



daily news bulletin

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DAYAN SAYS 136 ISRAELI SOLDIERS STILL MISSING ON EGYPTIAN FRONT

JERUSALEM, March 18 (JTA)--Defense Minister Moshe Dayan told the Knesset today that 136 soldiers were still missing on the Egyptian front. Searches by army chaplaincy squads together with Egyptian men and Red Cross delegates were continuing he said, answering parliamentary questions. By this week, 243 bodies had been returned from that front, Dayan said, 104 by the Egyptian army--exhumed from temporary burial grounds--and 139 which had been located by the mixed search squads. Dayan said there was full cooperation between the two sides and each tried to fulfill the other's requests on return of bodies. He hoped it would be possible to make similar arrangements with Syria--but so far the contacts with the Syrians through the Red Cross had been unsatisfactory.

SYRIAN FIRE CONTINUES FOR 7TH DAY

TEL AVIV, March 18 (JTA)--Israeli and Syrian gunners exchanged artillery and tank fire intermittently for three hours today in the seventh successive day of shooting along the northern front. There were no reports of casualties. A military spokesman said the Syrians opened fire on Israeli positions in the Mazraat Bet Jan region Harfa, Tel Shams and Tel Ansar. He said Israeli return fire was heavy but not as severe as yesterday when Syrian guns opened up all along the cease-fire line.

Heavy Syrian fire kept Golan Heights settlers in their bomb shelters for four hours Saturday and for a shorter period Friday. A military spokesman said the Syrians fired about 150 shells yesterday into the Israel-held enclave in the northern Golan Heights. No casualties were reported. Saturday's attacks were aimed at Israeli positions in the Mazraat Bet Jan area, Tel Karim, Tel Antar, Tel Shams, Tel Marii and Nassaj village.

SHAZAR SUFFERS SLIGHT HEART ATTACK

TEL AVIV, March 18 (JTA)--Former President Zalman Shazar was rushed to Poria Hospital near Tiberias last night after suffering what doctors described as a slight heart attack. He was stricken while on his annual vacation at the Tiberias Hot Springs. A medical bulletin this morning said he was feeling better.

REAL PROGRESS IN DISENGAGEMENT TALKS MAY TAKE 2-3 MONTHS

JERUSALEM, March 18 (JTA)--A well placed source said today that it may take 2-3 months before any real progress is made in disengagement talks with Syria and termed Defense Minister Moshe Dayan's trip to Washington which the Cabinet approved yesterday a "pre-embryonic stage" of the talks. No date has been set for Dayan's Washington visit and it is not clear whether it will precede or follow the arrival there of a Syrian representative with Damascus' disengagement plan. (President Hafez Assad was reported today to have named Syria's delegate to meet with Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger on disengagement.)

Observers here who believe the path to an Israeli-Syrian separation of forces agreement will be a long one, say the main obstacle to an accord will be territorial issues. Israel remains adamant that disengagement with Syria must be effected only in the territory Israel conquered in the Yom Kippur War and will not withdraw an inch from the Golan Heights territory seized in the Six-Day War of 1967. The fact that Israeli leaders have not reiterated this position publicly in recent weeks is seen as a tactical move to avoid needlessly hardening the Syrian position rather than any softening of the Israeli stance on the issue.

Another anticipated obstacle to a disengagement accord is Syria's demand and Israel's refusal to link it to a timetable for Israeli withdrawal from the entire Golan Heights. Officials here say the only linkage Israel will agree to is an undertaking by both sides to negotiate a final peace settlement.

SCIENTISTS, PUBLIC FIGURES IN LEADERSHIP OF HUNGARIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

BUDAPEST, March 18 (JTA)--Hungarian Jewry has recently elected its community officials and results show an increased number of men from public life and science assuming leadership posts, especially in the community affairs section.

Elected to the section were two university professors of medicine, Istvan Kunos and Pal Weinstein; a literature professor, Aladar Komlos; two writers, Imre Keszi and Tamas Ungvari; and Dr. Sandor Scheiber. Scheiber is the director of the Budapest Jewish Seminary and the only rabbi elected to this section. Geza Seifert was once again elected as chairman of the national organization of Hungarian Jews.

In contrast to community affairs, those elected to leadership posts in religious affairs are comparatively unknown. It is noteworthy, however, that for the first time a young man, Hermann Fixler, has assumed the chairmanship. Speaking at Fixler's swearing-in ceremony, Seifert called him "a fine choice."

CHARGE BLOOD PLOT AGAINST SYRIAN JEWS

NEW YORK, March 18 (JTA)--Rabbi Joseph Harari, director of the Committee for the Rescue of Syrian Jewry, has sent a telegram to United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim urging him to investigate the murder of four Jewish women in Syria and "to alleviate the plight of the Jewish minority by calling upon the Syrian government to permit their departure."

At the same time, Rabbi Harari charged that the reported arrest of two Jewish men along with two Moslems for the murder was an "apparent blood plot against the small Jewish community" which has maintained a clean record throughout its 3000-year history in Syria. The Associated Press and the New York Times reported over the weekend that a gang of smugglers had killed the women. The AP said that Syrian security men had arrested four members of the gang who were described as two Syrian Jews and two Syrian Moslem Arabs. According to the Times, a diplomat in Damascus said he believed the four women had been carrying valuables and were robbed by the smuggler-guides who killed them to avoid detection.

However, Rabbi Harari said the two Jews who

were arrested are "respectable members of distinguished Jewish families" and were praised as "men of integrity by those who know them personally." To believe that these two men "would go to a cave in the mountains to participate in the robbery and murder of four girls from their own community is an insult to the intelligence of the enlightened world and a slap in the face of justice and human decency," Rabbi Harari said.

"The courage displayed by the oppressed Syrian Jews who organized a demonstration in the streets of Damascus to protest the murders despite police threats clearly indicates that the Syrian government cannot succeed in concealing the fact."

Several news reports over the weekend reported the bodies of the women were found on the Lebanese border which they had been allegedly trying to cross in an attempt to flee Syria. The original report in the French daily *Le Figaro*, citing a "sure source" said the bodies were found on a street in the Jewish quarter of Damascus. Israeli sources refuse to rule out the possibility the slayings took place in Damascus.

SPECIAL PRAYER FOR POWs IN SYRIA

JERUSALEM, March 18 (JTA)--Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren has written a special prayer for the safety of Israeli POWs in Syria. The text of the prayer, sent to all 4000 synagogues in Israel, will be recited every Saturday after reading the Torah--until the POWs are released.

Meanwhile, Sephardic Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef called on "all the enlightened nations of the world to rescue the oppressed Jews of Syria from the barbarians surrounding them." He was speaking at a memorial prayer service in Tel Aviv for four young Jewish women from Damascus recently raped and tortured to death in Syria. Another speaker at the meeting, MK Menahem Yadid of Likud, called on the government to make release of Syrian Jewry a condition of any negotiations with the Damascus regime.

SHARON RESIGNS FROM LIBERAL PARTY'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE; PROTESTS AGAINST FACTIONALISM IN LIKUD

TEL AVIV, March 18 (JTA)--Gen. Ariel Sharon, the founding father of Likud, resigned last night from the Liberal Party's political committee in protest against the factionalism within Likud which, he contended, was hampering its work. The non-Labor opposition, put together prior to the Yom Kippur War, largely through the efforts of Sharon, is an amalgamation of Herut, the Liberal Party, the Free Center and the State List.

Sharon announced his resignation at a meeting of the Liberal Party executive after delivering a lecture on the present political and security situation and demanding, once again, new elections to establish a more representative government. He said Likud was lagging in its work mainly because its individual components maintain independence on a wide variety of issues. He called for the elimination of the old factions in the interests of a single united party.

The Liberal executive immediately passed a resolution calling on Sharon to withdraw his resignation. Liberal leader Elimelech Rimalt agreed that Likud's strength lay in a consensus of all of its constituent groups but observed that such a goal required time and patience.

CCAR TO SEEK DIALOGUE WITH OTHER JEWISH BRANCHES ON CONVERSION ISSUE

JERUSALEM, March 18 (JTA)--The Central Conference of American Rabbis resolved today to review conversion procedures by Reform rabbis and to seek a dialogue on the subject with the other Jewish denominations. A resolution to that effect was adopted at the 85th annual convention of the CCAR. Rabbi Robert I. Kahn, of Houston, CCAR president, who initiated the plan, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that the committee appointed to study the conversion procedures would report back to the CCAR executive committee in June.

The CCAR convention is being attended by some 350 of the group's 1100 rabbis and over 1000 lay leaders of the Reform movement. When it opened last week, Rabbi Kahn called on the Orthodox and Conservative branches of Judaism to seek a mutually acceptable solution to the problem of conversions and the Who is a Jew issue that has created a furor in Israel and abroad.

He suggested as a model solution the "Toronto arrangement" of mixed tripartite conversion panels. He said that if such a system were adopted, the Reform movement would be guided by halacha in performing conversions. Rabbi Kahn warned, however, that the Reform movement would not tolerate aspersions cast on persons converted to Judaism in the past by Reform rabbis who did not follow the halachic rules.

Urges Right To Criticize Israel's Policies

The CCAR convention heard today from Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, who lashed out at certain American Jews who, he said, "sought to suppress all free discussion relating to any policies or problems of Israel." Rabbi Schindler said pressures for silence came "not from Israel as much as from her self-appointed minions, with American passports, minor functionaries strutting about as guardians of the Jewish State's security."

These persons, he said, tried to restrain him and others from criticizing Israel's political policies as perhaps not flexible enough and from "decrying this government's manifest incapacity to cope with the yawning social gap which tears this society's fabric." Declaring that "dissent should never be equated with disloyalty," Rabbi Schindler asked, "Must I applaud this government's every act to demonstrate my love for Israel? Why should I not be able to say what Israelis themselves are free to say in their own land?"

Rabbis Allan Levine and Henry Skirball, Israel-based Reform rabbis, reported today on plans to establish a Reform kibbutz in Israel. They said that several sites were under consideration, particularly in the Arava region in the south. They said the scheme had been evolving over four years and that Reform temple youth in the U.S. was being canvassed.

ISRAEL ASSAILED BY BLACK GROUP

NEW YORK, March 18 (JTA)--The National Black Political Convention meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas this weekend adopted a resolution condemning those Black Congressmen who voted for \$2.2 billion in U.S. aid to Israel "while ignoring the plight of Arab Palestinian refugees," and called for support of the Arab nations of Africa. This resolution was seen as a victory against the hard-line Black militants who had sought a much stronger resolution accusing Israel of being "major instrument" of a U.S.-dictated "world strategy of monopoly to increase profits and exploit all people."

The stronger resolution was introduced by the New Jersey delegation. Only three of the 16 Black Congressmen voted against aid to Israel. They were John Conyers of Michigan, Parren Mitchell of Maryland and Ronald V. Dellums of California, all Democrats.

The resolution condemning Israel was the object of a bitter behind-the-scenes fight over the weekend as militants led by Imamu Baraka from Newark, N.J. (formerly known as Leroy Jones), sought to tie in the anti-Israel statement with a general resolution calling for the destruction of "racism, capitalism and imperialism." Leaders from the New York and Indiana delegations, who sought to water down the resolution to prevent a bitter floor fight, noted their opposition for the record.

They told the 1200 delegates at the convention that there was "considerable opposition" to the more moderate resolution. Although the resolution calling for the destruction of imperialism was adopted by a lopsided majority the resolutions committee had succeeded in throwing out sections of the original draft submitted by the New Jersey delegation accusing Israel of being the major instrument of American world policy.

TWO JEWISH GROUPS BLAST TV BROADCAST OF MERCHANT OF VENICE

NEW YORK, March 18 (JTA)--The Jewish Broadcasting and Film Committee today deplored Saturday night's broadcast of "The Merchant of Venice" over ABC-TV. It claimed that the production, by Britain's famed National Theater Co., starring Sir Laurence Olivier in the role of Shylock, "perpetuates the anti-Semitic theme of Shakespeare's play and its negative stereotype of the Jew."

The statement by the Committee, a constituent of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, said that while Olivier's introductory statement about the character of Shylock was "well intentioned," it did "not substantially change or diminish the negative impact of the 2 1/2 hour program." The British actor characterized the play as a "harsh portrayal of prejudice and revenge" and said he was taking the arguments stirred by its contents "too seriously to allow Shylock to be either sentimentalized or caricatured."

"While we do not in any way seek to censor the network or challenge its right to present the play," the Committee's statement said, "we would have hoped that ABC-TV, relying on their own sense of sound social policy, would have refrained from presenting this production on nationwide television which reaches millions of people of all ages, many of whom have no knowledge of the history and the meaning of the play and may readily accept the anti-Semitism expressed in 'The Merchant of Venice' at face value. If the anti-Semitic content of 'The Merchant of Venice' were presented in some less formidable vehicle, it would probably be widely scoffed at and disregarded."

The broadcast was also bitterly assailed by Benjamin R. Epstein, director of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, who described "The Merchant of Venice" as a "classic anti-Semitic drama which has caused incalculable harm to the Jewish people over the centuries." Epstein said the ADL "expressed its grave apprehensions and misgivings about the play's anti-Semitic content to network officials but because of ADL's opposition to censorship did not protest publicly before the broadcast lest such action be considered an attempt to censor."

Epstein said that because of "long-time Jewish concerns in regard to the Shylock stereotype" the ADL sought the judgement of a respected Christian leader, the Rev. Dr. David R. Hunter, Deputy General Secretary of the National Council of Churches who had previewed the production. According to Epstein, Dr. Hunter questioned ABC's judgement in contracting for the broadcast because, "The nature of our society with its devastating history of anti-Semitism, still present today actively and latently, raises the whole matter of social responsibility."

Epstein said the ADL's view was expressed in a letter to Alfred Schneider, an ABC executive, by Arnold Forster, ADL associate director and general counsel. A spokesman for ABC said the network was "not insensitive to these charges which have been made for a hundred years." He said, however, that it stood on the "very eloquent remarks" made by Olivier in his foreword to the production.

LATE BULLETIN: TEL AVIV, March 18 (JTA)--Two Israeli soldiers were killed and three were wounded during fierce exchanges of artillery and tank fire on the Syrian front today. A military spokesman said the Syrians opened fire at 10 a.m. local time and the shooting continued intermittently until 6 p.m.

DISENGAGEMENT TALKS UNCERTAIN AGAIN

WASHINGTON, March 18 (JTA)--The start of disengagement talks here involving Israel and Syria remained uncertain today. State Department spokesman George Vest indicated that the talks probably will not get started until Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger returns from his visit to Moscow at the end of the month. Vest also said that there were "no firm plans" for Kissinger to visit the Middle East again now. But he said there "remains a possibility" that he might make the trip after his meetings with Latin American foreign ministers here and in Atlanta April 17-19.

Vest's remarks at today's press conference indicated that disengagement was marking time, though when asked if the talks were being delayed, he replied, "No, that is not intended to be the case." He said no official word has been received here as to when Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan would be coming to Washington. Vest said that "nothing at all yet" has been heard from the Syrians.

He said the Syrians would most likely send their representative to Washington after the Israelis depart and that the disengagement discussions here would probably be consecutive not simultaneous. Kissinger meanwhile is engaging in other foreign policy matters. Vest said he will be in Moscow March 24-27 and in London March 28 before returning to the U.S. But Kissinger will meet at 3 p.m. tomorrow with Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban for further talks on disengagement and a Kissinger visit to the Middle East, Vest said. (By Joseph Polakoff)

VIENNA (JTA)--Soviet Jewish dissident Pavel Litvinov, a 33-year-old chemical research engineer, arrived here today with his wife, Maya, and their two children. Austrian police took tight security measures at the airport. All exits were controlled by policemen armed with submachineguns. Litvinov, the grandson of Maxim Litvinov, was given a visa to emigrate to Israel but it is believed that he will go to the U.S. where he has been offered a post at a New England university. He had served a five-year sentence in Siberia from 1968-73 for protesting Russia's invasion of Czechoslovakia.

HEARINGS ON FOREIGN TRADE ACT RESUME FOR 3 WEEKS BEGINNING MARCH 21

A 'Different Version' May Emerge

WASHINGTON, March 18 (JTA)--The Senate Finance Committee, after hearing the Administration's views for four days on the House-approved Foreign Trade Act which embodies measures regarding Soviet emigration, will hear public witnesses for three weeks beginning March 21. Most of them are understood to be representatives of commerce and industry. But the Mills-Vanik-Jackson measures are expected to be aired, too.

The Senate committee will recess for the spring holiday after the testimony from public witnesses and begin its deliberations on the Act early in April. A committee source indicated to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that it was unlikely the committee will make its presentment to the Senate prior to late spring. It possibly may even be later than that, for the Senate leadership is understood to want the committee to handle the energy tax bill on a priority basis and give it precedence over the trade legislation.

Although the majority of the 18-member committee favors the Jackson Amendment, which has 78 Senate sponsors, JTA was informed that in view of Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger's warning to the committee that he would recommend to President Nixon that he veto the measure rather than accept the Jackson-Mills-Vanik section, a vote on the J/M-V proposals may not take place.

"Everybody may agree on a different version," a committee source said to JTA. "You do have political realities, too. It may yet well be that co-sponsors may hope something can be worked out that Kissinger can live with. But neither will the committee work out something that Jackson won't accept. So right now nobody knows how it will emerge." Senate Finance Committee chairman Russell Long (D-La.) had told JTA when he opened the hearings that something like J/M-V will be in the trade bill.

URGE WORLDWIDE CONCLAVE OF JEWISH LEADERS TO WIN SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

PHILADELPHIA, March 18 (JTA)--The presidents of major Jewish organizations in the United States were called upon "to convene a world Jewish convention in Jerusalem within 30 days to mobilize support for Israel in the coming fateful period." The appeal was initiated by Brith Sholom's national administrative committee, meeting here, on recommendation by the pro-Israel fraternal organization's national president, David Young. Young said, "such a major and momentous undertaking is imperative to help shape the course of events, now being played out on the Middle East stage, that will decide not only Israel's fate but also the fate of the Jewish people for countless time."

Young underscored the urgent nature of the conference by suggesting that "not only organization representatives and community leaders be invited but also the best Jewish minds in all spheres of national life who are committed to Israel's survival."

Terming the conference, "the Jewish people's answer to the recent summit conference of Moslem nations in Pakistan," Young said that the "conference would represent for Israel's welfare the same landmark in Jewish history as the conference on behalf of Soviet Jews held in Brussels in 1971. The conference," he said, "would demonstrate the Jewish people's solidarity with Israel and constitute an expression of awareness

that the fate of the Jewish people and Israel are mutually linked."

Albert Liss, Brith Sholom's national executive director, warned that "the initial steps taken in the disengagement of the military forces in the Middle East should not blind the Jewish community to the new explicit factors which serve as formidable obstacles to Israel's interests--such as the oil crisis, changes in national alignments, the obsession of the Nixon Administration with so-called detente and the new military equation in the Middle East which give the Arab nations astronomical preponderance of military power."

Liss said that "the Jewish community must be on guard to see that Israel's legitimate rights and interests as a sovereign power are not sacrificed to the immediate economic and geo-political goals and prejudices of the Big Powers and their subordinate nation-states." Liss acknowledged, "the worthy efforts made today by the Jewish community as important and material." He counseled, however, that "quiet diplomatic efforts can have maximum impact only when they are backed by the popular will in a visible and dramatic show of strength."

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE RAPS PACIFIST GROUP FOR ITS AWARD TO BERRIGAN

NEW YORK, March 18 (JTA)--The presenting of a "peace prize" to the Rev. Daniel Berrigan by the War Resisters League Friday night coupled with an anti-Israel stand taken by the pacifist organization was termed "a retreat from the pacifist dogma of peaceful neutrality and an apparent attempt by Father Berrigan to become the Father Coughlin of the irresponsible 'left'" by the Workmen's Circle.

The Jewish labor fraternal order, which called Berrigan's continuing anti-Israel statements "the effusions of one who picks his weapons in the arsenal of Israel's enemies, and his sense of justice from the propaganda ministries of terrorists," condemned the priest for having "no word of condemnation for the Soviet arms suppliers, no word of horror at the shelling of Jewish settlements in the Golan Heights, never a word of comfort for the Israeli prisoners of war in Syria." Instead, the Workmen's Circle noted, "Rev. Berrigan, who professes to be a man of peace, has blindfolded himself lest he see Russian SAM missiles in the Sinai and saber-rattling on Moscow radio."

At a press conference prior to receiving his award, Berrigan referred to the "Zionist hawks who presume to speak for the American Jewish community." Commenting on this, the Workmen's Circle said that "the avary Rev. Berrigan chooses would defeat democracy in the Middle East against totalitarian and Arab authoritarian domination."

Responding to the War Resisters League's demand that Israel accept its pre-1967 borders, the Workmen's Circle stated: "Does it also ask Russia to accept its pre-World War II and Finnish War borders? The specious statement by David McReynolds (WRL's co-secretary) that the War Resisters League's executive committee majority is Jewish indicates a defensive insensitivity to the real issues in the Middle East and should be repudiated by the organization's Jewish members."

LONDON (JTA)--The London-based Chamber of Shipping has sent worldwide warnings to British merchant ships to be on guard against possible attacks or sabotage by pro-Arab terrorists. A spokesman for the Chamber said a government department reported this possibility.