



ISRAEL TOLD BROWN OVER-STEPPED INSTRUCTIONS WHEN HE CRITICIZED ISRAEL'S OIL DRILLING OPERATION

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 15 (JTA)--Official sources reported today that the Israeli Embassy in Washington has received clarification from the State Department on the strong criticism of Israel's oil drilling in the Gulf of Suez voiced by Department spokesman Frederick Z. Brown at yesterday's press briefing. The Embassy was advised by State Department aides that Brown had overstepped his briefing instructions, the sources said.

They also said there was reason to hope that the U.S. Administration would seek to balance Brown's remarks, possibly during the visit of Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance who arrives here tonight. Brown had said, in reply to reporters' questions, that Israel's oil explorations in the Gulf of Suez violated international law and could hamper Middle East peace negotiations.

Israeli officials were disturbed by this new source of friction with the U.S. on the eve of Vance's arrival but apparently the matter has been laid to rest for the time being. One Israeli official termed Brown's remark that Israel's search for oil "complicates the achievement of a settlement" as "a vast overstatement, out of all proportion to the facts."

Vance Emphasizes Trust, Confidence

Meanwhile, Vance and his entourage, including his chief Middle East strategist, Assistant Secretary of State Alfred L. Atherton, arrived here this evening. At Ben Gurion Airport, Vance spoke of the "enduring trust and confidence" in the relationship between the United States and Israel. He had brought a "simple message," he said; that the U.S. was "convinced" that this "trust and confidence" must be a "fundamental, underlying" part of the search for peace upon which the parties were embarked. Vance underlined the U.S. commitment to Israel's security.

No formal schedule has been arranged for Vance for tonight. His political talks and courtesy visits will all take place tomorrow, starting with a private breakfast with Premier Yitzhak Rabin.

Reliable sources said Vance's talks with Israeli leaders would concentrate on enunciating and clarifying positions rather than on any substantive negotiations at this stage. Officials here are concerned about Vance's stated intention to test the position of the Palestinian leadership in its so-called shift toward moderation. The officials are not raising any objections publicly but are taking every opportunity to reinforce Israel's official position that the PLO cannot participate in the negotiating process.

LABOR PARTY SHAKEN BY YADLIN'S PLEA OF GUILTY TO TAKING BRIBES

JERUSALEM, Feb. 15 (JTA)--Israel's governing Labor Party was badly shaken by Asher Yadlin's guilty plea yesterday in which the former head of Kupat Holim admitted that he accepted bribes and claimed he turned much of the money over to the Labor Party treasury. Key

party figures named by Yadlin in the Tel Aviv district court were quick to deny any knowledge of such transactions.

Finance Minister Yehoshua Rabinowitz told television reporters last night that he was never personally involved in party financing. He and former party treasurer Ze'ev Weiner were among those mentioned by Yadlin as having received the money. David Kalderon, another Labor insider and former associate of the late Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir, also denied knowledge of monies paid by Yadlin to the party.

Education Minister Aharon Yadlin, a cousin of the defendant who was the Labor Party's secretary general at the time the money was allegedly transferred, declined to comment on press reports that he might resign from the Cabinet. Aharon Yadlin's name was signed to a receipt for IL 70,000 received from Asher Yadlin. The receipt was entered as an exhibit for the defense in court yesterday. The Education Minister said that on the advice of counsel he would not discuss the Yadlin trial until it is over.

Faces Additional Charges

Although Yadlin will be sentenced next Tuesday for the offenses to which he has pleaded guilty, he faces prosecution on additional charges of bribery, fraud and tax evasion. Attorney General Aharon Barak indicated, meanwhile, that he would examine Yadlin's testimony to determine whether to order an investigation of the Labor Party's finances. The party may be open to charges that in accepting money from Yadlin it violated a 1973 law barring contributions from companies. Kupat Holim, the giant Histrut sick-fund, could be legally construed as a company.

An investigation of Labor Party finances during the heat of the election campaign could have grave political consequences for Labor. Rabin met at the party headquarters in Tel Aviv last night with Rabinowitz, Aharon Yadlin and others named in the guilty plea. The meeting, attended by party secretary general Meir Zarmi, was apparently called to decide on strategy to meet the political onslaught triggered by Asher Yadlin's allegations. (By David Landau and Gil Sedan)

LAWMAKER MOVES TO HALT CONVERSION OF MINORS UNDER STATE SUPERVISION

By David Friedman

NEW YORK, Feb. 15 (JTA)--A bill to prevent the conversion of minors who are under state supervision will be considered soon by the New York State Assembly. Assemblyman Leonard Silverman, who represents the Flatbush and Boro Park sections of Brooklyn, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that he introduced the bill after learning that two retarded young Jews in state-supported foster homes have been converted to Catholicism.

Silverman's bill would forbid the religious conversion of any minor in a psychiatric center or facility, development center, group home, family care home, foster care home, for retarded children being supported or maintained under the supervision of the State Department of Mental Hygiene. A similar bill is expected to be

Introduced in the State Senate.

Silverman, urging Jewish organizations to support the legislation, said the problem came to his attention when he learned that children who had been sent to foster homes from the Willowbrook Developmental Center on Staten Island had been converted by their foster parents.

How The Problem Arose

Rabbi Philip Goldberg, the Jewish chaplain at the center for retarded children, told the JTA today the problem arose when the state decided a few years ago that children would be better off in foster homes than in institutions. However, he said Jewish families have not offered to take in the children, even though funds are provided, so they go to Christian homes. At the time the program began, Goldberg said, 1400 of Willowbrook's children were Jewish; now there are 700 Jewish children there.

Goldberg said that some of the foster parents want the foster children to have the same religion as they and their other children have and so have converted them. This, he noted, has happened in three cases. He said that the Catholic chaplain at Willowbrook also complained that two Catholic children sent to foster homes were converted to the Pentecostal faith.

Asked whether these children would have the mental capacity to understand the conversion process, Goldberg stressed that they do. In addition, he emphasized that as Jews "they are as dear to us as normal children." He said according to Jewish law they are accepted fully as Jews.

Foster Home Children Aided

As Jews, the children may be better off in institutions than in the foster homes, Goldberg noted. He said he provides the children with Jewish education and with Sabbath services as well as with special programs for the Jewish holidays. Funds come from various Jewish organizations and the rabbi himself.

He said as a means of helping the Jewish children in foster homes one temple on Staten Island has offered to include them in their Shabbat services and the Board of Jewish Education plans to operate Jewish education classes for them at various locations.

Meanwhile, Rabbi Harold Gordon, executive vice-president of the New York Board of Rabbis, has reported that a woman in a state-operated mental health home in Rockland County was converted to Catholicism. He said Silverman's bill was a step forward in stopping this "stealing of souls." Silverman is expected to amend the bill to include all persons considered by the state to be incompetent to deal with their own affairs.

WAR CRIMINAL FACES DEPORTATION

ALBANY, N.Y., Feb. 15 (JTA)--Vilis A. Hazners, 71, a nationally prominent Latvian emigre, denied in a U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) court here yesterday that he committed war crimes while an officer in the Nazi-backed Latvian SS Legion during World War II. Hazners, who is facing deportation proceedings, has been accused of responsibility for the deaths of an estimated several hundred to 1000 Jews in Riga, Latvia in July, 1941, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency was informed by Frederic U. Dicker, a reporter for the Albany Times-Union who first wrote an expose on Hazners in the newspaper last November.

Hazners, who lives in Dresden, N.Y., is pres-

ident of the Committee for a Free Latvia and made broadcasts for the Voice of America in the 1960s, Dicker told the JTA. He is charged with entering the U.S. from Germany in 1956 in violation of the anti-war crimes proviso of the Refugee Relief Act of 1953. He was served with a deportation notice on Jan. 28.

Dicker, in his investigative report last November, wrote that the accusations against Hazners came from official present-day Latvian publications and from Dr. Gertrude Schneider, a City University of New York professor, Latvian history scholar, survivor of the Riga ghetto and a naturalized U.S. citizen.

During a visit to Latvia in 1971, Schneider, who had been deported from her native Austria to Latvia by the Nazis at the beginning of World War II, recalled a discussion with the Latvian culture minister in which he spoke of alleged atrocities committed during the war by persons now living in the U.S. and mentioned Hazners, among others, Dicker reported Schneider told him during an interview last November.

Charges Against Hazners

Hazners' attorney, Ivars Berzins, of Babylon, L.I., declared yesterday in court that the charges against his client had "made in Moscow stamped all over them." Lloyd Sherman, the INS attorney who presented the case, said the government was prepared "to bring 4-5 witnesses from overseas" to testify against Hazners. Most of the witnesses, survivors of the Riga ghetto, are believed to be living in Israel.

The deportation notice states that Hazners participated "in the collection of a group of Jews in Riga and detaining them in the Big Synagogue (Choral Synagogue) on Gogol St., Riga, after which said synagogue was set afire and the detained Jews burned to death therein." Hazners is also accused of helping select Jews for execution in an area known as Pogularka Woods in Latvia in June, 1941. INS Judge Anthony De Gato set June 20 as the trial date.

USSR WITHHOLDS FORMAL DECISION ON GRANTING VISA TO SENATOR

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15 (JTA)--The Soviet government has withheld a formal decision on whether it will grant Sen. Richard Stone (D, Fla.) a visa for an official trip to the Soviet Union, but it has not formally denied his application, the Senator said today.

Stone, a member of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, applied for the visa to visit the Soviet Union Feb. 13-19. The State Department now says that it has been informed by the Soviet Embassy that it has returned his passport and is "holding" the visa application, Stone said.

Stone said he thinks the Soviet government does not want to "confront the issue of human rights with a direct refusal of my visa request." He added that "its equivocal way of handling the matter underscores the increasing reports of violations of human rights and a severe crack-down on dissidents in that country." Nevertheless, Stone said he is encouraged by the fact that his application was not officially turned down.

AJCONGRESS TO RESUME TRAVEL PROGRAM TO MEXICO NEXT OCTOBER

NEW YORK, Feb. 15 (JTA)--The American Jewish Congress today announced resumption of

its members' travel program to Mexico, Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, president of the AJCongress, made the announcement following a meeting of the organization's national executive committee last night.

Hertzberg led an AJCongress mission to Mexico last month and met with President Jose Lopez Portillo, former President Miguel Aleman, who heads the Mexican National Tourist Council, and leaders of Mexico's Jewish community. "On the basis of our conversations with Mexican government officials and with representatives of Mexican Jewry," Hertzberg said, "we believe it is appropriate to resume our members' travel program to Mexico."

He noted that the AJCongress was persuaded "that there is an eagerness on the part of our Mexican neighbors to strengthen relations with the United States, with Israel and with American Jews and to adopt policies that will strengthen the cause of freedom everywhere. For all these reasons, our mission recommended unanimously to lift the suspension of the American Jewish Congress travel program to Mexico. I am pleased to report that this recommendation was adopted unanimously by our national executive committee."

Hertzberg said that the Congress would resume its group tours to Mexico next October. Some 25 departures for more than 1000 members are now being scheduled. The AJCongress suspended its members' travel program to Mexico in November, 1975, following Mexico's vote at the United Nations in support of the General Assembly resolution equating Zionism with racism.

In his statement today, Hertzberg noted two recent "positive actions" taken by Mexico--the signing of a new air agreement inaugurating regular flights between Israel and Mexico and the decision by Mexico to join the United States, Britain, France and West Germany in abstaining from a UN resolution condemning "collaboration by Israel with the South African racist regime."

UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION VOTES 23-3 TO INDICT ISRAEL

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Feb. 15 (JTA)--The United Nations Human Rights Commission voted 23-3 today to accept a multi-count indictment of Israel charging it with all manner of violations of human rights in the occupied Arab territories. The document called on all states, international organizations and specialized agencies not to recognize changes carried out by Israel in the territories and requested the UN Secretary General to bring the indictment resolution to the attention of all governments, UN organizations and agencies.

Only the United States, Canada and Costa Rica voted against the resolution. Six countries abstained, including Britain and the other Western European nations. The chief U.S. delegate, Alard Lowenstein, said the resolution was based on unproven allegations and that its text seemed to question Israel's right to exist by referring to Palestine as part of the occupied territories.

Israel's observer at the Human Rights Commission conference, Ambassador Theodor Meron, denounced the resolution as "a shameful document, a structure of lies and half-truths." The resolution was presented to the 32-member Human Rights Commission by eight member states, none of which has diplomatic relations with Israel.

Among the accusations leveled against Israel were: the torture and ill-treatment of persons

under detention and the violation of the relevant provisions of the Geneva conventions; the confiscation, expropriation of Arab property by Israeli authorities and individuals; the exploitation of human and natural resources; the denial to the population of the occupied Arab territories of their rights to national education and cultural life; interference with religious freedom and practices; promulgation of discriminatory economic legislation; and the pillaging of archaeological and cultural property.

The resolution demanded that Israel rescind all measures taken to change the physical character, demographic composition or status of the occupied territories and that it release all Arabs detained or imprisoned "as a result of their struggle for self-determination and the liberation of their territories."

RISE IN IMMIGRATION REPORTED

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 15 (JTA)--A slight rise in immigration during January was noted in the monthly report of the Jewish Agency's immigration department just released here. According to the report, arrivals numbered 1648 compared to 1506 during January, 1976. It was slightly lower than the January 1975 figure of 1747. The number of immigrants from the Soviet Union increased but there was a small decrease in the number from all of Eastern Europe compared to the same month last year.

The Jewish Agency reported that the rate of noshrim (dropouts) among Soviet Jews who reached Vienna was 58 percent compared to 49.3 percent in 1976. Immigration from other parts of the world remained stable or showed an increase.

Olim From South Africa

Increases were registered among olim from South Africa, according to Max Miodownik, chairman of the Israel branch of the South African Zionist Federation. He said the Federation offices here now interview about 200 olim a week compared to 50 six months ago. He said that aliyah activities have increased to an extent that private homes are no longer adequate to hold meetings.

Miodownik predicted that the number of olim from South Africa will reach 1200 this year, double last year's figure. But he acknowledged that many Jews emigrated from South Africa to English-speaking countries, mainly the U.S. and Canada, rather than to Israel. There are about 120,000 Jews in South Africa and about 20,000 Israelis currently living there.

CANADA MUST HELP PRESERVE ISRAEL

TORONTO, Feb. 15 (JTA)--Premier William Davis of Ontario affirmed here that Canada must commit itself to preserving Israel. The head of the Progressive Conservative government of Canada's most populous province told a meeting of the Toronto United Jewish Appeal that Canada's foreign policy must never be allowed "to become so weak or so soft or so vague or so self-seeking that it no longer has room for a stand of principle in the Middle East." Davis, who was being honored by the 850 UJA guests, said his government would not tolerate any submissioin to the Arab boycott against Israel or any Canadians who trade with Israel to the extent that provincial human rights laws could prevent this. He recently returned from a trip to Israel.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**ARABS DISAPPOINTED WITH EEC**

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Feb. 15 (JTA)--Arab spokesmen have begun to voice disappointment over the failure to change the European Economic Community's (EEC) policy on the Arab-Israeli conflict at last week's Euro-Arab dialogue meeting in Tunis.

The Tunis newspaper, Al-Amal, quoted here, complained that the dialogue had not achieved all the results expected of it. An Algerian radio commentary regretted that the EEC had not adopted a more pro-Palestinian position and had failed to reach a preferential agreement on trade with all the Arab League countries.

These criticisms have been quickly echoed by the Soviet Union. In a broadcast to the Arab world, Moscow Radio said: "The (nine) EEC countries are doing everything to take the formal recognition of the PLO off the agenda."

The full communique issued yesterday in Tunis after the two-day conference reflected the decision by the EEC Foreign Ministers at their London meeting the previous week that there should be no independent appeal for reconvening the Geneva conference and no formal acknowledgement of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Palestinian Question Discussed

Both sides, the joint statement said, "reiterated that the solution of the Palestine question on the basis of the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people constitutes a decisive factor in the realization of a just, durable peace."

It went on: "The European side expressed the belief that the principles embodied in the (Luxembourg) statement of November 6, 1973, and further developed through the statements issued by the group of nine since then, particularly with regard to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, constitute the basic elements of any peaceful settlement and that these principles must be taken en bloc."

"The European side also expressed concern over the continued Israeli occupation of the Arab territories since 1967 and...expressed their opposition to the policy of the establishment of settlements--a matter which is bound to harm the chances of peace...and to any unilateral action aimed at changing the status quo in Jerusalem. The Arab side expressed its appreciation of this."

The Luxembourg statement, issued at the height of the pressure conducted by the Arab oil-producing nations after the Yom Kippur War, spoke of the need for Israel "to end the territorial occupation which it has maintained since the conflict of 1967" and of "application of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338."

At the opening session, the Arab delegate stressed that the basis of the dialogue was political. "Without this political aspect there can be no success in other aspects," he said, adding that Europe's security depended on averting another Arab-Israeli war. The European representative, however, stressed that there were limits to the EEC's readiness to become involved in Middle East diplomacy and that it wished to place equal emphasis on non-political aspects of Euro-Arab cooperation.

YEAR-LONG FREEDOM VIGIL LAUNCHED

NEW YORK, Feb. 15 (JTA)--Six New York area

Congressmen yesterday launched a year-long program of daily protests organized by the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry. Standing in front of the offices of Aeroflot, the Soviet national airline, Frederick Richmond, Theodore Weiss, Charles Rangel, Benjamin Rosenthal and Joseph Addabbo and Hamilton Fish, participated in the lighting of the Ner Tamid (Eternal Flame), symbolizing New Yorkers' unflinching commitment to the cause of freeing Soviet Jews.

For the next year, "six or more demonstrators representing a church, synagogue, school or community organization will demonstrate each business day at noon in front of the Aeroflot offices to constantly remind the Soviets we will not rest until all Soviet Jews are free," proclaimed Bronx Borough President Robert Abrams, Conference chairman.

The legislators, as well as the six vigil participants, who will demonstrate each business day over the next year, "symbolize the six million victims of the Nazi Final Solution and our firm commitment to the three million Soviet Jews who comprise the largest surviving national group of East European Jews," Abrams noted.

At each "Freedom Vigil," participants will hold signs calling for free emigration and freedom of religious and cultural expression for Soviet Jews. They will also distribute materials, collect signatures on petitions, and ask passersby to correspond with Soviet Jewish activists. The Ner Tamid participants will comprise an ever-ready core group for instant reaction to breaking developments in the Soviet Union such as the recent beatings, arrests and interrogations of Soviet Jewish activists in recent months, Abrams said.

POC REFUSED MEDICAL AID

NEW YORK, Feb. 15 (JTA)--Prisoner of Conscience Leib Knokh is bleeding internally, according to information reaching the National Conference on Soviet Jewry. Sentenced to 10 years in a strict regime camp, all pleas to have Knokh removed to medical facilities have been unanswered. He was one of 11 defendants in the first Leningrad trial December, 1970. Having previously renounced his Soviet citizenship, Knokh claimed that he was no longer under the jurisdiction of a Soviet court and refused to answer any questions during his trial pertaining to anyone other than the defendants. His wife and child are now living in Israel.

N.Y. SENATE ACTS ON ZAVUROV

ALBANY, N.Y., Feb. 15 (JTA)--The New York State Senate unanimously passed a resolution calling for the release of Amner Zavurov, the newest Soviet Jewish Prisoner of Conscience. The resolution, sponsored by Senator Albert Lewis, was passed Feb. 9, two days prior to Zavurov's appeal of his three-year sentence on a variety of charges. Despite the resolution and massive protests from around the world, Soviet authorities rejected Zavurov's appeal and upheld his three-year sentence.

Passage of the resolution was conducted with the assistance of the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry. The measure noted several violations of Soviet and international law, including denying the Zavurov family the right to emigrate and denying the defendant the right to counsel of his choice as guaranteed under the Soviet Code of Criminal Procedure.