization of America. He issued a statement noting that the area elections committee "set a deadline of Nov. 4 for submission of platforms to be enclosed with the ballots" but because of the Congress Tribunal hearings, the ZOA and Revisionists were given a "special dispensation" to submit the material a month later.

"The Area Election Committee therefore decided that organizations submitting material at this

late date could not bite the Congress Tribunal decision--or anything else that took place after the Nov. 4 deadline--in fairness to all the other organizations whose platforms were already on the press," Rabbi Miller said.

"Anyone can see from the remainder of the ZOA platform that no censorship was exercised nor has the ZOA been prevented from distributing and advertising its entire platform throughout the American Jewish community," Rabbi Miller added. "We believe that organizations which announce that they 'abide by the decision of the Congress Tribunal' should remember that the Tribunal asked that 'from now on they refrain from making public accusations that are liable to bring harm on the entire Zionist Movement.'"

255 INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING OFFERED COURSES IN HEBREW IN 1970

NEW YORK, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The study of Hebrew in US colleges and universities has scored a dramatic increase in recent years despite a declining interest in foreign languages generally. Dr. David Rudavsky, professor emeritus of Hebrew Culture and Education at New York University, has reported. He told a recent meeting of the National Association of Professors of Hebrew that 255 institutions of higher learning offered classes in classical and modern Hebrew in 1970. He predicted that the growing demand for modern Hebrew will undoubtedly lead to the introduction and expansion of such courses in more universities and colleges in the future, although financial support remains a critical problem. Dr. Rudavsky estimated that of the 17,000 college students currently enrolled in Hebrew language studies, about 20 percent are non-Jewish.

ISRAEL, VATICAN SWAPPING RELICS

ROME, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The Vatican and Israel are negotiating a swap on archaeological relics that will enrich the collections of museums in Israel and Italy, it was learned here today. Sources said the negotiations came about after the Vatican decided to establish a Palestinian branch at its museums next year and needed objects to illustrate the Biblical ages of the Patriarchs. In exchange, the Vatican plans to give Israel ancient Etruscan, Roman and Jewish objects found in Catacombs near the Appian Way, the sources said.

ISRAELIS SEND FOOD, MONEY TO WAR RAVAGED BANGLA DESH

TEL AVIV, Dec. 9 (JTA)--The freighter Elva sailed from Eilat today with 25 tons of soya flour donated by Israelis for the children of war ravaged Bangla Desh, East Pakistan. The vessel will tranship its cargo at Singapore to another ship that will carry it to its destination. The soya flour was provided by the Israeli Committee for Bangla Desh Children, a group that includes actors, writers and lawyers. The committee said it would continue to raise money for more aid to Bangla Desh children.

68 JEWS GRANTED CITIZENSHIP

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9 (JTA)--Interior Minister Joseph Burg informed the Knesset last night that 68 Jews residing outside of Israel have been granted Israeli citizenship under a recent amendment of the Law of Return. The amendment permits the conferring of citizenship in absentia on Jews abroad who apply for it but are prevented by circumstances from going to Israel. The amendment was aimed mainly at helping Soviet Jews.