



# daily news bulletin

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## JORDAN NOW TOPS THE AGENDA

By David Landau and Tuvia Mendelson

JERUSALEM, Feb. 8 (JTA)--Political observers here believe the prospect of Israel-Jordan talks will be the focus of attention in Jerusalem and Washington during the coming weeks, with efforts to explore the prospect intensifying as the time for King Hussein's visit to the U.S. approaches. Hussein is scheduled in Washington in March.

While Premier Yitzhak Rabin formally supports the Geneva alternative, there seems a large measure of agreement in private that Geneva is not a likely prospect because of Soviet and Syrian reluctance, and insistence on the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The most practical possibility for progress, therefore, would seem to be with Jordan. For this reason, observers here are watching with special interest Hussein's current program of tightening his ties with the West Bank.

### Report Talks Between Israel, Jordan

Sources on the West Bank have indicated there were talks progressing during recent weeks between Israel and Jordan. These talks, according to the sources, were not of a broad political nature but were rather focussed on West Bank affairs, and particularly on the upcoming municipal elections there. Israel and Jordan are said to share interests in certain candidates (of the pro-Hussein type) and to share opposition to PLO sympathizers being elected to municipal office.

Hussein last week summoned 15 West Bank deputies to a meeting of the Jordanian Parliament in Amman which postponed Jordanian elections for a year. The deputies were due to return today and it is expected here that this will mark the beginning of intensified activities by Hussein's supporters in the West Bank. Jordan will channel funds to institutes and officials in the West Bank in order to gain support for Hussein in the municipal elections.

The talks between Israel and Jordan which were conducted directly by officials of the two countries are aimed at giving the relationship between Jordan and the West Bank more "legitimization" according to reports here. One result is the reported opening of branches of an Amman bank in the West Bank and East Jerusalem so that Jordanian funds can be channeled more easily to West Bank Arabs.

Supporters of the PLO on the West Bank and in East Jerusalem have reacted angrily to the latest Jordanian moves. The East Jerusalem newspaper, "El Fajar," said yesterday that Rabin was handing over "the Palestinian people as a present to Jordan."

### Lip Service To PLO

Meanwhile, Hussein continues to pay lip service to "political support for the PLO"--but it's hard to see how this squares with his very definite and obvious effort to return to the status of patron of the West Bank. What remains to be seen is to what extent Egypt, Saudi Arabia--and even Syria--will support this new Hashemite activism. If he can win broader Arab support,

then Hussein will begin to appear the kind of authoritative negotiating partner which optimistic Israelis have, since Rabat, predicted he would.

### ANTI-SEMITIC PLAY ATTACKED

PARIS, Feb. 8 (JTA)--Christopher Marlow's anti-Semitic play, "The Jew of Malta," has opened here in a huff of accusations and counter-accusations. The play, written by one of Shakespeare's contemporaries, is produced by a progressive company and is staged in one of the new "popular" theaters in one of Paris' working class suburbs.

A spokesman for the company, Theatre de Genevilliers told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency the play had been chosen in order to show the ridicule of its anti-Semitic argument and thus "to fight racism." Preview and first night audiences in the suburb of Genevilliers, part of Paris' "red belt," reacted as the producers had hoped. Certain Jewish organizations, however, have lodged protests with the company, charging it is fanning anti-Semitic sentiments.

Another French theater is staging a play dealing with the rights of the Palestinians and those of the Jews. The play, written by a French Jew active in communal affairs, Lilliane Atlan, is set in the ruins of Deir Yassin, the Arab village whose inhabitants were killed by Irgun units during Israel's War of Independence.

### CABINET DEVOTES MUCH OF ITS MEETING TO CLEARING THE AIR OVER CRITICISM OF WEAPONS PURCHASE LIST VOICED BY A 'SENIOR SOURCE' IN WASHINGTON

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 8 (JTA)--The Cabinet met for eight hours today, two of them occupied by Premier Rabin's report on his recent talks in Washington and much of the rest of the time devoted to "clearing the air" over the criticism of Israel's weapons purchase list voiced by a "senior source" in Rabin's party in Washington Jan. 29.

The nub of the Premier's report on his talks with President Ford, Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and other top Administration officials, was that the overall situation in the Middle East was in a state of flux and that neither the U.S. nor Israel was entirely sure what direction events of the immediate future will take.

Rabin reportedly did not rule out either reconvening of the Geneva talks or the possibility of interim talks with Jordan on the West Bank. However, he did not hold out great hopes for either course and it appeared from today's Cabinet session that efforts will proceed on several fronts in the weeks ahead. One informed observer described the coming weeks as a "testing period" for the future course of Middle East diplomacy.

The domestic political storm raised by the "senior source's" charge that the military purchase list drafted by the Defense establishment was sloppy, inflated and reflected no honor on the State was thrashed out in the Cabinet meeting which, according to some participants was "heated" at times. Rabin, as had been expected, did not exculpate himself of blame for the mistakes embodied in the list.

He reiterated to the Cabinet what he told repor-

ters on his return from the U.S. Friday--that a "corrective list" had been submitted to Washington which omitted certain items contained in the original list that had been presented to the U.S. in mid-December. Rabin had said Friday that the earlier list provided ammunition for circles in Washington unsympathetic to Israel and added, "I am happy we had the courage to admit our mistake and correct it."

#### Peres, Several Ministers Assail Rabin

Defense Minister Shimon Peres, the prime target of criticism over the original weapons list, spoke for an hour at today's Cabinet meeting. He explained in detail the work that went into compiling the weapons list at General Headquarters and at his Ministry and he bluntly assailed Rabin for the tone of the remarks made in Washington which, Peres contended, were neither fair nor justified.

Several ministers joined Peres in his criticism of the Premier. One Cabinet member said later that he believed the original weapons list was a good projection of Israel's long-range needs but that the circumstances of American reality in December had made it necessary and prudent to whittle down the list.

The Cabinet as a whole appears anxious to let the entire matter fade away and focus attention on the political and diplomatic aspects of the Premier's visit. Nevertheless, Rabin seems assured of his party's solid support when he faces a Likud non-confidence motion in the Knesset tomorrow evening. The Premier will meet with the Labor Alignment Knesset faction tomorrow before the debate begins.

#### Positive Aspects Of U.S. Visit

Since his return, Rabin has been stressing the positive aspects of his American visit. He has spoken of coordination with Washington on the "general direction" of policy in the Middle East. He told reporters Friday that Israel and the U.S. have agreed to aim "at peace or something very close to it." He characterized this as a much more far-reaching goal than that sought during the step-by-step phase of diplomacy. Rabin said that while he and Ford had "not discussed maps" they agreed that in the coming months peace efforts should not focus on one particular Arab state but on all of them.

Several Cabinet "doves" today stressed the need to examine thoroughly the prospects of interim negotiations with Jordan. Sources close to Rabin have not discouraged speculation that Ford agreed to examine this possibility with King Hussein when the latter visits Washington next month.

Rabin indicated at the Cabinet meeting that this process is as yet in its tentative stages and much would depend on the extent to which Hussein may be willing to jeopardize his improved relations with the other Arab states, notably Syria, by entering into interim talks with Israel and thereby challenging the 1974 Arab summit decision at Rabat to designate the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole spokesman for the Palestinian people.

Police Minister Shlomo Hillel and Transportation Minister Gad Yaacobi spoke out against the "Jordanian option" at today's Cabinet meeting and were supported by the National Religious Party ministers. The Cabinet "hawks" appeared to favor a reconvened Geneva conference as the next step in Middle East diplomacy.

#### U.S. WILL NOT CONFIRM, DENY THAT IT IS PREPARED TO SUPPORT EGYPT'S REQUEST FOR AMERICAN MILITARY ARMS

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Feb. 8 (JTA)--A State Department spokesman would neither confirm nor deny today that the Ford Administration is prepared to support Egypt's request for U.S. military equipment. The spokesman was asked by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency about press reports that the Administration is close to deciding to consult with Congressional leaders on ending the long-standing ban on the sale of military hardware to Egypt.

The press reports mentioned, among items Egypt is said to be seeking to purchase in the U.S., "Hawk" anti-aircraft missiles, wire-guided TOW anti-tank weapons, radar and communications equipment, patrol boats, F-5E jet fighters and C-130 military transports. With respect to the latter, State Department spokesman John Trattner told newsmen at a briefing last Monday that the U.S. has projected the sale of six C-130s to Egypt with expected delivery this spring.

The subsequent press reports said that President Ford and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger had mentioned the sale of C-130s to Egypt to Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin during their talks here a week ago. "Questioned about this report today, the State Department spokesman told the JTA, "We are not going to get into a point-by-point discussion" of the Rabin talks.

#### U.S. Proceeding With Caution

According to the press reports from Washington, high Administration officials have said that various recommendations on how to proceed toward lifting the ban on arms sales to Egypt were under consideration at the White House but no "final decision" has been reached. Administration sources are stressing, according to the reports, that the Administration intends to exercise the utmost candor in approaching Congress on military sales to Egypt because being too secretive about such deals in the past proved counterproductive.

Furthermore, according to the reports, the Administration is proceeding with caution because of the extreme political sensitivity of the issue in this election year. In discussing military sales to Egypt with Congress, Administration spokesmen are expected to point out that Israel will be getting even more, so that the balance will be maintained, the reports said.

Ford and Kissinger are known to have heard with sympathy Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's wishes for U.S. military equipment to bolster Egypt's armed forces since the decline in deliveries of military hardware from the Soviet Union. Ford said, in an interview last September, that he had an implied commitment to provide Egypt with certain equipment. Sadat discussed Egypt's military needs with Ford when he was in Washington last October.

The press reports said Egypt would pay cash for whatever hardware it purchases in the U.S. The Egyptians have been promised help from Saudi Arabia to finance their purchases here, according to the reports.

#### MAJOR U.S. FIRMS ACCUSED OF VIOLATING ANTI-BOYCOTT LAWS

NEW YORK, Feb. 8 (JTA)--Two Jewish organizations charged before a New York State Assem-

bly subcommittee that major American corporations are violating the federal anti-boycott laws and are surrendering to Arab pressure. But officers of four banks said that since they believed Arab countries are boycotting Israel for economic reasons; they process letters of credit for shipments of American-made products to Arab countries on the premise that the boycott is not necessarily anti-Semitic.

Their testimony was given last Thursday and Friday during a two-day hearing of the New York Assembly Subcommittee on Human Rights at the Carnegie International Center here.

Will Maslow, general counsel of the American Jewish Congress, said "major corporations treat the federal law as a joke. In my conversations with representatives of such firms, they have pointed out there are no penalties for violating the requirement of the Export Administration Act of 1969" which bans boycott compliance.

Maslow said his testimony was based on negotiations with major corporations as part of the AJ Congress project under which members of the organization have submitted stockholders' resolutions to 152 corporations seeking information about the companies' policy toward the Arab boycott. "Leaders of American industry whose names are household words are cravenly surrendering to Arab pressures by refusing to do business with American companies on the Arab blacklist," Maslow said. He declined to name or identify these leaders.

#### Some Violators Are Identified

Daniel S. Shapiro, honorary president of the American Jewish Committee's New York Chapter, specifically named the Exxon Corporation and Bankers Trust Co. as being among the major violators. He quoted a letter from D.L. Snook of Exxon's public affairs department in which Snook said:

"We certainly regret the conditions which have given rise to boycotts wherever they have been imposed... We would prefer that they did not exist anywhere. However, when they do, compliance with the laws and regulations of the sovereign nations involved is unavoidable if the company or its affiliates are to continue to do business in or with such nations."

Turning to the compliance with Arab boycott demands by Bankers Trust Co., Shapiro charged that the bank "has honored Arab letters of credit with discriminatory restrictions attached." He related that his organization had met with Bankers Trust officials on this matter last December and that the latter "seemed to believe that there is nothing reprehensible in their practice in this regard, U.S. policy and regulations, and the then-anticipated New York anti-boycott law notwithstanding."

#### Bank Officials Deny Violations

In testimony before the subcommittee, Albert Bellon, vice-president of Bankers Trust, Edwin Batch, associate counsel of Chemical Bank, Hans Angermueller, senior vice-president of First National City Corp., and Richard A. Fenn, vice-president of Chase Manhattan identified letters of credit from their banks which carried attached certificates that the goods were not made, shipped or insured by any firm connected with Israel.

They said the examples were typical and contended the letters of credit did not violate federal or state anti-bias laws. Furthermore, the officers said the policy of the banks was to process

such letters of credit without examining the "underlying documents" or considering the standards used by the Arab countries in choosing targets for blacklisting.

Batch testified that "these procedures are consistent with the distinction drawn by the United States government itself between actions which discriminate against United States firms and citizens on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin and the separate and distinct issue of the Arab boycott against the State of Israel." All of the officers testified they had never seen the Arab League blacklist and did not know what names were on it.

#### Strict Enforcement Urged

The officials of the two Jewish organizations urged strict enforcement by the State Division of Human Rights of New York State's anti-boycott law which went into effect Jan. 1. Shapiro urged that all contracts signed with business companies by the state, any of its agencies, or any country or city in the state, contain a clause prohibiting adherence to the boycott.

Maslow noted that the New York State law "has already had an impact in England." He said he was informed by Dr. Stephen Roth of the World Jewish Congress in London that several British-American companies were able to resist the boycott by pointing to the New York law.

#### ALMOGI: ARABS TRYING TO ACHIEVE BY POLITICAL MEANS WHAT THEY FAILED TO ACHIEVE AGAINST ISRAEL IN WARS

NEW YORK, Feb. 8 (JTA)--Yosef Almogi, chairman of the World Zionist Organization, warned last night that the Arabs are trying to achieve by political means what they could not in the wars against Israel. "We believe this struggle of ours in the coming months is one of the most decisive in our history and we believe in a good outcome."

Speaking in Hauppauge, Long Island, to more than 300 leaders of the Suffolk County Jewish community, Almogi said Israel faces the future with a mixture of danger and hope. "We may have to choose between the risk of losing our gentle image or our lives," he said.

"Every Israeli must consider himself one of 14.5 million Jews," Almogi noted urging those present to increase political and financial support for Israel along with aliyah.

A total of \$420,000 was raised at the dinner for the United Jewish Appeal-Federation of Jewish Philanthropies Joint Campaign. The dinner, which launched the Suffolk campaign, honored Gerald Benstock, of Huntington, who is president of the campaign. He was presented a 3000-year-old terra cotta vase recently unearthed in Israel by Ernest Michel, vice-president and campaign director of the UJA-FJP campaign.

LONDON (JTA)--A large British delegation will attend the Second World Conference on Soviet Jewry Feb. 17-19 in Brussels. The delegation will be led by Greville Jenner, MP, acting president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews in the absence of the president, Lord Fisher, who is ill. The British delegation will comprise 150 persons representing a broad spectrum of Soviet Jewry campaign activists. In addition, a distinguished delegation of members of both houses of Parliament will be going to the conference. It will be led by Lord Soper, a sponsor of the All-Party Parliamentary Committee for the Release of Soviet Jewry.

## CHARGE MOSCOW PARLEY FEATURING SEVEN JEWISH EMIGRES WHO RETURNED FROM ISRAEL WAS A PROPAGANDA PLOY

BRUSSELS, Feb. 8 (JTA)--Organizers of the Second World Conference on Soviet Jewry, scheduled to open here Feb. 17, charged today that a Moscow press conference last Friday featuring seven Jewish emigres who had returned from Israel was a "transparent propaganda device that will deceive neither the Jews of the USSR nor the millions of Christians around the world who support the Soviet Jewish struggle."

The elaborate news conference in Moscow, the first of its kind involving Soviet Jews, was organized by the Soviet Foreign Ministry and Novosti, a feature press agency. Held just 11 days before the Brussels assembly on Soviet Jewry was scheduled to begin, the Moscow conference was seen by many in the West as a ploy to counter the Brussels assembly. Some of the Jews speaking at the Moscow conference read from prepared statements and said that Israel is a racist state. Vsevolod N. Sofinsky, chief of the Foreign Ministry's press department who conducted the conference, asserted that 90 percent of Soviet Jews abroad wanted to return to the Soviet Union.

David Susskind, chairman of the Brussels secretariat, said that more than 100,000 Soviet Jews who had emigrated to Israel since 1970 only 45 had returned to the USSR. He quoted a report on the situation of Soviet Jews adopted by the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe Jan. 29, which said:

"Considering the fact that most of the 45 have been since their return, used by the Soviet government in its campaign against emigration and that, moreover, some of them had spent only a few weeks in Israel, it might be supposed that these people were, from the outset, immigrants 'with a mission.'"

### Real Problem Noted

Susskind commented: "The problem does not lie in the unwillingness of the Jews to emigrate but rather in the Kremlin's refusal to let Jews out and in its harassment and intimidation of Jews who apply to leave." He said that Soviet authorities had cut back sharply in the number of exit visas granted to Jews--from 35,000 in 1973 to 20,000 in 1974 to 12,000 in 1975.

Currently, Susskind noted, there was a backlog inside the USSR of about 160,000 Jews who had begun the emigration process by requesting family reunification affidavits from relatives in Israel. "Soviet Jews who apply to emigrate face public vilification, dismissal from their jobs, expulsion from universities, enforced military conscription, arrest, trial and imprisonment," Susskind said.

## 2 ORTHODOX RABBIS ASSAIL THE VATICAN

NEW YORK, Feb. 8 (JTA)--Two Orthodox rabbinical leaders in separate statements, have charged the Vatican with insensitivity to the security needs of Israel. The charges were made by Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld, president of the Rabbinical Council of America, and Rabbi Benjamin Blech, president of the Council of Young Israel Rabbis.

Schonfeld accused the Catholic Church of "lacking the moral courage" to recognize Israel and with "yielding to Arab pressure," and he called for reassessment of Jewish-Catholic rela-

tions. His comments focused on the release Jan. 23 by the Vatican of a lengthy report on the role of the Catholic Church during World War II, which included papal correspondence opposing establishment of Israel.

Blech, in his statement, charged Pope Paul VI with being "politically misguided" and "morally insensitive" for his condemnation of Israel's air raids last December against terrorist bases in Lebanon while remaining silent about the reason for the raids--the "vicious killing" of Israeli civilians by Lebanon-based terrorists.

Schonfeld said "we wish that the Vatican had shown its resoluteness and the courage of its convictions during the Nazi holocaust as it did recently in its manifestor regarding sexual morality," adding that "thousands of Jews would have been saved from gas chambers by its forthright intervention."

### Charges Vatican Is Insensitive

He also urged "the Christian leadership of communities throughout the world" to recognize "the bond" between Judaism and Zionism." He said that despite progress in many areas, "the insensitivity of the Vatican to the major concern of world Jewry, namely, the State of Israel, constitutes a barrier and an obstacle which prevents a true achievement of amity and mutual understanding."

Msgr. Eugene Clark of the New York Archdiocese said Schonfeld was "poisoning the well of Catholic-Jewish understanding" and perpetuating "the wholly discredited lie that Pope Pius was not anti-Nazi."

Blech attributed the Pope's statements to the restoration of Israel in 1948 which he said made an "obvious falsehood" of an "implicit prophecy" of Christian doctrine that "the destruction of the Jewish State and the subsequent dispersion of its inhabitants" was "fitting punishment for rejection of Jesus" as the messiah. According to that Christian doctrine, Blech asserted, Jews "could not ever return to Israel until they accepted Jesus."

Asserting that "Israel together with Jerusalem in Jewish hands spoil the end of a Christian distortion of history," Blech declared that "the Pope's attacks against Israel" represented "a last ditch effort to restore validity to a creed contradicted by contemporary events."

NEW YORK (JTA)--The American Associates of Ben Gurion University has announced it has received a first installment check for \$250,000 from the estate of Morris Metz of Brooklyn, who died in 1975. The check was accepted from Barry Aranoff, an executor for the estate, by Ms. Bobbi Abrams, chairman of the executive committee of the organization. Frederick Siegmund, the organization's secretary and general counsel, said that there was no way of knowing, at this stage of the proceedings, what the balance of the bequest to the university would total.

BUCHAREST (JTA)--Rumania's Chief Rabbi, Dr. Moses Rosen, has reported that Michael Tandelnik, the president of the Moscow Jewish community, visited Bucharest on Jan. 26-28 and suggested to the Chief Rabbi that the Moscow community be accepted in various international Jewish religious organizations. Rosen also said that Tandelnik expressed the hope that he would receive help to improve religious life in the Moscow Jewish community.