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HISTADRUT POSTPONES CALL FOR A GENERAL STRIKE; GIVES GOVERNMENT TILL TUESDAY TO AGREE TO A COMPROMISE
By David Landau and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, July 14 (JTA) — Histadrut has given the government until Tuesday to agree to a compromise on its emergency economic program that would ease the burden of sacrifice imposed on wage-earners.

The trade union federation postponed its call for a general strike that was supposed to begin today so that negotiations could continue in a calm atmosphere. Histadrut Secretary General Yisrael Kessar met again with Premier Shimon Peres and Finance Minister Yitzhak Modai. Their marathon sessions, which began last week, are on two major issues, wage erosion and mass dismissals of public employees. Histadrut also objects to the implementation of these measures by decree.

Inching Toward Agreement

Although Kessar said late today that no progress was made, media sources said both sides were inching toward agreement on the key issues. Political pundits said both were anxious to reach an accord, if possible before tomorrow afternoon. At that time, the Central Bureau of Statistics will release the inflation figures for June. They are expected to be high and could trigger a new round of wildcat strikes by the more militant unions which would make an agreement even harder to achieve.

Government sources said today that Histadrut has agreed in principle that about three percent of the public sector workforce will have to be dismissed in the interest of averting economic collapse. But they are negotiating vigorously over how this will be implemented.

The Cabinet decided at its meeting today to include all government-owned companies in the blanket three percent cut. Modai had intended to exempt the companies on grounds they were governed by the profit motive and should be left to take whatever economic measures were necessary to ensure their profitability.

But Energy Minister Moshe Shahal insisted that government enterprises be included in the austerity plan and his view carried.

Bus Drivers Walk Off The Job

While negotiations continued, the labor scene simmered. Egged bus drivers walked off the job today throwing public transportation into chaos. Egged, a cooperative with a monopoly of inter-urban bus service, is seeking to reduce expenses. The drivers and other employees are fighting the plan on grounds it would drastically reduce their incomes.

Employees of the Israel Electric Corp. resumed normal operations today after a week of partial power cuts which blacked out large areas of the country for as long as three hours at a time. They and other public service employees who engaged in wildcat strikes or job actions last week, got a tongue-lashing today from President Chaim Herzog.

The strikes "hit the little man ... the medical patient on the operating table, the pensioner," Herzog said. He said it was "incomprehensible" that a nation which was capable of monumental sacrifices in self-defense should show such irresponsibility in defense of the economy.

Herzog has spoken out several times in recent days to urge public support of the government's economic program. He apparently feels no constitutional constraint in lining up his prestigious but non-political office behind the government inasmuch as the economic program was adopted by a unity coalition which represents a preponderant majority of the Knesset.

Peres Justifies Plans

Peres, addressing local authorities Friday, admitted that the government was being forced to take measures to save the economy that no trade union would approve. He justified plans to impose the economic program by decree because the measures were too urgently needed to allow for time-consuming union negotiations and debate in the Knesset.

Peres said the government has tried wage-price package deals but with only limited success because after a point no agreement could be sustained between the principal parties, labor and management.

SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH LEADER SAYS THE COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED ABOUT STRONG VOCAL OPPOSITION TO SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT BY U.S. JEWS
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, July 14 (JTA) — The South African Jewish community is becoming increasingly concerned about the strong vocal opposition to the South African government by American Jewish groups, which it fears could endanger that community, a leader of South African Jewry warned here.

"We appeal to them (American Jewish organizations) to exercise restraint and to realize that their actions and expressions must in no way jeopardize the integrity or safety of our community," Dr. Israel Abramowitz, former chairman of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, said in an address to the B'nai B'rith public affairs forum Friday. "Our local community interests must be taken into account."

Abramowitz, president of B'nai B'rith in South Africa, stressed he neither supported nor spoke for the South African government. But he said he was reflecting the views of the South African Jewish community.

Claims 'Obsessional Preoccupation'

He charged that South African Jews believed there was an "obsessional preoccupation" with South Africa in the U.S. and much of the anti-South African manifestations here were made for purely American political reasons.

While no one denied the "inalienable right" of American Jewish organizations to speak out on any issues, Abramowitz said, South African Jews questioned "why are they literally falling and stumbling over themselves in their zeal and enthusiasm to get on the bandwagon of condemnation and protestation."

He also questioned why American Jewish organizations believed it was speaking for world Jewry and why Jewish groups felt that they had to lobby Congress on this issue. He implied that many of the groups demonstrating against South Africa wanted a violent change rather than the peaceful change supported by the South African Jewish community.

While Abramowitz had no prescribed course for American Jewish groups to follow, he strongly urged them to maintain contact and consultations with South African Jewish organizations, which, he stressed, valued their ties to world Jewry. He said he was very pleased that B'nai B'rith president Gerald Kraft would be visiting South Africa this week.

Obligated To Maintain Cautious Stand

As for the position of South African Jewry, "we are obliged to maintain a cautious stance," Abramowitz said. He said there was always the danger of an anti-Semitic backlash.

At the same time, he pointed out many individual Jews have been in the forefront of the human rights struggle in South Africa. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies has also increasingly spoken out on these issues, most recently adopting a resolution opposing apartheid.

The resolution was adopted not "in search of any accolades, nor to please certain quarters of the community, nor to meet the requirement and pressures of overseas and international Jewish bodies," Abramowitz said. "We have done so because we believe it is the correct thing for a Jewish community to do in line with Jewish ethical and moral principles."

Abramowitz added that the resolution will also help meet the charge that "Zionism is racism." He said that the Black community in South Africa has been influenced by Arab propaganda and frequently criticizes the Jewish community for its strong ties to Israel.

Optimistic About Peaceful Change

Abramowitz said that while there is a "tremendous amount of concern and anxiety" in the Jewish community about the future, most are optimistic that change will come peacefully. He complained that he has seen little from the critics in the U.S. about the reforms being made by the South African government.

However, Abramowitz stressed that the Jewish community's future is tied to that of the white community in South Africa and what is happening in Zimbabwe leaves it uneasy. There, a Jewish community of 7,500 has shrunk to a few hundred, he said.

The 119,220 Jews in South Africa make up 2.6 percent of the white population and .04 percent of the overall population, Abramowitz said. He said the Jewish community is a "declining community" and the population would have decreased since 1970 because of emigration to Israel, the U.S., Canada, Britain and Australia, if it were not for an influx of Jews from Zimbabwe and Israel. There are an estimated 15,000 Israelis in South Africa. By the end of the century the Jewish population is expected to shrink to 64,000, Abramowitz said.

At the conclusion of Abramowitz's talk, Warren Eizenberg, director of the B'nai B'rith International Council, appeared to be responding to Abramowitz's charge that American Jewish organizations may be "naive," when he noted that Americans have always spoken out for what they believed were moral issues. He noted the Soviet Jewry issue was primarily a moral issue and it is one of many that American Jews have supported on this ground and not mainly for political reasons.

ETHIOPIAN JEWS IN ISRAELI ABSORPTION CENTERS PROTEST AGAINST HAVING TO UNDERGO FORMAL CONVERSION CEREMONY By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 14 (JTA) — Ethiopian Jews in absorption centers all over the country protested angrily today against the insistence by the Chief Rabbinate that they undergo a formal conversion ceremony — immersion but not symbolic circumcision.

The protestors declared this demand constituted a grave insult and questioned their authenticity as Jews. They noted they endured severe hardship and suffering to get out of Ethiopia and find their way to Israel. They are being singled out as no other Jewish emigre group and it is demeaning to have their Judaism doubted, they said.

Many of the immigrants refused to attend their Hebrew classes today and others refused to report for work. Activists said the protests would continue for three days. The Rabbinate claims it is only marginal, artificially fanned by "certain" activists.

It is not clear how widespread the protest is among the Ethiopian Jews, most of whom arrived here through "Operation Moses" between November, 1984 and January, 1985 when the airlift from Sudan was suspended because of premature disclosure.

Last week, Sephardic Chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliahu declared that he and his colleague, Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi Avraham Shapiro, do indeed consider the Ethiopians to be Jews. In fact, he said, the Rabbinate formally permitted the desecration of the Sabbath by Israeli officials involved in Operation Moses.

Eliahu claimed that the formal conversion requirement was intended to correct any halachic violations that may have affected the newcomers or their families in the past with respect to marriage, divorce, conversion and other personal matters.

In practice, the Chief Rabbinate will not permit the performance of marriages involving an Ethiopian spouse who has not undergone formal reconversion.

CJC OFFERS PROPOSALS TO CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO HELP BRING NAZI WAR CRIMINALS IN CANADA TO JUSTICE

By Michael Solomon

MONTREAL, July 14 (JTA) — The Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) has offered detailed, far-reaching proposals for measures the Canadian government could take to help bring Nazi war criminals living in Canada to justice.

The proposals were presented on behalf of the CJC by Irwin Cotler, a leading attorney and professor of law at McGill University, to former Quebec Superior Court Judge Jules Deschenes, who constitutes a one-man committee appointed by the federal government to investigate suspected war criminals living in Canada and recommend legislation or other means to deal with them.

There are, according to estimates now in the hands of the committee, 660 aliens or naturalized citizens suspected of war crimes presently in Canada.

Some Of The Recommendations

One of Cotler's recommendations, submitted last Friday, was to amend Canada's 1967 extradition treaty with Israel so that it will apply to criminal acts committed before 1967, i.e., during World War II.

Another would have the Canadian government seek the cooperation of West Germany to investigate and extradite suspected war criminals who were not German nationals but committed their crimes in territory under control of the Third Reich.

In addition, "The government of Canada should explore with other West European states with whom there are extradition treaties, the possibility of extraditing suspected Nazi war criminals in Canada to them for trial in these countries," Cotler proposed.

Among the 660 suspects are many from Eastern European countries with which Canada has no extradition treaties. Alternatives would be to extradite them to Israel or West Germany.

Basis For Denaturalization

The CJC recommended the denaturalization of the suspects, where applicable, under the Citizenship Act of 1976 which provides for this on evidence that the suspect obtained Canadian citizenship by concealment of a crime of moral turpitude or misrepresented membership in an organization whose members would be excluded from citizenship under the 1976 Act.

Aliens suspected of Nazi war crimes would be deported on evidence of subversive acts against the government or of the use of fraudulent means to gain entry to Canada.

Cotler also proposed that the Canadian government prosecute suspected Nazi war criminals under customary international law or international criminal law. He suggested the government amend the Criminal Code to extend the principle of universality of jurisdiction accepted and applied to crimes of piracy, to war crimes.

Finally, he urged that the government must provide investigators of Nazi war criminals with all the resources and assistance they require to pursue their investigations "with all deliberate speed."

So far, Canada has extradited only one suspected Nazi war criminal — Albert Rauca, a naturalized emigre from Germany who was returned to West Germany to face charges of murdering 12,000 Lithuanians, most of them Jews. Rauca died in a German prison before standing trial.

SPECIAL TO THE JTA VIEWS ON THE MIDEAST EXCHANGED AT INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MEETING By Nancy Miller

NAIROBI, Kenya, July 14 (JTA) — More than 500 women crammed into an oversized striped Peace Tent on the campus of the University of Nairobi to hear a Palestinian sociologist, an Israeli professor of women's studies, an American Jewish freelance journalist, and a British Jewish Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) delegate sympathetic to the Palestinian cause exchange their views on the Middle East.

The program was one of hundreds planned for the NGO Forum '85 on women which began here last Wednesday and ends tomorrow. The meetings of the NGOs, which include many Jewish organizations, are meeting in conjunction with the 12-day world conference ending the United Nations Decade for Women.

After each panelist delivered a 10-minute speech, dozens crowded the podium to comment. Many spoke in familiar terms about the horrors of apartheid, racism, and Zionism. Yhan Melou, a representative of the General Union of Palestinian Women, noted to the approval of the meeting, that "Zionism is racism. We do not say this because we like to condemn Zionism, but it is a fact."

Despite the jingoistic cant, distressing as it was to the Jewish and Israeli delegates, this meeting was noteworthy for its orderliness and self-control.

Thus, Charlotte Ettlinger, a Swedish-born Jew who found refuge in Norway during World War II, was able to ask: "Why aren't PLO people as nice to Arabs as the Norwegians were to the Swedes?" The audience began to hiss at this observation, but was quickly hushed, as Ettlinger continued:

"If someone comes to Sweden, after five years he is a citizen, unlike Palestinian refugees who left Israel in 1948 and have been denied citizenship by other Arab countries."

During the 1975 women's meeting in Mexico City and the 1980 mid-decade conference in Copenhagen, discussions of Zionism, apartheid, and racism dissolved into ugly free-for-alls. Supporters of the U.S. as well as Israel were prevented from speaking or were so severely heckled, that many left the podium in tears. Parliamentary rules of order completely broke down then and chaos ruled.

At the meeting here, however, the women running the program maintained discipline through the often emotional, often bitter statements.

Orderliness Strictly Enforced

Barbara Bick, the moderator, strictly enforced time limits on all speakers. Sonia Johnson took names of those wishing to speak, attempting to include as many women from as many countries as possible. Applause, booing, and hissing were forbidden. Instead the women were told to wave their hands in approval or to turn their thumbs down for disapproval. After every fifth speaker, the group sang songs of peace and sisterhood.

Both Bick and Johnson are volunteer staff workers at the Peace Tent, which was the host for this event, and which has become a focal point for the NGO Forum '85.

According to Edith Ballantyn, she and a small group of women had organized the Peace Tent as a place where women can come and speak in complete freedom.

2,000 TEXTILE WORKS ARE DISMISSED

TEL AVIV, July 14 (JTA) — The bankrupt Ata textile mill's nearly 2,000 employees have been informed that their jobs were officially terminated as of June 28.

The giant industrial complex on Haifa Bay, once the largest employer in the Haifa area, was officially closed by court order. A last minute effort to sell it to a foreign syndicate was rejected by the Ministerial Economic Committee on grounds that the government's investment under the deal was too high.

The dismissed employees were advised by the receiver that they could withdraw money they had contributed to the pension plan up to June 28. But no mention was made of severance pay or financial benefits the workers had hoped to get from the government.

Now that they are officially without jobs, the Ata workers can apply for unemployment compensation or retraining to prepare them for jobs in other fields.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Abie Nathan's floating pirate radio station, The Voice of Peace, went off the air last week. He said he was forced to cease his popular broadcasts of mainly popular music and peace slogans because of a drastic decline in advertising. Nathan has raised funds and donated millions of dollars for worthy humanitarian causes throughout the world.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES THE YEAR OF THE MACCABIAH GAMES By Haskell Cohen

NEW YORK, July 14 (JTA) -- This is the year of the Maccabiah Games. The 12th quadrennial set of Jewish Olympic contests will begin tomorrow in Israel and conclude on July 25. More than 500 athletes from the United States are expected to participate in the Games, one of the most important offsprings of the Zionist movement.

The Maccabi World Union was formally proclaimed at the World Zionist Congress in 1921 in Basel. There were Jewish athletic clubs and groups even then in most of the European countries, in the Near East and in North Africa. The first branches of Jewish athletic organizations were founded in 1895 in Berlin, Constantinople, Bucharest and St. Petersburg.

At that time, those responsible for the advance of the Maccabiah movement and its objectives believed it was necessary to provide for the many members rallying to the movement a program of activities combining physical training with a Jewish educational background. The accent in recent years has been on the sports side rather than on the educational side.

Sixty-four years ago the program adopted by the WZ Congress was acceptable to the rank and file of the Maccabi members. Its implications raised the hope of every Jew in the diaspora that, someday, the return to Zion would become a reality.

Transmitting Traditions Of Judaism

The organizers of the Maccabiah movement originally felt that they had a duty to uphold and to transmit the traditions of Judaism at a time when the Jewish people were living in a world which was becoming devoid of moral standards and social justice, making them vulnerable to the erosion of their identity. This is still true today.

In the early years of this century, Jewish communities throughout Europe faced discrimination, and in addition in Russia became the targets of massive pogroms organized and abetted by the Czarist regimes. Jews were defenseless; they were not protected by civil rights legislation.

The Jewish people at that time were welded together by common religious links and traditions which had been maintained throughout the ages. Most of the Jews believed strongly that their redemption would come with the ultimate arrival of the Messiah. They were not conditioned to a situation of having to abandon the images of the Chosen People or of the eternal scapegoat.

Time For Self-Defense

But some imaginative secular Jews felt a need to shake the religious leadership out of their inertia and to convince them that the time had come for Jews to train themselves in the art of self-defense, should they be attacked by hostile neighbors.

This was an exciting idea that inspired many public spirited communal leaders to provide physical training to render all able-bodied men physically fit; to spend more hours of leisure out in the fresh air and not to cling forever to the image of the "People of the Book."

The younger generation trained by the Maccabi movement was taught that it was better to fight and, if need be, to die rather than to surrender. This was the lesson inherited from the valiant ancient Maccabi

warriors who were led by Judah the Maccabee in the revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes (167/6 BCE) in which Syrian armies suffered successive defeats.

The remnants of the Warsaw Ghetto were erstwhile members of the Maccabi movement. The ranks of the Haganah were known to have included young people from the ranks of Maccabi. Many of those who were responsible for the defense of Jewish homes in Latin American countries where dictators ruled and fascism was rampant were young men and women trained by Maccabi.

Fascist marches in London's East End during the 1930's were stopped by members of Maccabi. During the Six-Day War in 1967, 15,000 Maccabi members responded to the call for recruits. There are numerous other instances over the decades in which the Maccabi movement played an active and constructive part in Jewish survival. The sporting powers of Maccabi competitors in local, national and international contests have added luster to the image of the Jew.

The approximately 500 athletes representing the United States in the Games now are a far cry from the first contingent of Maccabi performers who participated in the 1932 Games in Palestine. At that time, the U.S. sent a team of 13 athletes. The highlight of their departure was when then Mayor Jimmy Walker of New York blessed the Jewish athletes as they boarded their ship and said "You bring home the bacon and I'll eat it."

ADL CONDEMNS ANTI-SEMITIC CARTOONS IN JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

NEW YORK, July 14 (JTA) -- The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has condemned the publication of a series of "vicious anti-Semitic cartoons" in the Jordanian government newspaper Al Dustur. In a letter to the Jordanian embassy in Washington, Abraham Foxman, the ADL's associate national director, asked the Jordanian Ambassador to communicate to his government the concern of the American Jewish community.

The cartoons, Foxman said, use repugnant caricatures to portray Jews in the same manner as the Nazis once did. "The fact that such poison has appeared and has been tolerated by your government is very distressing," the letter declared.

The reply, Foxman said, was far from satisfactory. Jordanian Ambassador Mohamed Kamal said he agreed that "defamation and abuse should not be condoned or accepted by decent people." The Ambassador, however, denied that the newspaper cartoons were anti-Semitic, claiming that they "were not directed against Jews but against Israel and Zionism." He then charged that a section of the American media is "under direct control and influence of certain groups in the American Jewish community."

Foxman pointed out that "the false stereotype that Jews control the media and the attempt to excuse anti-Semitism by calling it anti-Zionism are both longtime plays of anti-Jewish propagandists."

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- The government is planning to circumscribe the Shekel -- by lopping off zeroes. Government sources indicated unofficially that this will be done at the end of the first three-month phase of the economic emergency program. Presumably, the current 100 or 1,000 Shekel note will then become one new Shekel. The official rate of exchange for the Shekel presently stands at 1,500 to \$1. This is the result of the July 1 devaluation.