



daily news bulletin

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency 165 West 46th St. New York, N.Y. 10036

Contents copyright: Republication only by previous arrangement

Vol. XL - Fifty-Six Year

Wednesday, January 24, 1973

No. 17

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON:

ISRAEL AND AMERICAN JEWRY

By Joseph Polakoff, JTA Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 (JTA)—Lyndon Baines Johnson, America's 36th President who died yesterday at his ranch in Johnson City, Texas, at the age of 64, is remembered here for blocking threatened Soviet military intervention against Israel in the Six-Day War in 1967 and preserving Israel's rights to safe borders in the debate that followed in the United Nations.

During his Presidency from Nov. 22, 1963, after President Kennedy's assassination, to Inauguration Day in 1969, no doubt existed in the Jewish community of his support for Israel's survival and of scrupulous fairness to American Jews in his programming of progress in social legislation for the United States.

"He was a man who neither knew nor felt any distinction of race, religion or color," former Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "He was a man who valued people as individuals, valued them for their quality of heart and mind. He liked and trusted Jewish people because he found in those people the same concern for human value that he himself cherished."

David Ginsburg, the Washington lawyer whose counseling brought him perhaps closer to President Johnson on Jewish matters than anyone, appraised him to JTA in this way: "The American people have lost a friend who contributed more than any other President in American history to furtherance of domestic peace and prosperity. Israel has lost a friend who was unique in the history of that young State."

President Johnson manifested support for Israel in numerous ways. He encouraged Congress to vote substantial financial assistance to Israel. He demonstrated adroitness and courage in blocking the threat to Israel on June 10, 1967 when Soviet Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin was on the hot line from the Kremlin to the White House with threats of the use of Soviet force against Israel.

Prepared to Resist Soviet Intrusion

In his memoirs published in 1971—"The Vantage Point, Perspectives of the Presidency 1963-1969"—President Johnson recalled that on that June morning in the Six-Day War, "new word" came from Moscow that threw a "chill" into the White House. Mr. Kosygin was on the hot line with a "grave communication" in which the Soviet leader accused Israel of ignoring the UN resolutions, spoke of "independent decisions," foresaw "grave catastrophe" if Israel did not cease military action, and threatened that Russia would take military action.

President Johnson asked Robert S. McNamara, then Secretary of Defense, for the precise location of the Sixth Fleet. When Secretary McNamara replied it was about 300 miles west of Syria and 10-12 hours sailing time from that coast, President Johnson ordered the American warships to move immediately to within 50 miles of the Syrian coast, breaking previous Navy orders to the fleet to stay 100 miles away. "The Soviets had made a decision. I had to respond," President Johnson wrote. "The United States was prepared to resist Soviet in-

trusion in the Middle East."

President Johnson's decision that morning insured that the Soviet Union and the United States would both stay out of the conflict with their own forces. "It was also a clear signal to Moscow that this was an assurance for Israel that no power would intervene. When the Six-Day War began, the State Department issued a statement the U.S. would remain "neutral in word, thought and deed." But President Johnson's views laid to rest any hint that he would allow Israel to founder.

In the United Nations debate, U.S. Ambassador Arthur Goldberg, acting for the U.S. under President Johnson's instructions, played a significant role in shaping the United Nations Resolution 242 that was finally adopted on Nov. 22, 1967 and continues as the basis for American policies on the Middle East.

On June 20, 1967, during an emergency General Assembly debate initiated by the Soviet Union over Israel's conquest of Arab territory, Goldberg referred to the five principles for peace in the Middle East enunciated the day before by President Johnson in his address to the National Foreign Policy Conference for Educators. Johnson said these principles were: "...recognized right of national life; justice for the refugees; innocent maritime passage; limits of the wasteful and destructive arms race" and "political and territorial integrity for all."

While the Assembly was in session, President Johnson and Kosygin met in Glassboro, N.J. to discuss a number of issues including the Middle East crisis. Johnson suggested to Kosygin that the U.S. and USSR inform each other of any plans for arms shipments into the area. Nothing came of the suggestion, however, as the Russians poured arms into Egypt to replace its Six-Day War losses and the U.S. resumed arms shipments to Israel.

Jewish Support Phenomenal in 1964 Election

It was at President Johnson's meeting with the late Premier Levi Eshkol of Israel at his Texas ranch Jan. 7-8, 1968, during Mr. Eshkol's official visit to this country that agreement on the U.S. shipment of Phantom jets to Israel was reached. President Johnson's initial commitment was for two dozen of the supersonic aircraft and more were programmed for long-term delivery which is still being carried out. President Johnson also invited President Zalman Shazar of Israel to the LBJ ranch in 1966 when Shazar was visiting South America.

Although Johnson never visited Israel, he kept himself well informed on the Jewish State and its needs. One of his most dramatic utterances before a Jewish audience was made on Feb. 6, 1964, when, addressing the annual dinner of the Weizmann Scientific Institute in New York, he urged the use of nuclear power for water development in the Middle East.

An associate of President Johnson recalled to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency a remark by the President after the 1967 Middle East crisis had abated. "I want to see that little country out there flying its blue and white flag high," Johnson was quoted as saying.

Jewish political support for Mr. Johnson was phenomenal. In the 1964 elections he is believed to have received 90 percent of the Jewish vote.

considered the highest percentage of any Presidential candidate in history. Mr. Johnson stood out for his liberalism while his opponent, Sen. Barry Goldwater, was regarded as a hawk on the Vietnam war and a reactionary in social affairs, both of which were repellent to the vast majority of Jewish voters. It was a tragic paradox of history, however, that Johnson, the architect of the Great Society at home, was also the architect of America's massive involvement in the Vietnam war.

Jews Were Close Confidants

Throughout his political career, which covered the range from Congressman to Senator to Vice-President and President, Mr. Johnson had Jews among his closest confidants. This was especially evident during his Presidency. Besides appointing Fortas to the Supreme Court and nominating him to be Chief Justice, and his selection of Arthur Goldberg to be his Ambassador at the UN at an especially difficult time in that area, President Johnson named Wilbur Cohen as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Sheldon Z. Kaplan as Commissioner of Internal Revenue and Emanuel Cohen as Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Eugene Rostow was his Undersecretary for Economic Affairs in the State Department and his brother, Prof. Walt W. Rostow was his National Security Advisor at the end of his Presidency. Lee C. White, who was on his White House staff, became Chairman of the Federal Power Commission. Leonard Mark, who was the lawyer for the Johnson family's television interests, became director of the U.S. Information Agency. Ginsburg, his intimate personal advisor and counselor, was named Executive Director of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, familiarly known as the Kerner Commission.

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, then a professor of government at Harvard, entered the international scene as President Johnson's emissary to Paris in 1968 when negotiations were under way with the North Vietnamese to end the American bombing of North Vietnam. In Congressional affairs, two of Johnson's closest associates were Sen. Abraham Ribicoff (D. Conn.) and Rep. Emanuel Celler, the Democrat from Brooklyn who retired from the Congress less than a month ago after serving in it for nearly 50 years.

EBAN: LBJ ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLE OF MIDEAST BALANCE OF POWER

JERUSALEM, Jan. 23 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Abba Eban today paid tribute to the late President Lyndon B. Johnson saying he "was friendly and understanding to Israel even before he became President. During his presidency he understood the need to strengthen Israel against the dangers which ensnared it, and it was he who approved the sale of Patton tanks and Phantom planes to the State of Israel." Eban said Johnson thereby "established the principle of the balance of power as the first guarantee of the advancement of peace in the Middle East.... Whenever an Israeli thinks about the security of his country and its citizens, he must remember the vital role played by Lyndon Johnson."

The Foreign Minister also sent cables of condolence to Mrs. Johnson and to Secretary of State William P. Rogers. His cable to Mrs. Johnson said in part: "We hope that in this grievous personal and national loss you may find comfort in the knowledge that Lyndon Johnson had earned immortality in the annals of Israel.... We are grateful for his steadfast contribution to our security and welfare."

Addressing the Secretary of State as "Dear Friend," Eban said "there is not a man or woman in Israel who is not grief-stricken by the news of the death of Lyndon Johnson." Asking Rogers to convey to the U.S. government Israel's "sympathy with the American nation and with the bereaved family," Eban said Johnson's name "will be inscribed in Israel's memory for all that he did to strengthen the security and welfare of our state. In one of its most dangerous moments Israel was sustained by his resolute concern for its security and dignity. For that service we shall cherish his memory always."

In Tel Aviv, Mrs. Miriam Eshkol, widow of the late Premier Levi Eshkol, today sent a condolence cable to the Johnson family. The Israeli press headlined Johnson's death and revered him both as statesman and friend of Israel. One paper wrote he was "the most Zionist of American presidents."

JEWISH LEADERS PAY TRIBUTE TO LBJ

NEW YORK, Jan. 23 (JTA)--American Jewish leaders expressed shock and sorrow at the death of former President Lyndon Baines Johnson. They were unanimous in their praise of Johnson as a man who greatly aided Israel.

Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin, speaking last night at a farewell gathering sponsored by the National Committee for Labor Israel, said Johnson was "one of the presidents who have done so much in support of Israel." Rabin said Israelis admired Mr. Johnson as "a leader who fought for equality at home and freedom abroad," and said he was sure every Israeli feels affection "for the memory" of President Johnson.

"American Jewish Committee president Philip E. Hoffman said "the Jewish community was united in its admiration of Mr. Johnson's deep humanity, especially appreciating his support of Israel during its most trying hours." He said Johnson's "dedication to civil rights and his concern for the oppressed immeasurably benefitted and ennobled the nation."

American Zionist Federation president Rabbi Israel Miller said "President Johnson will be remembered by Zionists everywhere as the man, who once convinced of the rightness of Israel's cause, remained steadfast in his support of it." Rabbi Miller said "It was Johnson, especially during the period he served as majority leader of the Senate, who kept a close watch on the administration's policies and moves in the Middle East, remaining ever alert to safeguard Israel's integrity and survival."

Mrs. Charlotte Jacobson, chairman of the American Section of the World Zionist Organization, said "We Jews knew him (Johnson) as a man of tolerance who always advocated equality for all peoples and as a true friend of Israel who believed its strength was the best guarantee of Middle East peace."

Helped Israel During Fledgling Years

Mrs. Rose E. Matzkin, national president of Hadassah, sent a telegram of condolence to Mrs. Johnson on behalf of Hadassah's 325,000 members. At a memorial service in Hadassah House for the late President, Mrs. Matzkin noted his friendship for Israel and understanding of its problems. She observed that during the Six-Day War, his firm support at that time was a dramatic demonstration of U.S. commitment to the security and integrity of the Jewish State.

B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League national chairman Seymour Graubard said Johnson "understood the significance of Israel to American

Jews as well as their commitment to human rights. His leadership in achieving historic civil rights legislation put into law the guarantees which Jews and all minorities sought in order to fulfill the promise of the American Dream. The ADL is proud to have honored him in 1965 with our highest award--the America's Democratic Legacy Medalion for his distinguished contributions to the enrichment of our democratic heritage."

Zionist Organization of America president Herman L. Weisman said that Johnson asserted his championship of Israel and the Zionist cause "at every level of public service, in the U.S. Congress and the White House." Weisman said "Zionists will particularly remember his unstinting efforts in the Senate in assisting Israel during her fledgling years, and his forthright statesmanship as President in personally forestalling the possibility of Soviet intervention in the Six-Day War."

National Jewish Welfare Board president Morton L. Mandel said Johnson's "keen awareness of JWB's work on behalf of the Jewish personnel in the military and his citations of JWB's 'domestic efforts to build a better society' gave us great inspiration."

Rabbi Louis Bernstein, president of the Rabbinical Council of America, said Americans have lost one of the great champions of civil rights and Jews have lost one of the great friends of Israel. "Johnson proved to be a loyal and dedicated friend of Israel, particularly during the Six-Day War, when he stated in unmistakable terms that America would safeguard the integrity and sovereignty of the State of Israel despite pressure from Russia."

ARAB RELEASED FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE

TEL AVIV, Jan. 23 (JTA)--A Tel Aviv magistrate released Ghazi Shebita from detention today after police admitted they could not produce evidence at this time to substantiate charges that the Israeli Arab was in contact with "hostile elements" while studying in Moscow on a fellowship three years ago.

Shebita, a resident in Teibah village near Kfar Saba, is a member of the central committee of the pro-Moscow Rakah Communist party. He was arrested last Wednesday and last Thursday was remanded in custody for five days. His detention expired at noon today and the police were unable to convince the magistrate to remand the suspect for another 15 days. The magistrate offered the police one more day to submit material evidence but the police said they couldn't produce any by tomorrow.

Rakah has charged that Shebita's arrest was a deliberate provocation intended to discredit the party in an election year. Shebita's home was searched and written material was confiscated by police.

DAYAN: CONSCIENCE NOT A BASIS FOR ENDING RESERVE ARMY DUTY

JERUSALEM, Jan. 23 (JTA)--Defense Minister Moshe Dayan said today that he did not favor relieving reserve soldiers from duty in the administered territories on grounds of conscience. Dayan spoke in reply to a question in the Knesset by Communist MK Shmuel Mekunis. He said he would not intervene on behalf of Yossi Koten, a reservist sentenced to 35 days in jail for refusing to serve in the administered territories.

OPPOSITION TO HEAD TAX CONTINUES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 (JTA)--Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D. Wash.) served notice on the Soviet Union today that the recent publication in Moscow

of the regulations governing the education head tax applied to Jewish and other emigrants, will not deter the sponsors of the Jackson Amendment to the East-West Trade Act.

Jackson, whose amendment would deprive the USSR of most favored nation status and other U.S. trade concessions as long as it continues to impose restrictions on emigration, called the published regulations "totally unacceptable as a response to the concern expressed in the Jackson Amendment."

He declared that "Soviet policy remains one of great and capricious cruelty. So long as emigration is prevented by ransom taxes and other measures, we will use the votes we have to amend the appropriate trade bill," he said.

The Jackson Amendment, and an identical measure introduced in the House by Rep. Charles Vanik (D. Ohio) were not acted on when Congress adjourned last year. The amendments are expected to be re-submitted early in the current Congressional term. It was understood that Sen. Jackson and his associates are waiting either for a formal presentation of the new U.S.-Soviet trade agreement to the Senate for ratification or for definite knowledge of the agreement's provisions before renewing action on the amendment.

Publication of the Soviet education tax regulations, originally promulgated by the Supreme Soviet last Aug., was believed to have been intended to make the exit fees more acceptable to opponents in the West. Modifications were introduced gearing the payments to the number of years holders of academic degrees have worked in their field and exempting pensioners and disabled veterans from payment.

1000 SAY FAREWELL TO RABIN

NEW YORK, Jan. 23 (JTA)--Some 1000 trade unionists and Labor Zionists paid tribute last night to Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin at a farewell sponsored by the National Committee for Labor Israel. Sol C. Chaikin, national chairman of the American Trade Union Council for Histadrut, said that before Rabin came to Washington, "the Arabists were securely ensconced" in the State Department and that Department officials "were not, previous to his (Rabin's) coming, known for their friendship to Israel."

It was Rabin's task, Chaikin stated, to establish a rapport, an understanding, so they might listen and then be persuaded to a course of action. Rabin was successful in his job, he noted. Applause greeted Chaikin when he said that if the sentiments of warmth and appreciation for Rabin's work expressed at the gathering could be translated into votes, "we will have the occasion to see Rabin as a member of the (Israeli) government." He presented Rabin with a Torah breastplate which had inscribed in silver the words: "a tree of life to those who hold fast to it."

Uzi Bloch, representative of the Histadrut Executive in the United States, who spoke on behalf of Histadrut in Israel, said that the people of Israel and Histadrut were welcoming Rabin home "after a life here fully and totally dedicated to the people and the country (Israel)."

Dr. Judah J. Shapiro, president of the Labor Zionist Alliance, called Rabin "an Israeli Ambassador who taught an American administration how to keep the peace in the Middle East by making Israel strong enough so there has been no war in the past few years." Mrs. Blanche Fine, vice-president of Pioneer Women, paid tribute to Leah Rabin, wife of Ambassador Rabin, as an ambassador in her own right.

