The news of Eichmann’s arrest broke in Jerusalem when Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, on the afternoon of May 24, announced in the Knesset:

"I have to inform the Knesset that although the situation is one of the greatest in the Jewish state’s history, Adolf Eichmann, who is responsible together with the rest, to the “final solution of the Jewish question,” that is the extermination of six million of the Jews of Europe, was found by the Israeli Security Services.

"Adolf Eichmann is already under arrest in Israel and will shortly be placed on trial in Israel under terms of the Law for the Punishment of Natzis and Nazi Collaborators, 5710-1950."

This dramatic announcement set the tone for the subsequent handling of the affair by Israeli authorities, and almost immediately, a great publicity surrounding the incident was intense and constant. The arrest of Eichmann had been "found by the Israeli Security Services" leading to explanations and contradictions and started a campaign for the glorification of Israeli Security men. Therefore, there were strict security measures around the case.

Previous to the Ben-Gurion announcement in the Knesset, Eichmann had appeared before the Chief Magistrate in Jaffa, where the following charge was read:

"Adolf Eichmann, you are charged with causing the death of millions of Jews in Germany and the occupied countries in the years 1938 to 1945. Are you the Adolf Eichmann?"
According to the press, the reply was, "Ich bin Adolf Eichmann." He was at first reported as having stated he had nothing further to say except to present himself to be defended. Later, however, he was said to have stated that he was not responsible for the acts attributed to him and that he would protest at the proper time. He was remanded for fourteen days, a procedure which has been renewed periodically since then.

May 21:

The JERUSALEM POST of May 21 carried a brief front-page item to the following effect:

"The EILAI plane that took the Israeli delegation to the Argentine Independence celebrations returned early on Sunday morning from Buenos Aires.

"En route to Argentina, crew members related, the plane made a brief stop at Beck Airport in Brazil. The aircraft was held up for three hours by the airport manager there, who, for reasons that are unclear, tried to prevent the plane from taking off. After the commotion, the action was pointed out, in view of international flight regulations, the manager allowed the plane to proceed on its way.

"The Foreign Ministry announced on the following day that the delay in the flight of the EILAI plane was due purely to technical reasons and to a lack of experience in flying to South America, which led to a misunderstanding. The flights are regular flights. The statement added there was no delay in the plane's return flight from Argentina.

"Irrefuted reports have not admitted that Eichmann was taken from Argentina by the above-mentioned EILAI plane on which Abba Eban, Minister without Portfolio, was the highest-ranking passenger, but the incident brought him to Argentina early in the air line of the Argentine-Israeli. After it had been established that Eichmann had been caught by the Argentine Government, a Foreign Ministry source in response to a query as to how Eichmann was transported to Israel, referred to the above fact and said: "Draw your own conclusions." He also stated that the plane had flown non-stop to Dakar from Buenos Aires and from Dakar to Byblos' airport.

"The Israeli press and officials began to manifest keen interest in the foreign reaction to the capture. An apparent apprehension over international complications spread in the independent newspapers reported that the Foreign Ministry has instructed Israeli missions abroad, particularly those in countries where Eichmann had reported on public and press reaction to Eichmann's arrest."
At a press conference on May 24, the Chief of Security Services stated that the final operation leading to Eichmann's arrest had begun six months earlier and that the entire operation had been carried out by Israelis unassisted at any time by foreign agents.

May 26-31

On May 27, DAVAR, the Mapai-dominated organ, published a letter from Ben-Gurion to Israel Galili, Ahдут Avoda leader, containing a summary of how he conceived the importance and implications of the Eichmann capture. He wrote, "I regard the importance of Eichmann's capture and the trial in Israel as lying not only in the daring operations and the remarkable abilities of the Security Services, although it is difficult to praise their members too much, but also in the fact that because of their actions an international court will reveal the entire episode of the Nazi Holocaust." He went on to state that the trial would have an important educational effect on Israeli youth, who had no first-hand experience with the Nazi persecutions and could public opinion throughout the world, which would be reminded of the horrors of anti-Semitism. Ben-Gurion continued, "No doubt exists that there again the service of dictatorial neighboring countries dozens and hundreds of Nazis, German and Arab, who took part in the murder of Jews in that period and are now plotting against the people of Israel in their own land. We must remind public opinion in the world that these people are plotting the destruction of Israel and who is helping them intentionally and unintentionally.

Besides rumors that Eichmann had been captured in South America, it was frequently rumored he had been found in an Arab country. These latter rumors may have been planted to divert attention but from Ben-Gurion's letter, it would appear that Israel hoped to establish a 'spiritual' if not a physical link between Eichmann and the Arab States.

The press reported that at a regular Sunday meeting of the Cabinet, the Minister of Justice, Ben-Gurion had stressed the national and historical significance of Eichmann's capture. Officially, Minister of Justice Agranat had warned the press against publishing material likely to be brought to evidence and liable to prejudice the court as to Eichmann's guilt. Agranat pointed out that such reporting amounts to contempt of court, as the matter was still sub judice. This represented the first indication of official concern over at least the domestic legal aspects of the case. Agranat's statement drew sharp fire from many quarters. The Government Press Office released two communications on the Eichmann case. In reference to a NEW YORK TIMES story concerning the fate of the Eichmann family, it said, "The shocking suggestion hinted at in the report is one of the many baseless inventions that have recently appeared in the foreign and local press in connection with the Eichmann case."
the other communique, presenting general background information on Richmann, the prisoner, quoted as being prepared to cooperate fully with Israel in clarifying the history of that part of World War II in which he played a part, and also having stated he was embarrassed by the disproportionately unfair treatment he was receiving at Israeli hands.

Two international voices spoke for an international trial for Richmann and met with favorable reactions in Israel. First, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, United States former Chief of Staff, suggested reviving the Nuremberg trials. In a speech which tried to be fair, he said, "This was an International Court which tried Nazi leaders, and it was a fair and just process."

Second, United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution of 1948, recommended that the International Court be reactivated. In a sense, the United Nations was trying to make sure that no one from any country would be able to escape justice.

The Israeli Government's reaction came in a letter from the Prime Minister to the United Nations, stating that Richmann should be brought to Israel and stand trial there. This conclusion was based on the fact that Richmann had been captured in Argentina, and the Israeli Government believed that the trial should be held in Israel.

On June 15, 1962, the Israeli Government formally requested the extradition of Richmann to Israel. The United States, in its response, stated that it would not oppose extradition, provided that the trial was held in Israel and that Richmann was given a fair trial.

In a letter dated June 16, 1962, the Israeli Government formally requested the extradition of Richmann to Israel. The United States, in its response, stated that it would not oppose extradition, provided that the trial was held in Israel and that Richmann was given a fair trial.

The note, it is widely assumed, was prepared in the Prime Minister's Office. For reasons given in Embassy Despatch 799, it appears likely that this was the case. The question of authorship is of some importance, because of a widespread feeling in Israel that the note was in many respects a turning point for the worse from the Israeli point of view. Commonly regarded as blunders...
are the reference to Argentina's harboring of "many Nazis", the exclusion of a letter ostensibly written voluntarily by Eichmann in Buenos Aires and handed over to his captors, the reversal of the role of the Security Services in the capture, and the assertion that the Israeli Government had not known where Eichmann had been caught. (For a highly critical Israeli press article on the handling of the affair by the Israeli Government see Enclosure No. 11).

A personal letter from Prime Minister Ben-Gurion to President Frondizi was sent shortly after the despatch of the above-mentioned note. However, the letter was not delivered until after the receipt of the Argentine note (June 8) rejecting Israel's reply and asserting that unless Eichmann was returned before the end of the week Argentina would take the case to the Security Council and demanding the punishment of those responsible for the violation of Argentine sovereignty. The unexpectedly firm Argentine reply obviously caught the Israeli Government and public by surprise because of their intense belief that Israel's moral right to try Eichmann transcended any legal technicalities. It is worthy of note that the full text of the Argentine note has not been published by the Israeli press.

At the Sunday, June 12, meeting of the Cabinet it was decided to delay the Israeli reply to the Argentine note. A reliable Embassy source stated the decision was taken because of indications that the heated reaction of the Argentine Government to the capture had shown signs of abating, thus increasing chances of an amicable settlement. He added that a Ben-Gurion-Frondizi meeting was possible in Brussels during the coinciding visits of the two statesmen in Europe.

Although Israel delayed sending a note, Ben-Gurion's personal letter to President Frondizi was delivered. The text of the letter, stressing the moral implications of the Eichmann capture, is included as Enclosure No. 2 to this despatch.

On June 12, Rudolfo Garcia Arias, Argentine Ambassador to Israel, left for Buenos Aires via Rome, where he was to meet with President Frondizi. Before his departure he privately took a pessimistic view of the possibility of finding a solution to the case, which he described as "fomented by the devil."

June 13-20

Israeli officials and press expressed the view that an amicable settlement could be found. The Israelis had by this time switched from intense publicity to reliance on quiet and personal diplomacy. However, discussions between Foreign Minister Golda Meir and Argentina's UN representative Mario Amadeo in New York proved unsuccessful, and on June 15 Argentina requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the case. A Council session was set.
scheduled for June 22. Meanwhile, some hope is being pinned on a Ben-Gurion-Frondizi meeting in Europe to effect a compromise and head off a Council session on the case.

**Domestic and International Implications of the Case**

The somewhat intransigent position assumed by Israel in its negotiations with Argentina is conditioned not only by belief in the principle that Israel has a transcendent right to try Eichmann, but also by practical political considerations. Although the Israeli Government appears willing to seek a formula that will save Argentina face, without involving the return of Eichmann, an adherence to the letter of the Argentine request would create uncomfortable reverberations throughout Israel's political life. A decision to return Eichmann to Argentina or perhaps even to a third country would be so vastly unpopular that the continued life of the present Government would certainly be brought into question. In such a framework, there is little likelihood that even under the pressure of a United Nations decision calling for the return of Eichmann to Argentina, the Israeli Government would see fit to comply.

Aside from purely political considerations, the Israeli Government appears to be playing for higher stakes. In the event that Israel can keep the body of Eichmann in Argentina under the provisions of an international agreement, it may result in a significant advance in the apparent policy of assuming responsibility for the crimes of the Third Reich throughout the world. Such a policy was also evident earlier this year when the Argentine diplomatic notes to a number of governments in whose jurisdiction various anti-Semitic acts had been perpetuated expressing the profound shock inflicted on Israeli public opinion by the appearance of such activities involved in that policy, whether directly or indirectly, is the extension of psychological power, by Jews who have invested their spiritual and physical all in the State of Israel over Jews who have not made this definitive investment.

Although the domestic penalties for surrendering Eichmann are probably high, the potential gain from holding a trial in Israel may be great. Israel is already in a serious international complication, particularly with Latin American countries. In Africa and Asia, it has in recent years been forced to divert considerable energies in an effort to break out of the Arab ring and assure the possibilities for a peaceful and creative cultural influence. Should Israel feel itself committed to a public debate before a world body because it has made a practice of harboring Nazi criminals and similar personalities, it may result in a setback for Israel's relations with Argentina and very possibly with other Latin American countries.
For the major Western powers, the principal importance of the Eichmann affair appears to lie in avoiding a showdown for a one-sided decision as a result of which the Soviet Union may feel itself in a position to gain a cheap or easy good will among the Israelis, or, as the case may be, among Argentinians. The Soviet Union thus far, at least, as reflected in the Israeli press, has shown a tendency to approve the Eichmann capture, although expression of such approval appears to have been more outspoken in the case of the satellites than of the Soviet Union itself. The Soviet Union is probably not so committed to the Eichmann trial in Israel that it could not shift ground if it thought this were to its advantage.

Another concern of the Western powers is the impact of the Security Council resolution highly adverse to Israel. Could Western Powers induce the Israeli Government to cooperate with the Palestine Conciliation Commission in an effort to solve the problem of the Arab refugees?

For the Ambassador:

[Signature]
William Bruce Lockhart
First Secretary of Embassy

Enclosures:

1. "Israel's Mistakes in the Handling of the Eichmann Affair. Translation of an Article from Haaretz, June 12, 1960"

2. Text of Ben-Gurion's Letter to President Frondizi, June 12, 1960, Jerusalem Post.

Department please pass to Buenos Aires, London, Bonn, Moscow, USUN.
Israel's Mistakes in the Handling of the Eichmann Affair

Translation of Article from HAARETZ, June 12, 1960

by Elihu Salpeter

The fact that the Argentine Government, by its unreasonable demand for Eichmann's immediate return, has placed itself in a position from which it will be difficult to retreat, does not absolve Israel from examining—and perhaps learning—from its own mistakes in handling the Eichmann affair.

The impression that Argentina would have refused an Israeli request for Eichmann's extradition or arrest has been strengthened by the reasons for this. Among these are: the reasons why there was such a violent reaction in Buenos Aires to the news of Eichmann's arrest; the fact that in the political climate of South America, political asylum is one of the most sacred concepts; the frequent upheavals in these countries; the violent attached to this concept; the example set by the fact that the Peron regime allowed refugees from France and Spain to settle in Argentina; (one of these was the last foreign minister of the loyalist regime, now a professor in one of Argentina's universities.)

The Argentine authorities have refused to extradite several notorious Nazi war criminals to various European countries despite the persistent demands by Yugoslavia and Austria. Dr. X., the Croatian Fascist leader, was not sent back for trial. (Incidentally, Israel, through its ambassador at that time, Dr. Abony, approached Argentina and expressed the wholehearted support of the Yugoslavian demand.) Dr. M., the German doctor who performed experiments on humans at Auschwitz, has also not been extradited and is still living in Argentina.

Everything points to the fact that Israel's official circles did not know about or did not understand this phenomenon and thus were surprised by the vehemence of the Argentine reaction.

The South American countries are also extremely sensitive to violations of their sovereignty, which are considered to be insults of the first order. This was also an important reason in Israel.

Thus, assuming that Israel could not have obtained Eichmann's extradition through a formal request to the Argentine, the real question is: could Israel have acted differently after his capture, and whether this difference in attitude would have changed the Argentine Government's reaction.

UNCLASSIFIED
Today, it is only too clear that the first great mistake was the Prime Minister's statement in the Knesset, which announced Eichmann's arrest for the first time. The mistake was three-fold: the dramatic way in which the announcement was made, which ensured maximum publicity all over the world; the fact that Ben-Gurion stated quite emphatically that Eichmann was caught by the Israeli Security Services; and the fact that Ben-Gurion announced Eichmann's capture almost immediately, instead of keeping the matter secret for a few weeks in the hope of arriving at a quiet diplomatic arrangement with the Buenos Aires Government in the interim.

The fact that Eichmann was captured by Israelis was also emphasized in the first official Government press release published on May 26. And when reports stated that Jews and non-Jewish aliens abroad had helped in Eichmann's arrest, the head of the Israeli Security Services hastened to state (at a press conference on May 29) that the operation was an Israeli one from start to finish.

This attitude of boasting publicly about the achievement -- justified in itself, but completely irresponsible in view of the complications with the Argentine Government, which could have been foreseen -- continued. Ben-Gurion's letter to Israel Cattan (published in DAYAR May 27) contained extravagant praise for the Israeli Security Services. On May 29, authorized sources reiterated that these services had been responsible for Eichmann's arrest, and the Government Press Office published a detailed account of the structure of the Services, which until then had been considered one of the country's best-kept secrets.

It is difficult to avoid the impression that certain elements connected with the Security Services, which the world now operate on the principle that silence is the best policy, suddenly decided to use the Eichmann affair in order to win the hearts of the public.

Although the Argentine Government was forced, after the release, to release Eichmann, in the Argentine to ask Israel for an explanation. This explanation was couched in moderate language and this confirmed the impression that Argentina wished to receive an Israeli explanation of the whole affair, which would free it of the need to take additional measures.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry had adopted a policy of complete silence all this time. This policy was admirable, as long as it served its purpose. But the time came when silence and obscurity, from comment was no longer enough, and when effective information policy was required. However, it should be noted that the Foreign Ministry actually constitutes only a sort of postal address, which handles the various contacts: the Prime Minister himself is acting
Foreign Minister, in Golda Meir's absence. While he had ordered the Foreign Ministry to maintain complete silence, and this prevented its launching an information drive, particularly towards foreign journalists, he did not order the Security Services to maintain silence — nor did he maintain silence himself.

On June 2, Argentina announced officially that it thought Richmann had been captured in its territory, but added: "there is no proof for this." These circles added that the Israeli government would deny knowing where Richmann was caught by its agents, nothing very much could be done.

Apparently the Prime Minister did not read or did not understand this statement before drafting the reply to the Argentine. He drafted a reply which in Argentina's opinion, aggravated matters, because it stated that Richmann was caught by Jewish volunteers, and that the Israeli government had not been previously aware he was caught. In Ben-Gurion, it is not known if Richmann was caught, why did he have to state this in reply to a letter from Buenos Aires, especially in view of the above-mentioned Argentine statement?

But Ben-Gurion went further. He stated that Richmann had been given 24 hours to decide what he wished to state, and Richmann, in his letter, had asked to present his statement, but Ben-Gurion added that Richmann, in the statement, which was written by a prisoner in Moscow, for example, and in order to annoy the Argentine, Ben-Gurion added that Richmann had stated that many Nazi were hiding in that country, and if it were dangerous for these Nazis to return home, the government of the country of origin.

After great pressure, Ben-Gurion agreed to include an apology on the violation of Argentine sovereignty. But if Richmann was caught by Jewish volunteers acting without the prior knowledge of the government, why did the government have to apologize?

These internal contradictions in the Israeli reply reveal the fact that it was composed by someone who is not an expert in drafting a diplomatic document. The Prime Minister is not used to formulating diplomatic documents in preparing diplomatic notes. If something goes wrong on the telephone, one doesn't have to call Kishelov to fix it. Were Ben-Gurion able to be the leading spirit of the letter, he could be able to know how to draft diplomatic documents. This is much as professional and technical tasks, such as repairing a telephone, repairing shoes, or drafting a diplomatic document, are repeated in this field. Whose job is to know how to do it, if they are allowed to do their job.

The Argentine reply followed very soon, and its firm tone.
surprised Israeli circles. An interesting passage referred to the nature of the trial. "The Israeli Government has publicly announced its decision to try, Richmann, itself, and has publicly rejected all other suggestions. Is this not intended, as a hint, that Israel would be wise not to reject Dr. Goldmann's suggestion about an international court meeting in Israel with quite so much fervor, at least in public?"

Even before the Argentine reply was received, Ben Gurion sent a personal letter to President Frondizi. However, this letter did not reach Frondizi immediately. "The reasons for the delay should be investigated." Ben Gurion's letter reiterates the version about the Jewish volunteers.

Frondizi, most of his Cabinet, and many of the members of the opposition are known to be trusted friends of Israel, and they are certainly not anxious to harm this country. But they cannot pass over in silence what appears to South American eyes to be a double violation of sacred principles: sovereignty and the right to political asylum on the one hand, and the impression created is that the Argentine went too far by demanding Richmann's return and by threatening to approach the United Nations.

It can safely be assumed that both the Argentine and the Israeli Governments are anxious to find a way out of the deadlock. The search for a solution will require much diplomatic skill and thought. In any event, it is obvious that a solution will require time. A solution will not be made any easier if Israel simply will be uncompromising and couched in an emotional style — even if the sense of historic justice being done would justify such a reply.
Text of Ben-Gurion's Letter to President Frondizi

June 12, JERUSALEM POST

Dear Mr. President:

At this time, as a result of the capture of the Nazi war criminal, Adolf Eichmann, and his transfer to Israel, misunderstandings may arise in the relations between the Republic of Argentina and the State of Israel, and I therefore regard it as my duty to send you this direct message. I take the liberty of doing so precisely because the relations between our two Governments and our two peoples are dear to our hearts and because we should regard it as a matter for profound sorrow and regret if they were to be in any way impaired as a result of recent happenings in connection with Adolf Eichmann.

I understand that you personally are at the present time giving due consideration to the Diplomatic Note which our Ambassador at Buenos Aires delivered to your Minister for Foreign Affairs on Friday, June 3. In that Note you will find all the elements of our case in this matter. There are, however, certain points touching the very core of the issue which transcend the confines of a Diplomatic Note. It is on these points that I wish briefly to enlarge and I do so in the conviction that only by fully appreciating them is it possible to pass judgment on the issue involved.

During the Second World War, this man Eichmann was the person directly responsible for the execution of Hitler's orders for the "final solution" of the Jewish problem in Europe, for the murder of every single Jew on whom the Nazis could lay their hands throughout the satellite lands of Europe which they had occupied at that time. Six million of our people were murdered in Europe, and it was Eichmann who organized this mass murder, on a gigantic and unprecedented scale, throughout Europe.

I need not explain to you, Mr. President, what it means for any people on earth to be the victims of such a satanic murder campaign, and what profound scars such an experience must leave in a people's soul.

Never, even in the age-old annals of our martyrdom, has there been such a fiendish atrocity. Not only were millions murdered—including millions of infants—but the cultural and spiritual centre of our people, which until World War II had its seat in Europe, was devastated. Here is hardly a Jew in the world who does not have a member of his family among the victims of the Nazis. Hundreds of thousands of peoples are living in our midst, and hundreds of people in Israel and abroad would not rest since the end of the war until they had found the man who had been in charge of this appalling campaign of extermination. They regarded it as their mission in life to bring the man responsible for this crime, without precedent in
history, to stand trial before the Jewish people. Such a trial can take place only in Israel.

I do not underestimate the seriousness of the formal violation of Argentine law committed by those who found Eichmann, but I am convinced that very few people anywhere can fail to understand their feelings and appreciate the supreme moral validity of their act. These events cannot be approached, Mr. President, from an exclusively formal point of view. Though I do not question for a moment the duty of every state to respect its neighbour's laws, and we regard the Argentine Republic, of which you are the head, as an outstanding example of a state founded on respect for law, yet we can appreciate the over-riding motives whose tremendous moral and emotional force underlay the determination to find the chief murderer and to bring him, with his consent, to Israel.

I am convinced that Your Excellency will give full weight to the transcendent moral force of these motivations, for you yourself have fought against tyranny and shown your deep regard for human values. I hope you will understand our feelings, accept the expression of our sincere regret for the violation of your country's laws which was the result of an inner moral imperative, and associate yourself with all the friends of justice in the world who see in the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Israel an act of xúc numbe rhistoric justice, and that the friendly relations between Israel and your country will not be impaired.