



daily news bulletin

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FOUR JEWISH WOMEN FOUND DEAD IN DAMASCUS JEWISH QUARTERS

PARIS, March 10 (JTA)--Four Jewish women were killed in Damascus within the last week. Their bodies were found Friday in a street of the Jewish quarter, it was reported by the French daily, *Le Figaro*, which cited a "sure source" for this information. According to the daily, several dozen Jews left their ghetto to participate in a demonstration by Christian women last Tuesday to protest Syria's anti-Jewish discrimination. The protestors were reportedly brutally dispersed by the police. *Le Figaro*, in its Friday edition, quoted diplomatic sources saying that the slayings were by extremists opposed to President Hafez Assad's Middle East policy, but it was not known whether the extremists were Palestinian or local opponents of Assad.

Earlier, the French state radio, France Inter, reported that a number of Syrian Christians, mainly women, had conducted such a demonstration in the center of Damascus and tried to march through the streets. According to this report, they were protesting a recent incident involving a number of Syrian Jewish women who reportedly had been arrested and maltreated and others believed to have been killed. It was not immediately clear whether the four women found Friday were those killed earlier or whether they were killed during the demonstration last Tuesday. The French radio did not mention any source of datelines as to where its report originated. Other sources in Paris confirmed the veracity of the report of the demonstration.

SYRIAN FRONT SPARKED OVER WEEKEND BUT FAILED TO EXPLODE

TEL AVIV, March 10 (JTA)--The Syrian "tinder box" sparked over the weekend but failed to explode. Syrian forces initiated three shooting incidents Friday and Saturday. Israeli forces responded to the first one Friday--the firing of Russian-made Sager anti-tank missiles at an Israeli patrol--but did not return the fire when the Syrians lobbed a number of shells at Israeli positions in the northern Golan enclave later Friday or when they fired on the Israeli-held section of the Kuneitra-Damascus road Saturday. Israeli forces suffered no casualties or damage.

An Israeli army spokesman denied today a Syrian allegation that an Israeli pilotless plane -- "Drone" -- was shot down by Syrian anti-aircraft fire and crashed in north Jordan. Israeli circles said nothing of the sort happened. It was quiet all day today on the Golan Heights. Israeli restraint is believed to have averted more serious incidents which the Syrians were apparently intent on provoking.

Purim festivities were held at the various Golan Heights settlements but only the local settlers attended. Visitors and tourists have been barred from the area. Israeli engineers have demolished the easternmost portion of the Damascus road near the cease-fire line. The action was taken to make a possible Syrian attack more difficult. The road is the only one suitable for heavy tanks.

It was revealed meanwhile that last Tuesday's alert on the Syrian front was ordered on the basis of intelligence reports from the same sources that informed Israel that an attack was imminent on the eve of the Yom Kippur War. This was disclosed Friday by Information Minister-designate Shimon Peres in an interview published in *Maariv*. The newspaper said the source was the United States government and said the warning was most probably delivered directly to Premier Golda Meir. According to *Maariv*, the U.S. information was detailed and confirmed other indications that the Syrians were preparing to resume fighting.

KAHANE GOES ON TRIAL

JERUSALEM, March 10 (JTA)--Rabbi Meir Kahane went on trial here today charged with conspiracy to kidnap and murder foreign politicians during last June's visit to the United States by Soviet Communist Party Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev. He was also accused of involvement in planning to blow up foreign embassies overseas and sending letters abroad and cables from here during last May and June aimed at carrying out actions considered as crimes in the U.S. and Israel. Although the charge sheet did not specify the Brezhnev visit it did charge him with attempted conspiracy to harm relations with a friendly nation, the U.S.

Premier Golda Meir, in an affidavit presented to the court, stated that disclosure of government actions on the immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union was liable to harm Israel's foreign relations and thus constituted a breach of the official Secrets Act. Mrs. Meir's statement, written in her role as acting Foreign Minister in the absence of Abba Eban who is abroad, was presented to the court by State Prosecutor Gabriel Bach.

Judge Jacob Bazak ruled against a defense motion requesting Eban to be summoned as a witness to support the contention that Rabbi Kahane's actions were not liable to harm Israel's foreign relations. The JDL leader admitted writing letters and dispatching them abroad. He pleaded not guilty to the other charges. The trial was adjourned until Tuesday and will then continue in camera because some of the details relating to Soviet Jewry are confidential and cannot be made public. If Rabbi Kahane is found guilty he faces seven years' imprisonment.

WIDESPREAD PUBLIC DISSATISFACTION WITH MANEUVERING OF LABOR PARTY Dayan's, Peres' Credibility At Lowest Ebb

JERUSALEM, March 10 (JTA)--Premier Golda Meir delivered her new government to the Knesset today amid widespread public dissatisfaction with the Labor Party's maneuvering of the past week that saw Mrs. Meir and two of her key ministers--Moshe Dayan and Shimon Peres--abruptly reverse what they had claimed to be irrevocable decisions to resign. Their popularity and credibility is at its lowest ebb and there is considerable public disenchantment with the fact after months of tortuous coalition negotiations, Israel's new government is virtually the same as the old.

All of this has been grist for the Likud mills, and the opposition leaders lost no time in flying the Labor leadership--particularly Dayan for suddenly dropping his advocacy of a national unity government on alleged security grounds.

Gen. Ariel Sharon, the Likud founder and a popular hero of the Yom Kippur War, accused Dayan of exploiting the situation on the Syrian front which, Sharon claimed, was no worse than others that have arisen since the Yom Kippur War and which he said will continue "every time we cannot satisfy the Arab demands." Menachem Beigin claimed on a television interview that if Dayan and Peres had held out for a unity government it would have come about.

But the predictable "thunder from the right" was not all today. Weekend newspapers carried dozens of articles equally critical of Meir and Dayan and accusing them of exploiting the Syrian scare for political purposes. Haim Hefner, a pro-Labor poet wrote today in Yediot Achronot that the man-in-the-street has lost all trust and confidence in the country's political leadership. Sylvia Keshet, a columnist in the same newspaper, charged Mrs. Meir with cynical deception and claimed that under her leadership the Labor Party was severely weakened. Similar opinions were expressed in the independent press and, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned, at informal social gatherings of influential people.

Beigin Carries Battle To The Knesset

Beigin carried the battle to the Knesset today where he led off a 10-hour debate on the new government by charging that the Labor Party's coalition maneuverings brought "public shame and disgrace" to Israel. Referring sarcastically to Mrs. Meir's "final" decision to step down, Beigin declared that the world obviously did not know the Hebrew meaning of "final." "You have made the word of Israel's Prime Minister a mockery and source of laughter," Beigin shouted looking straight at Mrs. Meir who appeared uncomfortable.

Turning to Dayan, the Likud leader said that for weeks the Defense Minister adamantly refused the advice of his colleagues to withdraw his decision to quit. But "one night he suddenly did a somersault. What happened?" Beigin asked rhetorically, and answered himself: "A defense scandal unprecedented in the annals of the State."

He was referring to last week's top secret Cabinet meeting on the Syrian situation which, he charged, was made public only in order to let Dayan change his mind without losing face. "Golda who always complained of leaks from Cabinet meetings, published this top secret information herself for political purposes," Beigin claimed. According to Beigin, she thereby compromised Israel's intelligence sources in Syria. "And we know what happens to compromised intelligence sources in Syria," he said.

Beigin also denounced the National Religious Party for agreeing to compromise on the Who is a Jew issue and for retreating from its position in support of a national unity government. He challenged Mrs. Meir's contention that a government with Likud could never bring peace with the Arabs. If Labor claims it will never give up the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip or Sharm el-Sheikh, how does it propose to make peace? Beigin asked. (By David Landau)

LZA LEADER CALLS FOR SUPPORT OF THE JACKSON AMENDMENT

NEW YORK, March 10 (JTA)--Support for the Jackson Amendment, despite the opposition of Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, was called for by the head of the Labor Zionist Alliance at its National Council Assembly this

weekend. Dr. Judah J. Shapiro, LZA president, told the more than 100 Labor Zionist leaders from throughout the U.S. that the Jackson Amendment should be included in the Trade Reform Act because Kissinger's arguments "are based on an assumption of a detente with the Soviet Union." Thus far, he said, "there is no evidence that Moscow is prepared to act on its own accord to implement human rights and freedom of emigration. Only strong action by the U.S. will establish the will of the American people in this matter."

Commenting on Kissinger's argument that the Jackson Amendment would harm detente with the Soviet Union, Dr. Shapiro cited the serious situation along the Syrian-Israel border and he accused Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, who was in the Middle East last week, of stirring up trouble in the area. "Mr. Gromyko is following step by step our Secretary of State to undo what Dr. Kissinger has done in the Middle East," declared Dr. Shapiro, adding, "What detente is that!"

In a symposium at the National Council Assembly, Prof. Allen Pollack, member of the Executive of the World Zionist Organization, declared that Labor Zionists must be prepared, if necessary, to criticize the leaders of the government of Israel and the leaders of the Jewish community on the nature of "the society here and there and in the name of the vision of Israel and the Jewish people." But he reaffirmed the need to continue to support Israel morally, financially and in public affairs.

Warning about an increased Arab propaganda campaign in the U.S., Zev Baumgold, chairman of the National Board, declared that the African nations' break of diplomatic relations with Israel, the threats, the oil blackmail by the Arabs against the West is an "organized ploy to destroy the Jewish State in accord with the express will of the Black September movement."

SOVIET JEWISH FAMILY IN TROUBLE

NEW YORK, March 10 (JTA)--Dr. Isaac Poltinnikov of Novosibirsk and his family are in trouble, the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry reported today. The KGB came to their home last Thursday and read a document charging the family with anti-Soviet activity which included, according to the SSSJ, provoking reactions abroad, staging a hunger strike at the central telephone station in Novosibirsk and giving information abroad by use of the telephone. The charge sheet also noted that members of the family had been expelled from Kiev after meeting with Jewish activists. According to the SSSJ, the Poltinnikov family was told that if they didn't find work in 15 days they would be charged with parasitism. Such a charge carries a sentence of one to two years in jail.

MAJ. GEN. KALMAN MAGEN DEAD AT 45

TEL AVIV, March 10 (JTA)--Maj. Gen. Kalman Magen, one of Israel's youngest commanding officers, was found dead in his command post early today, apparently of a heart attack. He was 45. Gen. Magen was a divisional commander in the Yom Kippur War. His unit crossed the Suez Canal Oct. 18. Born in Vienna, he arrived in Palestine in 1933 and was a member of the underground Irgun Zvai Leumi during the pre-State period. He fought with the Givati Brigade on the Egyptian front during Israel's War for Independence in 1948, was wounded in 1954 in a retaliation action in Sinai and again in 1969 when he was then a senior commander in the Armored Corps. Gen. Magen was regarded as one of the most promising members of the army's young officers corps. He served for years as an armored corps commander and as commander of officers training schools. Funeral services are incomplete.

KNESSET APPROVES NEW CABINET BY VOTE OF 62-46 WITH 9 ABSTENTIONS--By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 10 (JTA)--The Knesset approved Premier Golda Meir's new Cabinet tonight by a vote of 62-46. Two prominent Labor Party members were among the nine MKs who abstained when the vote of confidence was taken after 10 hours of acrimonious debate. Both of them, Yitzhak Ben Aharon and Lyova Eliav, are outspoken doves. They had informed Party Secretary General Aharon Yadin and Alignment chairman Moshe Baran by mail earlier that they could not support the new government because it represented to them no change from the outgoing one. Yehuda Ben Meir and Zevulun Hammer, members of the National Religious Party which is expected to join the coalition tomorrow, also abstained as did five members of the Aguda bloc. The Likud opposition which voted en-bloc against the government was joined in its assertion of no confidence by the Rakah Communists, Meir Payll's Moked and Shulamit Aloni's Civil Rights List. Three Labor-affiliated Arab members who were embittered over not receiving a Cabinet post nevertheless voted for the new government.

Premier Meir presented the Knesset with the names of 22 ministers-designate, one short of the full Cabinet. The final designee will be from the NRP which will be given a ministry without portfolio in addition to the three it held in the old government. In her opening statement to the Knesset this afternoon, Mrs. Meir disclosed that she had promised U.S. Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger to send a top level representative to Washington with an Israeli disengagement plan for the Syrian front within two weeks after the establishment of her new government. The Premier noted that a state of emergency still exists on the Syrian front. "I hope that the war will not be renewed and that an opportunity will be given for the exertion of all possible political efforts with a view to reaching agreement for the separation of forces," she said. "If, however, war is forced upon us, I have no doubt of the outcome," she added.

Premier Meir contrasted the situation on the Syrian front with that on the Egyptian front where the disengagement process has been completed successfully. "I cannot assure you that the Syrian government has abandoned its preparations for an offensive," she said. She said Israel maintained a high state of preparedness which, she acknowledged, imposed a burden on the reserves. On the Egyptian front, however, Mrs. Meir expressed satisfaction that the separation of forces was accomplished and that both sides scrupulously observed the terms of the disengagement accord. "We are all aware that Egypt is still a long way from Israel's vision of peace, but it is of positive significance that even according to the Egyptian version, disengagement was the first step toward peace, even if the road is long," she said.

She affirmed the basic intention of her new government is to pursue every avenue toward negotiations with the Arab states. It was this policy, she continued, that precluded a national government with Likud. She recalled that the principal party in Likud (Gahal) had walked out of her last unity coalition government in Aug. 1970 when the majority accepted a U.S. plan for a cease-fire with Egypt, ending the war of attrition. More recently, Likud opposed the Oct. 22 cease-fire ending the Yom Kippur War and opposed Israel's agreement to join the Middle East peace conference in Geneva, Mrs. Meir noted.

"In this period the country needs a government whose policy is guided by the striving for peace, a government which has the capacity both to decide and to act in the international sphere," she said. Mrs. Meir expressed hope that the nation had learned the lessons of the Yom Kippur War and would not "hasten back to the routine of yesterday." She said "The capacity of Israeli society to learn what changes and improvements are required in methods of work, in our scale of priorities and in our way of life in general is one of the crucial tests we must face during this period."

Mrs. Meir told the Knesset that she was adamant against forming a national unity government with Likud because Likud's declared policies were totally "incompatible" with her own on negotiations with the Arab states and territorial concessions. But she vowed that in eventual peace negotiations with Jordan, her government would agree to no territorial withdrawals without first consulting its coalition partners and calling for new elections "if one of the coalition partners so demands." That pledge was part of the agreement worked out with the NRP during the past few weeks of coalition bargaining. She also pledged a ministerial review of the Who is a Jew issue as it applies to the Law of Return. And she announced, in accordance with the compromise reached between the Labor Party and the NRP, that "the Minister of Interior stated that to the best of his knowledge, no non-Jew has been registered as a Jew (in the past four years) and the government will continue to act thus in the future."

Mrs. Meir said that the ministerial committee set up to deal with the Who is a Jew issue will be charged with the task of reaching an agreed legal arrangement within one year. She made it clear, however, that the committee would consult with all trends in Judaism around the world. "I hope that good will and concern for the unity of the people will help us attain a solution," she said. Mrs. Meir also announced that she would establish a "national security council" to advise the government as well as a Cabinet security committee. She said the latter would not include every Cabinet member as in the outgoing Cabinet where all members sat as a ministerial security committee whenever urgent security matters were taken up. She said there would also be a council on social affairs to advise the government in that sphere.

ISRAEL NAMES FULL AMBASSADOR TO SOUTH AFRICA

JERUSALEM, March 10 (JTA)--Israel is to have a full Ambassador in South Africa instead of a Charge d'Affaires only as before. News of this was made known here today. The present Charge d'Affaires, Michael Michael, who has the personal rank of Ambassador, will return home in May to be replaced by Yitzhak Unna who will be the first full Ambassador. Unna served for five years in South Africa very successfully as Consul General in Johannesburg till last year. South Africa has a Consul General in Tel Aviv and his rank is also expected to be elevated. Officials here preferred to refer to the new arrangement as a "normalization" and sought to avoid overpublicizing it.

WBAI-FM RAPS JTA FOR ITS REPORT

NEW YORK, March 10 (JTA)—WBAI-FM has accused the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of having "blown up out of all proportion" the listener-sponsored station's dismissal of a broadcaster who criticized Black basketball players on the Rochester University team who boycotted a game with the Israeli basketball team. Peter Heller, who worked for the station as an unpaid sportscaster was fired Feb. 8 and his broadcast on the game was scrapped several hours after it was taped. Heller, sports producer for ABC-TV, had contended on the taped broadcast that the Black athletes had bowed to Arab pressure.

Larry Cox, WBAI news director, said then that Heller was dismissed because "we did not like his work generally" and that the broadcast was cancelled because it had injected politics and was "a personal commentary." Cox, in his rebuttal to the JTA report Feb. 13, said he was giving the facts about Heller's relationship to the WBAI news department, "reports from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency to the contrary."

He asserted that Heller had been asked to contribute on a trial basis a series of sports reports and that the series was discontinued "because of the generally unsatisfactory quality of his work." Cox said the series were "a rather superficial presentation of material which was often a rehash of items used on the ABC network news show where Heller is employed."

Cox insisted that "the decision to end the series had absolutely nothing to do with any commentary that Heller did concerning Israel. The decision was based on his two previous broadcasts and a discussion I had personally with Heller concerning an item which we considered sexist and which he did not." Cox added that the commentary on Israel, which he said he had not heard, "was simply one of a number of items in his last program. The entire program was dropped when it was decided to discontinue the series."

Cox declared that it was "nothing short of disgraceful" for anyone "to use people's genuine fears of anti-Semitism or their very real concern over the crucial events now occurring in the Middle East to comfort one's ego." He added that WBAI was "proud to be giving what we consider to be the very best coverage of Israel in the New York area." He said the station intended to remain "progressive," despite either political attacks or "attacks from those who are not capable of accepting critical judgement of their work."

STATE DEPT. SAYS KISSINGER STICKS BY HIS STATEMENT THAT HE HAS BEEN MEETING REGULARLY WITH JEWS

WASHINGTON, March 10 (JTA)—Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger "sticks by his statement" last Thursday to the Senate that he has been "meeting regularly" with Jewish community leaders on the issue of Soviet-American trade and the Jackson Amendment on Soviet emigration policy, the State Department said Friday, but the Department refused to say when or with whom Kissinger has been meeting or where the meetings have been held. Kissinger made that statement in his appearance before the Senate Finance Committee which was considering the Trade Reform Bill.

"I won't start handing out the Secretary's schedule," State Department spokesman George Vest declared. But he said he (Vest) had "verified the facts" of the Secretary's testimony that

he has been meeting with "members" of the Jewish community.

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency, which asked Vest for the information, pointed out that there are six million Jews in America who could be "members" but Kissinger had said "leaders." Vest responded that he had "no objection to leaders" or "key members," but he reiterated "we stick by it" (the statement) whether "leaders or members."

After the JTA reporter noted that he was informed neither the National Conference on Soviet Jewry nor the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations had met with Kissinger since last Oct. on the Jackson Amendment issue, Vest replied that "the National Conference is not the only organization. There are other organizations." Representatives of the NCSJ told JTA in Washington that Kissinger's statement on his meetings with Jewish leaders was "misleading" and out of context.

Asked whether he had any response regarding Sen. Henry M. Jackson's assertion, following Kissinger's testimony, that any resolution of the dispute over the amendment would require movement by the Soviet Union in its emigration policy, Vest said that "the Secretary put himself in a very precise position" that he was "willing to be reasonable" and was "hopeful."

SULTANIK CALLS FOR LARGER PARTNERSHIP OBLIGATIONS TO ISRAEL

NEW YORK, March 10 (JTA)—Kalman Sultantik, executive vice-president of the World Confederation of General Zionists, asserted that the extent of the obligations involved in the partnership of world Jewry with Israel in terms of financial support will be even larger in the "non-combat period" than was the case during the Yom Kippur War. He added that "Israel cannot afford to wait much longer in solving its outstanding social problems in closing the gaps between its various population sectors. The decline in the rate of giving which set in after the Six-Day War must not be repeated since Israel is now facing the most crucial economic crisis in its history," he said.

Sultantik, a member of the World Zionist Executive, spoke at a meeting of the National Administrative Committee of Bnai Zion held here under the chairmanship of Rabbi William Berkowitz. He emphasized that Zionists are now duty-bound to inculcate into the minds of the Jewish public the consciousness of the true meaning of partnership with Israel which was cemented by the Yom Kippur War. "Never before was world Jewry so conditioned to respond to the Zionist message and to unified action on behalf of Israel as now," Sultantik said. "Zionists are now in a position to play a decisive role not only in Zionizing in increasing measure Jewish communities but also to provide a stimulus for uplifting Israel from its somber mood." ***

LONDON (JTA)—Jewish sources in the Soviet Union reported today that large numbers of Jews in Moscow and other Soviet centers celebrated Purim. One of the Purim parties was held in the home of Prof. Alexander Lerner. Ten Kiev Jews sent a message of Purim greetings to Israel's president Ephraim Katzir. ***

COPENHAGEN (JTA)—In 1973, 328 Polish Jews applied to emigrate to Denmark or sought asylum there. The government granted all 328 requests, Justice Minister Natalia Lind revealed in answer to a Parliamentary question Friday.