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UNEASY PEACE MARKS X-MAS; BORDERS QUIET, ARMIES ON ALERT

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA)--An uneasy peace marked Christmas day in Israel. The borders were quiet but the armies of Israel, Syria and Egypt were on a high state of alert, each side suspecting that the other might use the holiday to launch a surprise attack. Yesterday was the Moslem feast of Id-el-Adha, the "Feast of Sacrifice" and Israeli sources noted that Arab armies were always put on the alert on Moslem holidays. Arab sources said, however, that the alert was called out of fear that Israel would retaliate for the 1973 Yom Kippur attack by Syria and Egypt.

Jerusalem's old walled city and the town of Bethlehem, the sites of Christianity's holiest shrines, were bristling with guns as Israeli soldiers and police patrolled the streets and stood guard on rooftops against possible terrorist attacks. In Bethlehem, Mayor Elias Freij blamed the security precaution for the disappointing turn out of tourists. Hotels, restaurants and gift shops were empty for the most part and the usual holiday crowds were missing from the streets bedecked with Christmas decorations.

Sunday's terrorist grenade attack on a tourist bus on the outskirts of Jerusalem, in which a teen-aged American girl was severely wounded, had a chilling effect on the tourists and pilgrims who come to Israel at this time of year. Although the Ministry of Tourism reported 15,000 tourists in Jerusalem and environs, matching the record year of 1972, many of them apparently are cutting their visits short.

Stop Beating War Drums

About 1200 tourists, mostly British and German high school students, arrived at Haifa by ship last night. But instead of spending four days in Israel, they are scheduled to leave tonight, foregoing a tour of Jerusalem. A spokesman for the group said the terrorist attack on the tourist bus caused them to change their plans. Tourism Minister Moshe Kol urged an end to talk of war in the Middle East. He said it caused depression at home, deterred immigration and hurt the tourist trade.

Mayor Freij similarly denounced "declarations of war by leaders in the Middle East." He called on them to "stop beating the drums of war and start playing the tunes of peace." He complained that security precautions in Bethlehem were excessive. An Israeli military source agreed that "this is a Christmas under bayonets." But, he added, "We must take precautions to protect those visitors who put their safety in our hands."

The Christmas holiday brought a flood of appeals from Christian clergymen for the release of Greek Catholic Archbishop Hillarion Capucci who is serving a 12-year sentence for smuggling weapons to terrorists in Israel. But the authorities are apparently determined that the pro-terrorist cleric serve the full sentence imposed by the court. Terrorists news agencies in Beirut claimed that Israel has offered to free Capucci in exchange for free exit for Syrian Jews. There was no Israeli reaction to the report.

POLSKY IN ISRAEL; SAYS SOVIET ACTIVISTS REJECT QUIET DIPLOMACY

TEL AVIV, Dec. 25 (JTA)--Jewish physicist Victor Polsky arrived here yesterday, completing a three-year struggle to leave the Soviet Union. Polsky, his wife, Yelena, and their daughter, Marina, 16, were greeted at Ben Gurion Airport by hundreds of Russian immigrants. Polsky told newsmen that he and his fellow activists still in the Soviet Union do not believe in quiet diplomacy. He said they demand a world-wide outcry in support of Jews who are imprisoned for wanting to go to Israel and for the right of all Jews to emigrate to Israel. Before leaving Moscow, Polsky was not allowed to say goodbye to the many friends who came to see him off at the airport. A thorough search was made of his luggage there.

DECLINE OF IMMIGRATION DURING 1974

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA)--Figures released by the Absorption Ministry this week showed a decline of nearly 50 percent in immigration from the Soviet Union during 1974 and a total of fall-off in immigration of nearly 23,000 from all over the world. Absorption Minister Shlomo Rosen attributed the decline in part to the deteriorating political situation in the Middle East and statements by Israeli officials about the prospects of a new war. "These daily declarations about the danger of war do not strengthen our standing and cause unnecessary panic," Rosen declared. He said the decline in immigration was "cause for concern" but predicted that it would be reversed.

The Ministry reported that 17,100 Jews immigrated to Israel from the Soviet Union during 1974 compared to 33,400 in 1973. Immigration from North and South America totaled 6100 in 1974 compared to 8200 in 1973. Overall immigration dropped from 54,890 last year to about 32,000 in 1974.

Rosen said "There is a defeatist view that as long as the present political situation continues, there will not be large-scale immigration. But I reject this view. It is a fact that despite the official political circumstances, some 32,000 immigrants did come to Israel. This shows that the difficulties encourage some Jews to come to this country and share the burden."

However, Rosen admitted that he was less hopeful about prospects for immigration from the Soviet Union than he was two months ago. He said the recent Soviet denial of an understanding with the United States on the emigration issue had limited his optimism. "However, I refuse to say that we have reached the low point, although I cannot say we shall reach new records in the near future," Rosen said.

USSR DENOUNCED FOR RENEGING ON VISA OFFER TO DR. LEVICH

NEW YORK, Dec. 25 (JTA)--The Committee of Concerned Scientists denounced the Soviet Union today for asking Dr. Benjamin Levich, an internationally-known electrochemist, to sign a pledge that he would not seek to join his two sons if they were allowed to emigrate. Dr. Levich had been told previously that his two sons could leave at the end of this year and that he could join them a year

later. The committee's condemnation, contained in a telegram to President Ford and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, declared that Dr. Levich had been told "he must accept permanent hostage status as the price for his sons' emigration."

The committee linked the Levich case with U.S.-Soviet detente efforts by asserting that "the freedom of the Leviches and those whom they symbolize is a pre-condition for the trade benefits so avidly pursued by the government of the USSR." Congress has approved a trade bill, now awaiting Ford's signature, which provides trade concessions in exchange for freer Soviet emigration policies.

The first pledge was made to Dr. Levich, a corresponding member of the Soviet Academy of Science and the highest-ranking Jewish scientist to have applied for a visa to Israel, last June 27, the day President Nixon arrived in Moscow for a visit. It was believed at the time that the promise had been made to Dr. Levich to avoid any embarrassment to the Soviet Union during the Nixon visit.

Latest Evidence Of Duplicity

Last Friday, Yevgeny Levich was informed by the Moscow office of Visas and Registration that he could leave in March if his father signed a pledge to remain. No departure date was given for the other son, Aleksandr, 30, an engineer. The committee, in its telegram, declared that "the scientific community, which has supported the Levich fight to emigrate, and supports the right of all scientists to decide where they want to live and work, condemns this latest evidence of Soviet duplicity."

The committee asserted that "however long the list of broken Soviet promises grows and however much they violate the spirit and even the letter of agreements, the United States is expected to 'understand' and explain away all evidences of bad faith and non-fulfillment." The committee added that "we respectfully remind you that detente imposes obligations on both sides."

The telegram was signed by Dr. Jack Cohen of the National Institutes of Health, and Dr. Earl Callan of the American University, co-chairmen of the committee.

SCHROEDER SAYS MEETING WITH ARAFAT WAS REQUIRED TO GET COOPERATION AMONG ALL CONCERNED

BONN, Dec. 25 (JTA)--Returning from talks last week in Egypt and Syria, Dr. Gerhard Schroeder, chairman of the Bundestag Foreign Policy Committee and former Foreign Minister, said his meeting with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat was intended "to serve cooperation among all concerned," because "without cooperation in the Middle East, a lasting, just and constructive peace is not possible." Schroeder described the situation in the Middle East as "more complicated and dangerous than many people imagine."

It was essential, he said, to take stock of the situation on the spot, and to exchange views with leaders in that area. He said the PLO was "a factor in the Middle-East conflict that cannot be ignored." He could not see any danger of his meeting with Arafat being misused for propaganda purposes.

Schroeder refused to divulge who had arranged the meeting last Tuesday with Arafat, but said he had called the Foreign Office immediately after the meeting had been fixed. The govern-

ment's answer had signified "neither approval nor disapproval," Schroeder said. He added that he had not and still did not require the approval of his Party--the Christian Democrats--for his meeting with Arafat. Schroeder informed the Bonn government on his talks in Cairo and Damascus. The Bundestag is scheduled to debate the situation in the Middle East.

Meeting With Arafat Justified

Minister of State Hans-Juergen Wischniewski of the West German Foreign Office sought to justify the talks of Schroeder with Arafat. In an interview with the "Bild-Zeitung," Wischniewski said that, as a member of Parliament, he "would also have talked to Arafat." This statement prompted the Central Council of Jews to cable its protest to Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Socialist Party chairman, Willy Brandt. They said Wischniewski's remarks were "incomprehensible," because Arafat's organization carried out acts of terror in West Germany.

In the West German Parliament, the Social Democrat Deputy, Bruno Friederich, also defended Schroeder. He said Friday it was the duty of a member of Parliament to get information. Since Arafat's appearance before the United Nations, the PLO, he said, "had been acknowledged as a political factor," although for West Germany it was "an incalculable factor."

Friederich outlined to Parliament the problems of safeguarding peace in the Middle East, against the background of threats to Israel's existence. He expressed support for secure frontiers for Israel, but also pointed to Germany's "traditionally good relations" with the Arabs.

THEOLOGIANS BACK ISRAEL CLAIMS

TORONTO, Dec. 25 (JTA)--A group of Canadian Christian theologians has issued a statement supporting the claims of Israel to "secure and recognized borders." The statement, which affirms "solidarity with our Jewish brethren in Israel," is signed by 12 theologians including Terry Anderson, Lloyd Gaston and James Lindenberg of the Vancouver School of Theology and William Nicholls, head of religious studies at the University of British Columbia.

The statement says the Middle East situation is a "proper matter of Christian concern" because "the maintenance in the land of Israel of the Jewish people and their faith is an integral part of their witness to the one God." It adds, "We call on members of all Christian churches, and the political leaders of Canada, to take all possible measures to uphold the security and integrity of the State of Israel." It notes that Israel's claim to statehood derives from United Nations resolutions of 1947 and says the same resolutions envisaged a Palestinian Arab state.

But the theologians say, Arab states have rejected these resolutions and engaged in armed aggression against Israel, and this releases Israel from the resolutions. They urge Israel to make "withdrawals from occupied Arab territory in exchange for progress towards recognition of her own final borders."

Jerusalem's Future Not A Christian Concern

The statement says the recent resolution of the UN General Assembly recognizing the Palestine Liberation Organization as a legitimate claimant to Israeli territory is "illegal, null and void, and a threat to peace. We hope for the emergence of legitimate representatives of the Palestinian

people with whom it would be possible for Israel to negotiate on the setting up of an independent Palestinian state," it says.

The statement adds that ownership of land on which Christian holy places are situated is not a legitimate Christian concern, provided freedom of access to pilgrims and worshippers is assured. "We therefore consider that Christians have no specific interest in the form which the future of Jerusalem should take," it says. "In our view, this is solely a matter for free negotiation between the parties directly concerned."

EBAN KEYNOTES CHICAGO JUF INAUGURAL

CHICAGO, Dec. 25 (JTA)--The 1975 Jewish United Fund drive was launched last week with the most successful single fund-raising meeting in its history. About 900 top campaign leaders and contributors announced gifts totalling \$12,746,800 at a Special Gifts Inaugural Dinner, after Abba Eban asked them to "share the burdens of Israel...in this perilous hour." These gifts showed a significant increase over the 1974 record-breaking contributions at this stage.

General campaign chairman Leonard H. Sherman and special gifts chairman Morton A. Blitstein lauded the community's response. Earlier Sherman had urged the huge gathering at the Pick Congress Hotel to "give not only from their income, but from their capital as well." Calling upon the assembled community leaders to rally to the support of Israel and their own, Chicago, community, Sherman asked: "Do we not all believe that all Jews are responsible, one for another?" adding, "Jewish survival knows no national boundaries and there is no place in the world today where there are no Jews struggling for survival."

Comparing the services provided for Soviet immigrants, the aged and the poor in Israel and in Chicago, Sherman pointed out that "here in Chicago we have thousands of impoverished Jews." He spoke about the Chicago Federation's broad spectrum of services for the aged, the poor and the young--stressing the importance of Jewish education. A mini-concert by Soviet-Jewish pianist Vladimir Leyetchkiss was a special feature on the program. Leyetchkiss, a recent immigrant to Chicago, is being assisted in resettlement by members of the Jewish Federation, a major JUF beneficiary.

Arab Underdog Image Is Ludicrous

In his address, Eban stated that the current Mideast impasse is due to contrary conceptions of Middle East history; a monolithic pan-Arab view versus the mosaic Israeli view that the region is one of diversity and the rightful home of many nations and religions. "There will never be a Middle East without the sovereign state of Israel. The question of whether the Arabs are to have 20 or 21 states is morally inconsequential compared to the question of whether the Jews are to have one state," Eban said, claiming it was ludicrous for the Arabs numbering 100,000,000 people to cast themselves as underdogs when they possess 60 percent of the world's known oil reserves and will soon have 70 percent of its currency reserves.

Israel's greatest problem today is the gnawing doubt that she is unable to protect herself, Eban said. This is because the Arab assets are tangible, whereas those of Israel--social cohesion, discipline and the solidarity of Jews throughout the world--are not. He admitted that Israel could not maintain a "viable balance" (of power) without the support of Jews in other lands. "Their

support enlarges the dimensions of Israel, culturally, historically and economically. It is the (only) answer to Moslem solidarity established for the purpose of Israel's destruction," he said.

ARAFAT PICKED AS ONE OF 25 'MOST INTRIGUING' PEOPLE OF 1974

NEW YORK, Dec. 25 (JTA)--People, a weekly magazine published by Time-Life Inc., has named Yasir Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, one of the 25 "most intriguing" people of 1974. There were no Israelis on the list but there were two Jews and one non-Jewish actress who plays a Jew on one of the most popular American television programs.

People's editors said the selections were made on the basis of persons in the news who "thrilled or shocked us, made us laugh or sometimes weep, provoked us to envy, wonder, pride, anger or respect." Arafat was selected because he "gained new status as a 'stateless head of state' and remains secure as head of the Palestine Liberation Organization thanks largely to his 'carefully staged UN appearance.'"

People also named Joseph Hirshhorn, the 75-year-old Jewish millionaire, who in 1974 was responsible for the opening in Washington of the museum housing the \$100 million art collection he gave the U.S.; Valerie Harper, a non-Jewish actress who plays "Rhoda," a top-ranked new TV show; and Erica Jong, a 32-year-old New York writer whose novel "Fear of Flying," a chronicle of a New York "Jewish Princess," has become what the magazine described as the feminist movement's author of the year.

ISRAELI GROUP REJECTS UNESCO GRANT

JERUSALEM, Dec. 25 (JTA)--The Israeli Adult Education Association has rejected a grant of \$4000 from UNESCO to aid it in a planned survey of adult educators in Israel. "In view of the resolutions adopted by the 18th General Conference regarding Israel's position in UNESCO, (we) cannot of course agree to accept the research grant," the association wrote to UNESCO's Paris headquarters. "We shall find ways and means of conducting the survey without UNESCO participation, and we shall look for ways of distributing the survey report among adult educationalists throughout the world without UNESCO's assistance."

Copies of the letter were sent to the UNESCO Director General and to the Israel delegation to UNESCO. It was signed by Dr. Yehezkel Cohen, chairman of the association, which is affiliated with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Dr. Cohen also stated: "It is highly regrettable that at the 18th General Conference an unholy alliance of blatantly vested political interests succeeded in forcibly imposing upon UNESCO a sharp change in policy regarding equality of member states.... The harm done to UNESCO...may prove irreparable...."

SOVIET NAVAL VESSELS LEAVE SUEZ GULF

TEL AVIV, Dec. 25 (JTA)--Soviet naval vessels occupied with minesweeping in the Gulf of Suez have completed their work and have left the area, it was reported here today. The operation was commanded from the Soviet helicopter carrier Leningrad which reportedly left before the minesweepers.

According to Israeli sources, the Russian Mediterranean fleet now numbers about 50 vessels, the same as before the Yom Kippur War. It consists of missile-launching cruisers of the Kara type and sophisticated communication ships, one of them apparently on an electronic surveillance mission off the Lebanese coast. There are about 25 Soviet naval units in the Indian Ocean, the sources said.

CHARGE RABBI WAS HOUNDED OUT OF NEW YORK CITY POST

NEW YORK, Dec. 25 (JTA)--The New York Board of Rabbis charged yesterday that Rabbi David Haymovitz, who resigned his \$32,000 a year post in the New York City's Human Resources Administration, was "literally hounded out of his position" and implied that the attack upon him "was an attack on the Jewish community."

Rabbi Haymowitz came under attack by city union leaders when it was revealed that Mayor Abraham Beame was retaining him in his provisional job to which he was named last April while many civil servants were being fired because of the city's budget crisis. Rabbi Haymowitz, one of three rabbis at the Brooklyn Jewish Center where Beame worships occasionally, was named by the Mayor to the HRA post to succeed Rabbi Bernard Weinberger, who had served in the position under the prior Lindsay administration.

An Attack On The Jewish Community

Rabbi Sol Roth, president of the Board of Rabbis, issued a statement in which he declared, "The reason for his (Rabbi Haymovitz) resignation was constant harassment. He was literally hounded out of his position." Rabbi Roth said the fact that Rabbi Haymovitz could command a good salary and has a good relationship with the Mayor was "totally irrelevant, morally as well as pragmatically." He concluded, "One cannot help but wonder about the extent to which the attack on Rabbi Haymovitz was an attack on the Jewish community."

In a letter of resignation to Beame, Rabbi Haymovitz said he was resigning with "extreme regret" because "the position that I hold has become the target of unpleasant and unjustified criticism which I find alien to my temperament and background." Beame has asked the rabbi to serve as his unpaid "personal advisor" in the same areas that Rabbi Haymovitz handled in the Human Resources Administration, that of liaison to Jewish groups and the Jewish poor.

The New York Daily News, which first revealed that Rabbi Haymovitz was working for the city, said yesterday the rabbi was born in Israel and received undergraduate and law degrees from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

PROBE MAFIA LINKS TO BERGMAN

NEW YORK, Dec. 25 (JTA)--The federal-New York State investigation into alleged fraud and other illegal activities in the network of nursing and old aged homes owned by Rabbi Bernard Bergman, a leader of the American and World Mizrahi Movement, will also look into possible ties with the underworld. In particular, the probe will check a report that an alleged associate of reputed underworld figure Joseph A. Colombo Sr. had lived in a penthouse at one of Rabbi Bergman's nursing homes for the indigent.

Sen. Charles H. Percy (R., Ill.), a member of the Senate subcommittee on long-term care, has asked the New York Temporary State Commission on Living Costs which has scheduled a hearing for Jan. 21 to look into the matter. Percy acted on allegations by Rep. Edward I. Koch (D., N.Y.), who charged underworld ties and political protection. Assemblyman Andrew J. Stein (D., Manhattan), chairman of the commission, told a news conference yesterday, "It is our information that there are connections between the Bernard Bergman empire and organized crime."

Stein said that Rocco Scarfone, considered a former advisor to Colombo, had been on the payroll of the Towers Nursing Home and had used a penthouse in the Park Crescent Nursing Home, both Bergman facilities on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

Rabbi Bergman, a former president of the Religious Zionist Organization of America, heads the Mizrahi's Religious Education Committee in the U.S. He is also one of three members of the World Mizrahi Bressidium which is closely connected to the National Religious Party in Israel. Another member and associate of Rabbi Bergman is Swiss-Jewish financier Tibor Rosenbaum whose financial troubles involving millions of dollars in investments by leading Israeli firms has created a major scandal.

Rabbi Bergman reportedly became a multimillionaire through the operations of nursing homes in New York City and State and in New Jersey which receive large sums of money from Medicaid. The alleged misuse of these funds and deplorable conditions in many of the homes were exposed in recent articles in the New York Times and the Village Voice.

HEBREW MELODIES, RATHER THAN X-MAS CAROLS, MARK VIGIL AT SOVIET EMBASSY

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25 (JTA)--Local residents and visitors to Washington have been hearing Hebrew melodies rather than Christmas carols this week echoing down busy Sixteenth Street opposite the Soviet Embassy. The singers are part of a group of more than 1200 teenagers and 500 staff members attending the four-day United Synagogue Youth Convention at the Sheraton Park Hotel which ends tomorrow.

The young people attending the convention represent USY chapters from Conservative congregations from every state in the United States and from Canada. As part of the social action program of the convention, all those attending are participating in the vigil which is part of a program portion of the convention on a 24-hour basis for the duration of the convention. The young people and their advisors stand opposite the Soviet Embassy in line formation and sing quiet songs pertinent to the occasion in Hebrew and English.

The Soviet Jewry vigil is a program of the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington and its Soviet Jewry Committee. The vigil was started in 1970 in reaction to the first Leningrad trials.

3 ISRAELIS WIN BIALIK LITERARY AWARD

TEL AVIV, Dec. 25 (JTA)--The prestigious Bialik Literary Award of the Tel Aviv Municipality was presented to three Israelis by Mayor Shlomo Lehat last night. The recipients were Israel Cohen who was cited for outstanding contributions to Hebrew Monography in his book, "Yaacob Steinberg--the Man and His Creation"; Chaim Guri, the poet, for his book "Marot Gichzi"; and Prof. Yehuda Kolomoosh for his work of research, "The Bible in the Light of the Translations."

Prof. Kolomoosh was credited with important research involving the various Aramaic translations of the Bible. Guri was cited for deep insight into the problems of the generation of Israelis that produced the fighters for Israel's liberation and witnessed the ascendancy of great ideals which, in the present generation, are fading.

JERUSALEM (JTA)--Jewish Agency Treasurer Leon Dulzin said here that the Agency's budget for fiscal 1974-75 will be \$580 million compared to \$710 million this year. He explained that the cut was due to world-wide financial difficulties.