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No. 1

STATE DEPARTMENT DENIES INDIA'S REQUEST FOR JHIRAD'S EXTRADITION

NEW YORK, Jan. 2 (JTA)--The State Department has denied India's request for extradition of Elijah Ephraim Jhirad, former Judge Advocate General of the Indian Navy, according to Leon Charney, Jhirad's attorney. The government of India had sought Jhirad's extradition ostensibly in connection with alleged misappropriation of some \$1600 in naval funds in 1961. Leaders of the Jewish community and other distinguished Americans had issued appeals on Jhirad's behalf in support of his contention he was a victim of political persecution.

Charney told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Friday that he had received a telephone call Thursday night from David Lissy, special assistant to President Ford, informing him of the State Department's decision. Charney added that the State Department decision ended the case and that Jhirad was now "a free man."

An ardent anti-Communist and Zionist, Jhirad, 63, who presently lives here with his wife and three teen-aged children, has claimed consistently that pro-Arab elements in the Indira Gandhi government had sought to bring him back to India to set an example to other Zionist sympathizers.

Last October, the Supreme Court refused to review the case, leaving stand a lower court ruling holding Jhirad extraditable. The Supreme Court action meant that only the President or the State Department could prevent his extradition. On Nov. 8, Judge Gerald L. Goetel allowed Jhirad to remain free on \$50,000 bail pending a State Department decision after the Department received Jhirad's file following the Supreme Court denial.

MRS. JACOBSON SAYS CONDITIONS FOR JEWS IN SYRIA HAVE IMPROVED

By Tuvia Mendelson and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 2 (JTA)--Mrs. Charlotte Jacobson, chairman of the World Zionist Organization-American Section, and a former leader of Hadasah, said here today that conditions for Jews in Syria have improved. She and 15 Hadasah women arrived in Israel Friday via the Allenby Bridge after concluding a two-week tour of Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

Mrs. Jacobson, who led the group, said in an interview in Yediot Achronot that the women met with Syrian officials, including the Health Minister and high officials of the Ministry of Interior and visited Jewish institutions in Damascus schools and homes of the Jewish community's leaders.

According to Mrs. Jacobson, Syrian officials told the group that restrictions on Jewish citizens had been lifted and this was confirmed by the U.S. Ambassador in Damascus. However, she noted, the main restriction lifted pertained to the right of Jews to travel freely inside Syria. There was no immediate comment on Mrs. Jacobson's interview by the Foreign Ministry.

A highlight of the group's tour in Egypt was a meeting with Mrs. Anwar Sadat in her Cairo residence. The Egyptian President's wife briefed the delegation on Egypt's views on the current political

situation. The impression she made, according to one of the three husbands accompanying their wives on the tour, was that Mrs. Sadat is "a beautiful woman who says exactly what her husband tells her to." Mrs. Jacobson said there were slight improvements in the conditions for Jews in Egypt but she did not elaborate.

Tour Had Been Criticized

The two-week tour, which created adverse reactions in Israel and the American Jewish community, was described officially by Mrs. Jacobson as a mission to study health practices in the Arab countries. The main criticism of the tour by Jewish Agency and Foreign Ministry officials here was that such tours may be used for propaganda purposes by the Arabs. Another criticism was that Mrs. Jacobson did not first consult with her WZO colleagues here about the intended trip and they learned about it from press reports. One Jewish Agency senior official said: "However you view it, it was still the head of the American Section of the World Zionist Organization visiting Cairo. Mrs. Jacobson cannot visit Arab countries merely as an individual in view of her high Zionist position."

When the delegation arrived in Israel Friday there were no WZO, Jewish Agency or government officials to greet them. The only ones to meet them on the Israeli side of the Allenby Bridge were Prof. Kalman Mann, director general of the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem, and George Edward Lichtblau, first secretary for labor and social affairs at the American Embassy.

ISRAELIS AMBIVALENT ABOUT SADAT'S LATEST MIDEAST PEACE STATEMENTS

By Gil Sedan and Tuvia Mendelson

JERUSALEM, Jan. 2 (JTA)--Israeli leaders saw both positive and negative elements in Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's latest statements on a Middle East peace settlement contained in a Washington Post interview published Thursday. The biggest surprise and the one that has aroused most interest here was Sadat's flat assertion that any Palestinian state created must be linked in some way to Jordan.

Foreign Minister Yigal Allon described it in a Cabinet briefing today as a possible "first step in the right direction." He recalled that Sadat has made similar statements in the past but quickly retracted them. The fact that he has now repeated his view of a Palestinian-Jordanian linkage therefore is "not without significance," Allon said.

On the other hand, he pointed out, Sadat was speaking of a third state between Jordan and the sea, a concept that Israel rejects out of hand. Israel has always insisted, however, that the Palestinian problem must be solved in the context of peace negotiations with Jordan.

Allon suggested that Sadat may have been signaling support for Jordan's return to the West Bank and hinting to elements in the administered territories not to go overboard in strengthening their ties with the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Israeli Foreign Minister warned that Sadat's aim is to generate

pressure on Israel. But, he noted, the United States is committed not to exert pressure on Israel for a Middle East settlement.

In his interview with Washington Post correspondent Thomas W. Lippman, Sadat said a Palestinian state must be formally linked with Jordan, insisted that Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories must be swift and total and completed in a single phase and that Lebanon must be a full participant in the Geneva peace conference.

No Dispute Between Israel, Lebanon

Allon's initial reaction to the interview was that it could be a "positive development." But he warned that if Sadat genuinely accepts Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict he should refrain from laying down prior conditions. "Rigidity in the Egyptian position could only encumber genuine peace efforts for our region," Allon said during a talk in Ramat Gan Thursday. He referred to Sadat's demand for a one-stage Israeli withdrawal "like the withdrawal from Sinai in 1956" and the inclusion of Lebanon in the Geneva talks.

With respect to the latter, Allon observed that "there is no dispute between Israel and Lebanon and there is no reason why peace negotiations cannot be held between them." However, he felt that the question of Lebanese participation should be discussed only after "the Geneva conference is reconvened as originally constituted."

Allon called the demand for withdrawal to the 1967 lines "a rigid and unrealistic position to take," adding that "Israel will not give up defensible frontiers." He said that "whatever Israel can compromise on she will do so in free negotiations and without pressure and what she cannot compromise on she will not compromise on even under the highest pressure."

Shlomo Avineri, director general of the Foreign Ministry, said on a radio interview yesterday that Sadat's support for a Palestinian-Jordanian linkage might pave the way for resuming the Geneva conference "but it is certainly not enough" by itself. He said that Arab insistence on PLO participation at Geneva remained a major obstacle and is unacceptable to Israel. On the other hand, Avineri thought that Sadat's remarks could signify the beginning of a serious erosion of Arab support for the PLO and, if continued, could provide the basis for a dialogue between Israel and its neighbors.

New Developments In the Offing

The consensus here, was that Sadat's approach gave new substance to Israel's refusal to accept a third state between itself and Jordan. Some circles now believe that the Rabat summit decision designating the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people was "dead and buried." On the other hand, they saw a strengthening of political and military cooperation between the three confrontation states--Egypt, Jordan and Syria--with the objective of increasing pressure on Israel through the U.S. if negotiations materialize this year.

Israeli observers who regard Sadat's approach as a significant gesture toward Israel, found support for their view in secret talks held in Amman this week between former Hebron Mayor Mohammed Ali el Jaabari and King Hussein and in a statement by Mayor Elias Freij of Bethlehem supporting a West Bank-Jordanian confederation. Jaabari and Freij are among the

moderate West Bank leaders. PLO sources meanwhile have remained silent.

But most observers familiar with the Middle East scene bear in mind the erratic nature of inter-Arab politics. They noted that the PLO, decimated by the Lebanese civil war, re-emerged as an influential factor after the Riyadh and Cairo conferences last year. Now their position seems to have deteriorated but the tide could turn again, the observers warned.

It was also noted that once again Sadat gained the initiative in peace proposals made to the news media, not to Israel. And Israel once more is in the position of reacting to the latest Egyptian gambit.

POLL FORECASTS BAD TIDINGS FOR THE LABOR ALIGNMENT

TEL AVIV, Jan. 2 (JTA)--A public opinion poll published Friday in Yediot Achronot showed that for the first time the Labor Alignment will get fewer seats in the next Knesset and will actually become the second largest party after the Likud, although the Likud will also lose some of its present seats.

The poll, generally considered reliable, was conducted among some 1200 Israelis after the government resigned. The question asked was: if elections were held today, which list would you vote for? The result showed that Labor would get only 33 seats, down from its present 51; and Likud would get 36 seats, down from its present 39.

The most striking feature was that Yigal Yadin's Democratic Movement for Change would get 18 seats; Arik Sharon's Shlomzion would receive seven seats, Rakah would gain very little and the Arab lists would get seven seats. The Independent Liberal Party, the poll showed, would drop two of its four seats, the National Religious Party would lose one seat of its present 10 and the Free Center Party would fail to gain any seat.

Nine percent of those polled declined to reply and 27 percent said they did not know for whom they would vote. The majority of these previously voted for Labor.

KAHANE TO RUN FOR KNESSET

JERUSALEM, Jan. 2 (JTA)--Rabbi Meir Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defense League, has announced that he would run for a Knesset seat in the next elections. He told a press conference here that he thought his chances were good because "the people of Israel are disappointed with the unfulfilled promises by the various parties."

Kahane's "platform" includes the following: Israeli sovereignty over "the entire land of Israel" and unlimited rights for every Jew to settle anywhere in the land of Israel; formation of an anti-terrorist organization; banning of the extradition of Jews to foreign governments; declaring the Communist Party illegal; and enforcing full Sabbath observance and conversion "according to halacha."

FORMER U.S. DIRECTOR OF SPANDAU BELIEVES HESS SHOULD BE RELEASED

NEW YORK, Jan. 2 (JTA)--Eugene K. Bird, the former American director of Spandau prison in Berlin, believes that its last remaining inmate, former No. 2 Nazi Rudolf Hess, now 82, should be released. Hess should be freed not only on humanitarian grounds but because

prison costs about \$415,000 a year to run... as many as 105 people may be on duty each day--to take care of one prisoner. It is a ridiculous figure," Bird said in an interview with "To The Point International," an English-language magazine published fortnightly in Antwerp, Belgium.

Bird contended that Spandau remains "a symbol of Soviet hate, revenge and terror" and claimed it is only at the insistence of the Soviet Union that Hess remains in prison. He said he expressed his views in a recent letter to the West German Justice Minister, Jurgen Baumann. He took strong exception to Baumann's response that he "would not stand up for the freedom of Rudolf Hess."

Bird said he spent hundreds of hours in Hess' cell talking to the one-time Deputy Fuehrer who defected to England early in World War II, "We talked about his flight to England, his relationship to Hitler and his place in world history." Bird told "To The Point International" in its latest issue. He said he found Hess "intelligent but he seemed to live in a fantasy world of his own. He often told me that he was 'a dedicated German'; but he regretted what happened to the Jews."

Bird believes that Hess, who is reportedly ill, has suffered enough and pointed out that he was not sentenced to life imprisonment as a war criminal but rather because he had helped carry out a war of aggression. "I have no sympathy for the Nazi past, nor do I plead the case of an old Nazi. It is more important for us than for Hess that he should be freed. Should he die in prison, he would become a monument for the neo-Nazis," Bird told the magazine.

WIZO HEAD COMES UNDER FIRE FOR HER CRITICISM OF ALMOGI

By Yitzhak Shargil and Tuvia Mendelson

JERUSALEM, Jan. 2 (JTA)--Raya Jaglom, president of WIZO, came under strong attack at the weekly meeting of the World Zionist Organization Executive for her criticism of Yosef Almogi, chairman of the WZO and Jewish Agency Executives. The meeting last week, which was to have discussed Almogi's invitation to visit Rumania and other current Zionist topics, turned into a stormy and bitter debate over Mrs. Jaglom's remarks.

In interviews several days earlier with Haaretz and the Jerusalem Post, the WIZO president said that Almogi was "unsuited" to head the WZO and Jewish Agency and that "Almogi did not make a good impression" at the Agency meeting in London last month. She said that Jewish Agency and WZO treasurer Leon Dulzin and former Defense Minister Moshe Dayan should be head of the WZO "for the good of aliya and for the good of the Jewish world."

The attack on Mrs. Jaglom was led off by Mordechai Bar-On, head of WZO's youth and hechalutz department, who asked her if she spoke for herself or WIZO and questioned whether her comments are in accordance with the agreement between WIZO and the WZO. (The Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned that the agreement requires WIZO not to take any sides nor to comment on personal issues.) Bar-On said Jaglom's comments were "by all means an expression of no confidence" in Almogi. "Perhaps it is high time to discuss the status of WIZO in the Zionist organization," Bar-On said.

Mrs. Jaglom replied she spoke for herself and not WIZO. She said she did so because she felt

the time had come to do something for the Jewish people and the Zionist movement. Mrs. Jaglom added that while the Executive could discuss the status of WIZO it should remember that "you did not put me here" since she was elected by the Zionist Congress "and only it can remove me from the Executive."

Shocked And Insulted

Ezra Shapiro, chairman of Keren Hayesod said he was "shocked" when he read Jaglom's interviews. He said he felt it indicated an "eagerness for publicity." Haim Finkelstein, head of the WZO's education department, said the whole Executive should feel insulted by Mrs. Jaglom's comments. He said he could not remember such a personal attack in the eight years he has been on the Executive. Prof. Ranan Weitz, head of the WZO's settlement department, said Almogi could not be blamed for the lack of aliya since "we all know that aliya does not depend on Almogi."

Herut's Yosef Klarman also attacked Mrs. Jaglom saying that he belonged to "another school which teaches to treat even enemies with respect." Yaacov Tsur, the Jewish National Fund's retiring chairman, said the dignity of the Zionist movement was more important than "personal insults."

The only one to defend Mrs. Jaglom was Dulzin. Saying that he was "surprised" by the discussion, Dulzin asked if the Executive was going to ban its members from speaking the truth. "Has Raya Jaglom given lies in her interviews?" he asked. He said it was not Mrs. Jaglom who had started criticizing Almogi, but "it started from outside."

Almogi himself did not take part in the discussion except to bring it to an end remarking it was a "hard discussion." Some Jewish Agency sources later said that the attack on Mrs. Jaglom indicated that the Executive supported Almogi. But other sources said that most of the persons who criticized Mrs. Jaglom were attacking only the way she did it and its timing.

Almogi Faces Criticism

Meanwhile, Almogi is coming under continued heavy criticism from the press and the Labor Party. Labor MKs Yosef Sarid and Rabbi Menachem Hacohen, in a letter two weeks ago to Meir Zarmi, the Labor Party's secretary general, said that criticism of Almogi was growing in Israel and abroad and the party ought to discuss the situation. Zarmi promised that a committee would be named to discuss the "Almogi issue."

After the two MKs attacked Almogi he received numerous cables of support from Zionist leaders in the U.S. and elsewhere. Mrs. Jaglom said in her interview that she "understands" that this support was "requested." This was denied by WZO sources.

TEL AVIV (JTA)--The death of a Druze on the Golan Heights, who was killed when he stepped on a mine while trying illegally to cross the Syrian border from Israel, led to the uncovering of three spy rings employed in the service of Syrian intelligence. An unspecified number of Golan Heights residents between the ages of 20 to 30 years were arrested during the past several days by Israeli security forces. Most of them were from the Druze village of Majd-el-Shams on the slopes of Mt. Hermon.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

SHIFTING PATTERNS FOR ISRAEL

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Jan. 2 (JTA)--Premier Yitzhak Rabin observed recently that not a single Israeli, civilian or soldier, was killed along the borders during 1976. The year just ended was, in fact, a good year for Israel in terms of the calm that prevailed on its frontiers and demarcation lines from the Golan Heights to Sinai. It was a good year too with respect to relations with the United States, although it ended on a slightly sour note supplied by the outgoing Ford Administration.

At the United Nations and in its various agencies such as UNESCO, Israel's travails persisted. The automatic majority of Arabs, Communist and Third World states had little difficulty ramming through resolution upon resolution condemning Israel for everything from its alleged mistreatment of West Bank Arabs to its alleged destruction of the Golan Heights town of Kuneitra. Except in one case, the U.S. was Israel's most faithful ally.

The peaceful situation on the borders resulted from the smooth functioning of the disengagement accords with Egypt and Syria. But most observers acknowledge that it stemmed mainly from the bitter civil war in Lebanon which seriously divided the Arab world and battered the PLO and other terrorist groups.

Open Fence Policy Gained Good Will

During the turmoil in its north, Israel gained prestige and international good will by its open fence policy. Although not without political intent, this was largely a humanitarian gesture aimed at providing medical treatment and other assistance to Lebanese cut off from all forms of aid in their own war torn country.

Originally only Christian villagers in southern Lebanon sought help in Israel. But soon the open fence was being crossed daily by Moslems and Druze, many from the northern regions of Lebanon. The ill or wounded were hospitalized or given free out-patient treatment at border clinics. Several hundred Lebanese found jobs in Israel and a brisk trade developed between Israelis and Lebanese farmers whose markets were cut off by the war.

The open fence policy did much to obliterate the harsh image Israel gained abroad when its soldiers and police fought Arab rioters in Galilee and on the West Bank earlier in the year.

New Israel-U.S. Honeymoon

There was a new honeymoon in relations between Israel and the United States attributable in large measure to the American election campaign. The U.S. was reluctant to press Israel for any far-reaching concessions, a move that might have alienated a large segment of Jewish voters. The Ford Administration met most of Israel's essential military assistance needs--not all of them--but enough to ensure a new generation of highly sophisticated combat planes for the 1980s.

Only a few days before the November elections, President Ford announced a very generous program of future military assistance for Israel. It was obviously a gesture toward Jewish voters but Israelis accepted it at face value and felt an added sense of security.

At the UN virtually the entire world seemed arrayed against Israel. The anti-Israel resolutions in the Security Council and General Assem-

bly were adopted by overwhelming majorities. In some cases, Israel was supported by a number of Latin American and Western European countries.

The U.S. consistently raised its hand on the side of Israel, except on the issue of Jewish settlements in the administered territories when it sided with the Arab bloc. Some circles here saw that vote as a form of punishment administered by the Ford Administration after losing the elections. A majority of American Jews had voted for the Carter-Mondale ticket.

Hurdles On Path To Mideast Peace

The year just ended saw the momentum toward peace in the Middle East falter, partly as a result of the Lebanese war, partly due to the U.S. elections and, in the past two weeks, because of the government crisis in Israel.

Nevertheless, Israel seems ready to go to a reconvened Geneva peace conference, provided it is limited to the original participants. The Arabs want the PLO at Geneva, preferably as an independent delegation, but, if necessary, through the "back door" as members of an all-embracing Arab delegation. This issue will have to be settled before the Geneva talks can resume.

A further delay seems inevitable because of the early elections in Israel, probably this May. When Israel does go to Geneva it is expected to seek an overall settlement with the Arab states to be formalized by peace treaties. If this proves impossible to attain, Israel is prepared to settle for non-belligerency pacts that would end the state of war in the Middle East after nearly 30 years. Those are issues that must be confronted in 1977.

BQNN (JTA)--Swastikas were painted on the walls of the Frankfurt cathedral and four flags with swastikas were placed on the cathedral's tower yesterday. Police reported finding leaflets on the cathedral's porch which claimed that a branch of the Nazi Party based in New Jersey (U.S.) was responsible for the acts. The party, officially called here the National Socialist Workers Party of Germany, is illegal here. Police believe that the flags were hoisted up the tower on scaffolding erected for repair work.

NEW YORK (JTA)--The rights to Moshe Dayan's autobiography, "Story of My Life," published by William Morrow, has been acquired by Otto Preminger, the producer-director who scored with the film "Exodus." Preminger said Dayan has agreed to be story adviser and consultant for the film titled, "The First 25 Years: Dayan's Israel." Preminger, who will produce and direct the film independently, has not as yet arranged for a distributor. He said he was currently discussing the project with screen writers and hoped to start filming in the spring on locations in Israel.

TEL AVIV (JTA)--Leopold Trepper, who was the head of the Soviet underground "Red Orchestra" during World War II, and Simon Wiesenthal, head of the Nazi documentation center in Vienna, will be the main speakers at the Second World Congress of Underground Fighters Jan. 12-17 in Tel Aviv. Foreign Minister Yigal Allon and Mrs. Golda Meir will address the expected 400 delegates from 15 countries.