



daily news bulletin

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Vol. XXXIX - Fifty-Fifth Year

Wednesday, August 30, 1972

No. 169

IATA WARNS TERRORISTS MAY SOON LAUNCH NEW ATTACKS ON PLANES, AIRPORTS

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IATA cautioned all air travelers not to accept parcels or presents from strangers; before boarding planes and to carefully check their own luggage for explosives concealed "by terrorist elements." Airport security services throughout Western Europe were asked by IATA to increase security checks on passengers and their baggage.

EXIT VISAS WOULD COST \$330,000 FOR TEN PROMINENT SOVIET JEWISH SCHOLARS

LONDON, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Ten prominent Soviet Jewish scientists, scholars and academicians seeking to emigrate to Israel will have to raise a combined total of over \$330,000 to pay for exit visas for themselves and their families under the new scale of fees levied by Soviet authorities, Jewish sources in the Soviet Union said today. The total was tallied by Jewish circles in Russia on the basis of the fees demanded to compensate the State for the free higher education enjoyed by those who want to leave.

The sources observed that most educated Russian Jews who have gone to Israel, and almost all who have applied for visas have already made valuable contributions to Soviet science, scholarship, medicine, technology and the arts. Thus they have already repaid the State many times for its investment in their education, the sources said. They added that while this argument may appeal to the bureaucratic imagination the real issue is the principle that no civilized society can demand ransom for its citizens who want to leave.

The Jewish circles estimated that Roman Rutman would have to pay about \$31,850 for his exit visa and his wife another \$19,600 for hers; Viktor Polsky would have to lay out approximately \$49,000 for himself, his wife and his father-in-law; Benjamin Levich would have to pay over \$100,000 for himself, his wife, his son Yevgeny, Yevgeny's wife and his son Alexander and his wife.

The exit visas of Boris Orlov, his wife and his father would cost \$24,300 and Lev Liubov would have to pay over \$31,000 for his and his wife's visas, it was estimated. The visa sought by Viktor Yakhout carries a \$9800 price tag and Vladimir Prestin would have to pay \$19,600 for himself and his wife to leave Russia. Vladimir Raginsky and his wife would pay over \$31,000.

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60,000 Immigrants Expected In Israel

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ISRAEL WATCHING FOR FRENCH DIPLOMATIC MOVES IN MIDEAST

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Jerusalem is watching diplomatic developments in Europe carefully following reports that Egypt is pressing France to embark on a new Mideast peace initiative. With their military options effectively closed for the foreseeable future by the Soviet exodus, the Egyptians are thought to be seeking progress on the diplomatic front. Last month they tried to revive the Jarring mission, and failed. They are now reportedly trying to interest France in an idea mooted vaguely some time ago by UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim for an Egypt-Israel peace conference with the participation of the Four Powers.

A senior official in Jerusalem said today that to date Israel knows of no firm and precisely stated French plan along these lines but there have been reports of French interest in the idea. Israeli diplomats have reported a feeling in Western European capitals that some form of help ought to be extended to Egyptian President Sadat, the man who drove out the Russians. With this in mind, the Germans are known to be considering offering economic aid to Cairo.

Israel for its part does not object to the extension of economic aid to the Arabs. There have also been reports of late that Egypt is seeking to buy weapons from Britain which has no embargo policy on arms for the Mideast, but treats each sale on its merits. This approach has always suited Israel in the past as she too buys various armaments in Britain. Government circles here are apparently not disturbed at the present time by reports that Egypt may seek arms from Britain.

Israeli Envoys Sounding Out Governments

It is believed here that a possible diplomatic initiative inspired by France towards Egyptian-Israeli negotiations with the Big Four powers present will be supported by Britain which is anxious, out of EEC considerations not to cross the Quai D'Orsay if it can be avoided.

Israel has instructed its ambassadors in Europe to hold talks with their accredited governments to find out what French intentions are and what other Europeans feel about the post-Soviet exodus prospects in the Mideast. A number of Israeli envoys are on home leave and they have been consulting with the Foreign Minister and his senior staff on latest developments in Europe. The ambassadors include Michael Comay from London, Asher Ben-Natan from Paris and Emil Najer from Rome.

The general policy line laid down to them is that if a French initiative does materialize, Israel will seek to convince the other Europeans that only harm can come from letting Sadat fall under another delusion that salvation from the outside will regain him his lost territories without direct peace negotiations with Israel. Israel believes that with the Russians out of Egypt, the chances of a political settlement have increased but would be prejudiced by a French plan for Four Power pressure which in effect means an imposed settlement.

Sen. Richard S. Schweiker (R., Pa.) said today that he would support any effort by the US government to protest the Soviet Union's excessive visa fees. He referred to the matter in a letter to Secretary of State William P. Rogers in which he described the visa fees as "an absolute mockery" of the rights of a citizen of a country to emigrate.

JEWISH ATHLETES WINNERS IN OLYMPICS

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Between 1896 and 1968, 131 Jews from 17 nations won 236 medals--101 gold, 68 silver and 67 bronze--in Olympic competition. Divided by sport, the first place went to fencing where Jews won 71 medals--31 by Jews from Hungary and 13 from the USSR. Thirty-three medals were won by Jews in track and field events, 15 of them by competitors from the US, and 25 in gymnastics, 14 of them from Hungary. Twenty-four medals were won by Jews in swimming and 20 in water polo. Only one Jew has ever won a medal in ice hockey, judo or rowing.

Taken by countries, Hungarian Jews lead with 76 medals followed by the US with 47 medals and the USSR with 36. Next is Austria with 20 and Belgium with 14. In the first modern Olympic Games at Athens in 1896, seven Jewish athletes won 13 medals. In basketball Jews have excelled as coaches. Julius Goldman, an American, coached Canada to an Olympic medal in 1936 and Alexander Gomelsky did the same for the Soviet Union in 1964 and 1968.

A Jew has also won Olympic medals in cycling--Felix Schmal of Austria who won a gold and two bronze medals at the first Olympic Games. Two brothers, Alfred and Felix Flatow of Germany, won six medals - five gold - in the 1896 Games. At the first Olympic Games Jews were outstanding in swimming, winning all three events. Mark Spitz, who won four medals for the US in the 1968 games, set records in the butterfly stroke this week.

Israel Never Won Olympic Medal

Israel has never won an Olympic medal but one of the most distinguished of Jewish medalists, Agnes Keleti of Hungary, who won no less than 11 medals, settled in Israel after the 1956 revolution in Hungary and became one of the country's main gymnastic trainers.

One of the great track and field athletes of the early 20th century was Myer Prinstein of the US who won medals at several Olympic Games. Britain's Harold Abrahams won the 100 meters race in 1924, was captain of the British Olympic team in 1928 and today is chairman of the British Amateur Athletics Board. His brother, Sir Sidney Abrahams, who became Chief Justice of Uganda, ran for Great Britain in the 1908 and 1912 Olympics. Jews won 24 medals in the 1956 Olympics, 18 in 1964 and 19 in 1968.

CJC HAILS TRUDEAU'S MOVE TO AID ASIANS FACING EXPULSION FROM UGANDA

MONTREAL, Aug. 29 (JTA)--The Canadian Jewish Congress sent a congratulatory message yesterday to Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau for his decision, announced last Friday, to aid Asians facing expulsion from Uganda by accepting 300-500 of them into Canada.

Trudeau stated that Ugandan President Idi Amin's order "would appear to be contrary to his country's obligation under the United Nations Charter and Declaration of Human Rights as well as against the principle of the Commonwealth Declaration of 1971, in which member States reiterated their belief in human dignity and non-racialism."

The CJC called Trudeau's decision "courageous and timely action in the aid of victims of discrimination," declaring that "this prompt humanitarian act designed to ameliorate the suffering of innocent people touches the heart of the Jewish community."

Sydney Maislin, president of the Canadian B'nai B'rith, sent a telegram to Trudeau support-

ing his position in accepting expelled Asians, whom he called "helpless and tragic victims of Idi Amin's economic and racial war." Canada's policy, he said, is "ethically consistent" with the country's humanitarianism "and serves as an example to the world and to all the Commonwealth nations."

ISRAELIS PROTEST AWARD TO POLISH COMMITTEE

TEL AVIV, Aug. 29 (JTA)--An Israeli group is protesting a 10,000 Mark award by the West German Publishers Association to the Korczak Committee in Poland, an organization established in memory of Janusz Korczak, a prominent Polish educator executed by the Nazis during World War II along with his Jewish pupils.

Yerahmiel Weingarten, a one-time associate of Korczak and a member of the Israeli Memorial Committee claimed that the Polish body has been systematically pruned of its Jewish members and that Korczak's Jewish and Zionist associations have been carefully camouflaged by Polish authorities.

Weingarten who addressed a press conference here suggested that Israel register its protest by boycotting the forthcoming book fair in Frankfurt where the award is to be made. A protest cable sent by the Israeli committee to the German publishers association has received no reply to date.

PROTESTS MOUNT AGAINST RANSOM DEMANDS

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Israeli scientists and educators issued a joint statement today urging the Soviet Union to rescind the excessively high visa fees levied on Jewish academicians seeking to emigrate. They warned that the new Soviet policy is "bound to have the most serious international implications."

The statement was signed by the Israel Academy of Humanities and Sciences, the Israel Council of Institutions of Higher Education and the Scientists Committee of the Public Council for Soviet Jewry. Representatives of the three organizations met in emergency session on the visa fee matter.

Their statement said in part: "The latest move against Soviet Jews creates the gravest doubt as to whether the spirit of Stalinism is not still the guiding policy of certain circles in the Kremlin."

Protests against the "ransom" of Soviet Jews continued to mount in other quarters. Various ex-servicemen's associations issued a joint appeal yesterday to the World Veterans Association in Paris to raise its voice against the Soviet policy which is "contrary to the rights of man for which the veterans of the free world fought during World War II." The World Veterans Association reportedly has 20 million affiliated members in 50 countries.

The Israeli war veterans also cabled veterans groups in the US. The organization of former partisans and anti-Nazi fighters and former concentration camp inmates appealed to the organization of Soviet veterans of World War II to "take all measures to halt the oppression of the Jewish people" in their country.

An Israeli firm beat tough American and West German competition to win a \$10 million contract to construct a plant for the manufacture of brake linings in Yugoslavia. The deal was reported by Edward Schwartz, director general of the Ceramcasting Corp. which will also provide the machinery and engineering know-how for the plant.

VOA RAPPED FOR DEVOTING TOO LITTLE TIME TO PLIGHT OF SOVIET JEWS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Rep. Claude Pepper (D, Fla.) has accused the Voice of America of devoting too little time to the plight of Soviet Jews in its weekly Russian-language program beamed to the USSR. "It is ridiculous and insulting to everyone who is concerned about the plight of Soviet Jewry to produce only one ten-minute program and not to broadcast any of this pitiful program in Yiddish," the Congressman said in a letter made public today to Frank Shakespeare, administrator of the US Information Agency. The VOA is part of the USIA.

A spokesman for the VOA told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Rep. Pepper's letter was being studied at the USIA but that no response will be made until Shakespeare returns from abroad next week. The VOA's program originated last Dec. after strong protests were lodged by Congressmen and others against the paucity of information about Jews being broadcast to the Soviet Union.

The program is broadcast on Sunday morning and is repeated Monday nights in the Russian and Ukrainian languages. A VOA spokesman told the JTA that the program is devoted to cultural and religious interest but also contains information on Jewish affairs. "VOA reported the blackmail on Jews wishing to emigrate and all that," the spokesman said, adding, "We do use words in Yiddish and Hebrew as warranted by the content although we don't have a program in those languages."

JEWISH ATHLETE BREAKS WORLD SWIMMING RECORD IN OLYMPIC GAMES

NEW YORK, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Mark Spitz swam a world record 2:00.7 in the men's 200-meter butterfly in the Olympics yesterday shattering the standard he set earlier this month at the US trials. Spitz, an Indiana University student from Carmichael, Calif., continued on to his second triumph at the Olympics when, 30 minutes after receiving his first individual gold medal, he returned and anchored the US 400-meter relay team to a record 3:26.42 triumph.

The New York Times, in a "Man in the News" feature on the Jewish athlete, noted that when he was 10 years old swimming interfered with his after-school Hebrew lessons. "His father, Arnold Spitz, explained to the rabbi: 'Even God likes a winner,'" the Times feature reported. At 14, Spitz made it to the national championships and by 17 he was regarded "as one of the world's best, setting or tying five American records in one year and breaking five world marks in international competition," the Times stated.

SPECIAL DAY OF FAST, PRAYERS TO PROTEST LAW OF RETURN AMENDMENT

NEW YORK, Aug. 29 (JTA)--The Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada designated Sunday, Sept. 3, as a day of fast and special prayers to protest against "repeated legislation (in Israel) which offends the sensitivities of religious Jews." The fast day was proclaimed by Rabbi Moses Feinstein, president of the rabbinical organization.

He singled out as target of the protest an amendment to Israel's Law of Return which, he claimed, "blurs the distinction between Jew and non-Jew" and is "particularly absurd and ominous in its implications."

Orthodox elements here and in Israel have been agitating to have the Law of Return amended to specify that the conversion of prospective immigrants must be in accordance with halacha, religious law. The law as it now stands is not specific on that point.

U.S. WOULD WELCOME DIPLOMATIC TALKS WITH EGYPTIAN DELEGATION

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29 (JTA)--The United States would welcome diplomatic talks with Egyptians when a high-level Egyptian delegation arrives here next month for the World Bank and International Monetary Fund meetings. This view was expressed yesterday by State Department spokesman John King. Although the delegation, headed by Deputy Premier Mohammed Abdulla Marzaban, has not approached the US on the matter of talks, King said, "Of course we would welcome talks." Marzaban is also Egyptian Economics Minister.

RANSOM FOR JEWS AND COMMUNITIES HAS PRECEDENT IN JEWISH HISTORY

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--The excessive visa fees demanded by Soviet authorities from educated Russian Jews wishing to emigrate to Israel has shocked Jewish and world opinion. But there is ample precedent in Jewish history for ransoming individuals and entire communities. In fact, the rescue of Jews by paying ransom was regarded as one of the important mitzvahs (good deeds) according to the Encyclopaedia Judaica.

But to avoid exorbitant ransom demands or repeated kidnappings, the rabbis of old ruled that captives should be redeemed only at their market value as slaves. One of the most famous Jewish captives, the 13th century scholar, Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg, refused to let Jews pay ransom for his release from prison in order to avoid a precedent that would encourage despots to hold rabbis for ransom. Rabbi Meir died in prison.

According to the Encyclopaedia Judaica, Jews in both Moslem and Christian lands were often seized and held captive in order to exact ransom from their fellow Jews. The phenomenon was widespread in Russia and was a common occurrence in the Ukraine and Volhynia during the 16th and 17th centuries. During the Cossack massacres of 1648-49, captured Jews were ransomed by Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire.

In the 20th century the ransom of imperiled Jews has been disguised as a special tax. Such was the case in 1939 when Jews seeking to leave Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia were forced to pay a heavy levy imposed by the Nazi office in Prague headed by Adolf Eichmann.

BANK ROBBED IN JERUSALEM Seven Men Arrested

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Police here arrested seven men this afternoon after an armed robbery at a bank in the Orthodox Bay-it Vegan quarter. The take was IL 10,000. No further details have yet been released. It was the first such robbery in the capital in recent memory, though a wave of armed robberies of banks has been sweeping the Tel Aviv region this year. A police patrol car which happened to pass by the bank during the holdup was shot up by the robbers and one of its occupants was slightly wounded.

Fifteen athletes in seven sports are representing Israel at the Olympic Games in Munich. The contingent includes only two women--hurdler Esther Shahamurov and swimmer Shlomit Nir. Others include long-distance walker Dr. Shaul Ladany; marksmen Henry Herashkowitz and Zelig Stroch; wrestlers Elizer Halfin, Gad Sahari and Mark Slavin (the last a recent immigrant from Russia); and yachtsmen Yitzhak Nir and Yair Michaeli.



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JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Jerusalem is watching diplomatic developments in Europe carefully following reports that Egypt is pressing France to embark on a new Mideast peace initiative. With their military options effectively closed for the foreseeable future by the Soviet exodus, the Egyptians are thought to be seeking progress on the diplomatic front. Last month they tried to revive the Jarring mission, and failed. They are now reportedly trying to interest France in an idea mooted vaguely some time ago by UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim for an Egypt-Israel peace conference with the participation of the Four Powers.

A senior official in Jerusalem said today that to date Israel knows of no firm and precisely stated French plan along these lines but there have been reports of French interest in the idea. Israeli diplomats have reported a feeling in Western European capitals that some form of help ought to be extended to Egyptian President Sadat, the man who drove out the Russians. With this in mind, the Germans are known to be considering offering economic aid to Cairo.

Israel for its part does not object to the extension of economic aid to the Arabs. There have also been reports of late that Egypt is seeking to buy weapons from Britain which has no embargo policy on arms for the Mideast, but treats each sale on its merits. This approach has always suited Israel in the past as she too buys various armaments in Britain. Government circles here are apparently not disturbed at the present time by reports that Egypt may seek arms from Britain.

Israeli Envoys Sounding Out Governments

It is believed here that a possible diplomatic initiative inspired by France towards Egyptian-Israeli negotiations with the Big Four powers present will be supported by Britain which is anxious, out of EEC considerations not to cross the Quai D'Orsay if it can be avoided.

Israel has instructed its ambassadors in Europe to hold talks with their accredited governments to find out what French intentions are and what other Europeans feel about the post-Soviet exodus prospects in the Mideast. A number of Israeli envoys are on home leave and they have been consulting with the Foreign Minister and his senior staff on latest developments in Europe. The ambassadors include Michael Comay from London, Asher Ben-Natan from Paris and Emil Najer from Rome.

The general policy line laid down to them is that if a French initiative does materialize, Israel will seek to convince the other Europeans that only harm can come from letting Sadat fall under another delusion that salvation from the outside will regain him his lost territories without direct peace negotiations with Israel. Israel believes that with the Russians out of Egypt, the chances of a political settlement have increased but would be prejudiced by a French plan for Four Power pressure which in effect means an imposed settlement.

Sen. Richard S. Schweiker (R., Pa.) said today that he would support any effort by the US government to protest the Soviet Union's excessive visa fees. He referred to the matter in a letter to Secretary of State William P. Rogers in which he described the visa fees as "an absolute mockery" of the rights of a citizen of a country to emigrate.

JEWISH ATHLETES WINNERS IN OLYMPICS

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Between 1896 and 1968, 131 Jews from 17 nations won 236 medals--101 gold, 68 silver and 67 bronze--in Olympic competition. Divided by sport, the first place went to fencing where Jews won 71 medals--31 by Jews from Hungary and 13 from the USSR. Thirty-three medals were won by Jews in track and field events, 15 of them by competitors from the US, and 25 in gymnastics, 14 of them from Hungary. Twenty-four medals were won by Jews in swimming and 20 in water polo. Only one Jew has ever won a medal in ice hockey, judo or rowing.

Taken by countries, Hungarian Jews lead with 76 medals followed by the US with 47 medals and the USSR with 36. Next is Austria with 20 and Belgium with 14. In the first modern Olympic Games at Athens in 1896, seven Jewish athletes won 13 medals. In basketball Jews have excelled as coaches. Julius Goldman, an American, coached Canada to an Olympic medal in 1936 and Alexander Gomelsky did the same for the Soviet Union in 1964 and 1968.

A Jew has also won Olympic medals in cycling--Felix Schmal of Austria who won a gold and two bronze medals at the first Olympic Games. Two brothers, Alfred and Felix Flatow of Germany, won six medals - five gold - in the 1896 Games. At the first Olympic Games Jews were outstanding in swimming, winning all three events. Mark Spitz, who won four medals for the US in the 1968 games, set records in the butterfly stroke this week.

Israel Never Won Olympic Medal

Israel has never won an Olympic medal but one of the most distinguished of Jewish medalists, Agnes Keleti of Hungary, who won no less than 11 medals, settled in Israel after the 1956 revolution in Hungary and became one of the country's main gymnastic trainers.

One of the great track and field athletes of the early 20th century was Myer Prinstein of the US who won medals at several Olympic Games. Britain's Harold Abrahams won the 100 meters race in 1924, was captain of the British Olympic team in 1928 and today is chairman of the British Amateur Athletics Board. His brother, Sir Sidney Abrahams, who became Chief Justice of Uganda, ran for Great Britain in the 1908 and 1912 Olympics. Jews won 24 medals in the 1956 Olympics, 18 in 1964 and 19 in 1968.

CJC HAILS TRUDEAU'S MOVE TO AID ASIANS FACING EXPULSION FROM UGANDA

MONTREAL, Aug. 29 (JTA)--The Canadian Jewish Congress sent a congratulatory message yesterday to Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau for his decision, announced last Friday, to aid Asians facing expulsion from Uganda by accepting 300-500 of them into Canada.

Trudeau stated that Ugandan President Idi Amin's order "would appear to be contrary to his country's obligation under the United Nations Charter and Declaration of Human Rights as well as against the principle of the Commonwealth Declaration of 1971, in which member States reiterated their belief in human dignity and non-racialism."

The CJC called Trudeau's decision "courageous and timely action in the aid of victims of discrimination," declaring that "this prompt humanitarian act designed to ameliorate the suffering of innocent people touches the heart of the Jewish community."

Sydney Maislin, president of the Canadian B'nai B'rith, sent a telegram to Trudeau support-

ing his position in accepting expelled Asians, whom he called "helpless and tragic victims of Idi Amin's economic and racial war." Canada's policy, he said, is "ethically consistent" with the country's humanitarianism "and serves as an example to the world and to all the Commonwealth nations."

ISRAELIS PROTEST AWARD TO POLISH COMMITTEE

TEL AVIV, Aug. 29 (JTA)--An Israeli group is protesting a 10,000 Mark award by the West German Publishers Association to the Korczak Committee in Poland, an organization established in memory of Janusz Korczak, a prominent Polish educator executed by the Nazis during World War II along with his Jewish pupils.

Yerahmiel Weingarten, a one-time associate of Korczak and a member of the Israeli Memorial Committee claimed that the Polish body has been systematically pruned of its Jewish members and that Korczak's Jewish and Zionist associations have been carefully camouflaged by Polish authorities.

Weingarten who addressed a press conference here suggested that Israel register its protest by boycotting the forthcoming book fair in Frankfurt where the award is to be made. A protest cable sent by the Israeli committee to the German publishers association has received no reply to date.

PROTESTS MOUNT AGAINST RANSOM DEMANDS

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Israeli scientists and educators issued a joint statement today urging the Soviet Union to rescind the excessively high visa fees levied on Jewish academicians seeking to emigrate. They warned that the new Soviet policy is "bound to have the most serious international implications."

The statement was signed by the Israel Academy of Humanities and Sciences, the Israel Council of Institutions of Higher Education and the Scientists Committee of the Public Council for Soviet Jewry. Representatives of the three organizations met in emergency session on the visa fee matter.

Their statement said in part: "The latest move against Soviet Jews creates the gravest doubt as to whether the spirit of Stalinism is not still the guiding policy of certain circles in the Kremlin."

Protests against the "ransom" of Soviet Jews continued to mount in other quarters. Various ex-servicemen's associations issued a joint appeal yesterday to the World Veterans Association in Paris to raise its voice against the Soviet policy which is "contrary to the rights of man for which the veterans of the free world fought during World War II." The World Veterans Association reportedly has 20 million affiliated members in 50 countries.

The Israeli war veterans also cabled veterans groups in the US. The organization of former partisans and anti-Nazi fighters and former concentration camp inmates appealed to the organization of Soviet veterans of World War II to "take all measures to halt the oppression of the Jewish people" in their country.

An Israeli firm beat tough American and West German competition to win a \$10 million contract to construct a plant for the manufacture of brake linings in Yugoslavia. The deal was reported by Edward Schwartz, director general of the Ceramcasting Corp. which will also provide the machinery and engineering know-how for the plant.

VOA RAPPED FOR DEVOTING TOO LITTLE TIME TO PLIGHT OF SOVIET JEWS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Rep. Claude Pepper (D, Fla.) has accused the Voice of America of devoting too little time to the plight of Soviet Jews in its weekly Russian-language program beamed to the USSR. "It is ridiculous and insulting to everyone who is concerned about the plight of Soviet Jewry to produce only one ten-minute program and not to broadcast any of this pitiful program in Yiddish," the Congressman said in a letter made public today to Frank Shakespeare, administrator of the US Information Agency. The VOA is part of the USIA.

A spokesman for the VOA told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Rep. Pepper's letter was being studied at the USIA but that no response will be made until Shakespeare returns from abroad next week. The VOA's program originated last Dec. after strong protests were lodged by Congressmen and others against the paucity of information about Jews being broadcast to the Soviet Union.

The program is broadcast on Sunday morning and is repeated Monday nights in the Russian and Ukrainian languages. A VOA spokesman told the JTA that the program is devoted to cultural and religious interest but also contains information on Jewish affairs. "VOA reported the blackmail on Jews wishing to emigrate and all that," the spokesman said, adding, "We do use words in Yiddish and Hebrew as warranted by the content although we don't have a program in those languages."

JEWS ATHLETE BREAKS WORLD SWIMMING RECORD IN OLYMPIC GAMES

NEW YORK, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Mark Spitz swam a world record 2:00.7 in the men's 200-meter butterfly in the Olympics yesterday shattering the standard he set earlier this month at the US trials. Spitz, an Indiana University student from Carmichael, Calif., continued on to his second triumph at the Olympics when, 30 minutes after receiving his first individual gold medal, he returned and anchored the US 400-meter relay team to a record 3:26.42 triumph.

The New York Times, in a "Man in the News" feature on the Jewish athlete, noted that when he was 10 years old swimming interfered with his after-school Hebrew lessons. "His father, Arnold Spitz, explained to the rabbi: 'Even God likes a winner,'" the Times feature reported. At 14, Spitz made it to the national championships and by 17 he was regarded "as one of the world's best, setting or tying five American records in one year and breaking five world marks in international competition," the Times stated.

SPECIAL DAY OF FAST, PRAYERS TO PROTEST LAW OF RETURN AMENDMENT

NEW YORK, Aug. 29 (JTA)--The Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada designated Sunday, Sept. 3, as a day of fast and special prayers to protest against "repeated legislation (in Israel) which offends the sensitivities of religious Jews." The fast day was proclaimed by Rabbi Moses Feinstein, president of the rabbinical organization.

He singled out as target of the protest an amendment to Israel's Law of Return which, he claimed, "blurs the distinction between Jew and non-Jew" and is "particularly absurd and ominous in its implications."

Orthodox elements here and in Israel have been agitating to have the Law of Return amended to specify that the conversion of prospective immigrants must be in accordance with halacha, religious law. The law as it now stands is not specific on that point.

U.S. WOULD WELCOME DIPLOMATIC TALKS WITH EGYPTIAN DELEGATION

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29 (JTA)--The United States would welcome diplomatic talks with Egyptians when a high-level Egyptian delegation arrives here next month for the World Bank and International Monetary Fund meetings. This view was expressed yesterday by State Department spokesman John King. Although the delegation, headed by Deputy Premier Mohammed Abdulla Marzaban, has not approached the US on the matter of talks, King said, "Of course we would welcome talks." Marzaban is also Egyptian Economics Minister.

RANSOM FOR JEWS AND COMMUNITIES HAS PRECEDENT IN JEWISH HISTORY

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--The excessive visa fees demanded by Soviet authorities from educated Russian Jews wishing to emigrate to Israel has shocked Jewish and world opinion. But there is ample precedent in Jewish history for ransoming individuals and entire communities. In fact, the rescue of Jews by paying ransom was regarded as one of the important mitzvahs (good deeds) according to the Encyclopaedia Judaica.

But to avoid exorbitant ransom demands or repeated kidnappings, the rabbis of old ruled that captives should be redeemed only at their market value as slaves. One of the most famous Jewish captives, the 13th century scholar, Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg, refused to let Jews pay ransom for his release from prison in order to avoid a precedent that would encourage despots to hold rabbis for ransom. Rabbi Meir died in prison.

According to the Encyclopaedia Judaica, Jews in both Moslem and Christian lands were often seized and held captive in order to exact ransom from their fellow Jews. The phenomenon was widespread in Russia and was a common occurrence in the Ukraine and Volhynia during the 16th and 17th centuries. During the Cossack massacres of 1648-49, captured Jews were ransomed by Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire.

In the 20th century the ransom of imperiled Jews has been disguised as a special tax. Such was the case in 1939 when Jews seeking to leave Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia were forced to pay a high levy imposed by the Nazi office in Prague headed by Adolf Eichmann.

BANK ROBBED IN JERUSALEM Seven Men Arrested

JERUSALEM, Aug. 29 (JTA)--Police here arrested seven men this afternoon after an armed robbery at a bank in the Orthodox Bay-it Vegan quarter. The take was IL 10,000. No further details have yet been released. It was the first such robbery in the capital in recent memory, though a wave of armed robberies of banks has been sweeping the Tel Aviv region this year. A police patrol car which happened to pass by the bank during the holdup was shot up by the robbers and one of its occupants was slightly wounded.

Fifteen athletes in seven sports are representing Israel at the Olympic Games in Munich. The contingent includes only two women--hurdler Esther Shahamurov and swimmer Shlomit Nir. Others include long-distance walker Dr. Shaul Ladany; marksmen Henry Herashkowitz and Zelig Stroch; wrestlers Elizer Halfin, Gad Sahari and Mark Slavin (the last a recent immigrant from Russia); and yachtsmen Yitzhak Nir and Yair Michaeli.