

AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS OPENS SESSION IN WASHINGTON

"Thou Dost Evil," American Jews Tell Roumania, Dr Wise Declares in Biennial Message; President of Congress Deals With Jewish Agency Agreement and Proposed National Community Chest; Outlines Plan for European Conference on Jewish Rights

(Jewish Daily Bulletin)

Washington, D. C., Feb. 20.—"Let Roumania bethink herself lest she seal her moral doom by achieving the succession of Czarist Russia in the matter of wrong and injustice to the Jew. We are not and we will not be satisfied to have an avoidance of pogroms in Roumania. We demand an end to that attitude of the ruling groups and classes, which makes possible and even inevitable the student movement against the Jew. This movement will be quelled in an hour when Roumania learns, as learn Roumania will, that there is such a thing as decent respect for the opinion of mankind, and that such opinion cannot be wantonly and persistently affronted save at a terrible cost from every point of view."

These words were directed to the Roumanian Government and people by Dr. Stephen S. Wise, president of the American Jewish Congress, in his address opening the biennial session of the Congress at the New Willard Hotel today.

Several hundred delegates from many parts of the country are attending the sessions.

Problems to Be Considered

The situation of the Jews in Roumania, the Weizmann-Marshall accord on the formation of the Jewish Agency, democracy in the affairs of American Jewry, the proposed creation of a Jewish national community chest in the

United States and a proposal to call a European conference on Jewish rights were the subjects dealt with by Dr. Wise in his opening message.

Dr. Wise paid tribute to the memory of Israel Zangwill and Achad Ha'am.

After the delivery of the President's address, the report of the Executive Committee was presented by Bernard G. Richards, executive secretary of the Congress.

A banquet will be tendered the delegates by the Washington Committee of the Congress tonight. Senator William E. Borah, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, will be the principal speaker.

ICA, HIAS AND EMIGDIREKT SIGN AGREEMENT FOR IMMIGRANT AID COOPERATION

Joint Budget Calls for \$166,000

(Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

Berlin, Feb. 19.—A provisional agreement calling for the cooperation of the Jewish Colonization Association (Ica), the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society of America (Hias) and the United Jewish Emigration Committee (Emigdirekt) concerning the work of aiding Jewish emigrants was signed here yesterday.

The agreement, which will be in operation for three years, was signed by Dr. Louis Ungre, James Simon, Dr. M. Krainin and Dr. James Bernstein.

The annual budget will amount to \$166,000, of which the Hias has pledged itself to furnish \$100,000 and the Ica \$66,000.

FIRST HEBREW BOOK IN LATIN CHARACTERS APPEARS

(Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

Jerusalem, Feb. 19.—The first Hebrew book to be printed in Latin characters was published here. The book was issued by Ben Avi, editor of the Hebrew daily, "Doar Ha'yom" and is a biography of his father, Eliezer Ben Yehuda, the author of the Hebrew dictionary. Ben Yehuda gave impetus to the renaissance of the Hebrew language in Palestine by his initiation of Hebrew as a spoken tongue in daily intercourse.

PALESTINE SNOWSTORM SWEEPS HEBRON AREA

(Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

Jerusalem, Feb. 19.—The area of Hebron, the ancient Biblical city, suffered in the snowstorm which is sweeping Palestine. The drifts in places were two metres deep.

An Arab was killed in the storm.

Among other speakers at the banquet will be Dr. Chaim Weizmann, Dr. Wise, and Carl Sherman, Vice President of the Congress.

The business sessions will begin on Monday, when three sessions will be held. The concluding meeting will be held on Tuesday.

Dr. Wise's Address

In his address Dr. Wise stated:

"Roumania is writ large on the pages of contemporaneous Jewish history. A tragic frustration of hope has for the second time become the portion of Roumanian Jewry. Roumania after 1878 merely violated her pledged word to her cosignatories and defeated the express purpose of the statesman, Disraeli, who had sought, with the help of the Powers, to constrain Roumania to deal lawfully, that is, humanely by its Jewish subjects. That promise, solemnly made to the Powers of Europe was broken to the hope of the Jew. In 1919, a new treaty was framed, paralleling the earlier as far as largesse to Roumania was concerned. But this differed in so far as just and even-handed treatment of the Jew became not an article of treaty stipulation, but a part of that organic instrument under which more than half a million Jews in Russian Bessarabia and Austro-Hungarian Transylvania, and Bukovina came under Roumanian sovereignty.

"All minorities, whose rights were scrupulously safeguarded under the Versailles Treaty, have fared ill at the hands of Roumania and the Jewish minority has fared worst of all. The normal method of approaching Roumania touching these violations is

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NEW ANTI-JEWISH EXCESSES OCCUR IN KISHINEFF; MANY INJURED, REPORT STATES

(Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

Vienna, Feb. 19.—New anti-Jewish excesses occurred in Kishineff, according to a report of the Ost Korrespondenz, a Balkan news agency.

Roumanian students invaded the Hotel Commercial and the Restaurant Suzanni, mistreating the Jewish patrons and wrecking the furniture. The students also attacked the neighboring Jewish houses where they smashed the windows and did much damage. Jewish passersby were cruelly beaten. Many were injured, including non-Jews who were mistaken for Jews. One of the injured, Werman, a cattle dealer, is dying. The police restored order.

BLACK HAND ORGANIZATION TERRORIZES OFFICIALS IN TRANSJORDANIA DISTRICT

(Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

Jerusalem, Feb. 19.—A terrorist organization, the Black Hand, has started operations in Transjordan. The organization directed anonymous, threatening letters to British officials and to a number of Arabs who are known sympathizers of the British.

The Syrian press claims that the Black Hand organization is supported by Bolsheviks.

NATHAN STRAUS ARRIVES IN PALESTINE; MET BY LEADERS

(Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

Haifa, Feb. 19.—Nathan Straus, American Jewish philanthropist, arrived here yesterday. He was met by representatives of the Zionist Executive and of the Jewish community.

The purpose of Mr. Straus's journey to Palestine, notwithstanding his recent seventy-ninth birthday, is the establishment of a health center in Jerusalem for all races and creeds.

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through the machinery of the League of Nations set up the part to maintain inviolate these hard-won minority rights. While the Jewries of the allied lands, England, France, Italy, Poland, and Germany, may be trusted to make their voices heard at Geneva, we are reminded that our own country is impotent to voice a protest against the gravest violations of minority rights by Roumania, seeing that we failed to become a signatory to the Treaty which reconstituted larger Roumania.

This is technically true and valid. But it is at least as valid to point out that Roumania is the only one of the allied nations with which our country and its arms were associated, wherein the status of the Jews has become worse rather than better since the war. In that war, the American people fought by the side of Roumania, giving of life and treasure to the end that Roumania be not strangled by the Central Powers. Whether or not our government attached its signature to the Versailles Treaty, we helped to make possible the triumph from which it derived and had a large and decisive part in shaping the negotiations out of which the new and enlarged Roumania emerged.

Roumania Betrayed by Civilization

"But we rest our case not on the ground of the unqualified moral and material indebtedness of Roumania to these United States, but on higher, yet no higher, ground. We remind Roumania that the civilized countries among the Allies, such as England, France and Italy, treat their Jewish citizens exactly as they treat every other element of the population and that to country is or deserves to be considered civilized, whatever its pretenses to civilization, which through every form of repression and discrimination metes out injustice to the Jew. Within the circle of the truly civilized and enlightened lands, there is a tattered aulus, fixed and operative against the admission of a country to modern civilization which stoops to the

medievalism of Jew-baiting and Jew-baiting.

"To urge that there have been no organized pogroms instigated and sanctioned by the Roumanian state is damning rather than exonerating. For it admits that the violation of rights and the infliction of wrongs have probably been stopped this side of pogroms. Alas for Roumania that it offered no defense against the charge that it permitted and has by its unending suffering made possible for a system of harassing and humiliating discriminations against the Jew—the inevitable result of which was the as yet unpunished assassination of a young Jew in court, David Falk, by a bloodthirsty disciple of the Cusa school. This act is deeply significant of the perversity of Roumanian law, of the unconscionableness of Roumanian justice. A young Jewish student against the wrong of academic discrimination against the Jew is brought into court as if he were a criminal. In court, within what ought to be the inviolable sanctuary of the law, he is foully slain. His assassin does not only go unpunished in all justice, but is emerging as a national hero, admired and lauded. The life of the Jew in Roumania is becoming unbearable. It is a life of misery and calamity, of oppression and proscription, of humiliation and shame.

Roumania Urged To Remove Stigma

"Let Roumania favor the stamping out of the spirit of anti-Jewish excesses one-half of the and which she now expends upon the suppression of protest and complaint against injustice to the Jew. It is not too late for Roumania to remove from within her boundaries the stigma of crude medievalism which is interchangeable with organized and sanctioned antisemitism.

"To make her Jewish subjects the victims of a system which casts on the faith that the Jew must forever be bait with as of inferior status is not only violative of the very condition of Roumania's political being but a challenge to enlightened public opinion and a menace to public comity incompatible with the better and nobler purposes of the Roumanian state. For our part, we shall cease to protest when the last ground for protest shall have ended, then and not before."

Speaking on the Weismann-Marshall agreement on the Jewish Agency, Dr. Wisniedel declared:

Lands Jewish Agency Agreement

"In one sense we are more happily situated than we were when last we met in Philadelphia, October, 1925. At that time confusion marred the counsels of American Israel. Firmly and uncompromisingly the American Jewish Congress stated its position with respect to the problem that threatened to divide the Jewish household into two warring camps. It may well be that the firmness of our own insistence upon the primacy of Palestine in any and every

encompassment of Jewish plans did much to make possible the honorable peace that was recently concluded instead of the disintegrating armistice which was then and since target soon as. In any event, the peace compact that has been made by Weismann and Marshall means that the Jewish Agency which was not "washed upon" in velleity by the Zionist leadership during and since the Paris Peace Conference, is somewhat nearer realization. The Jewish Agency is not a same for the Zionist organization since the days of Bialik that the burden of the righting of the wrongs of the Jewish Homeland was too heavy to rest upon any group, however zealous and meritorious, but it must be borne by an organized Jewish Jew save for the apostate and the unreasonable to be in active force in the great adventure of the Jewish spirit.

The Jewish Agency has not yet taken final and authentic form. It has been merely sketched in the conference and indeed various outlines of the Agency as conceived is at this time. We may safely assume that the Zionist Organization, in part because it has been magnanimous in its attitude in all the delicate and preliminary negotiations, will urge as a shield a misunderstanding of the basis of the Jewish Agency. No Jewish Agency could truly represent or fully function on behalf of American and World Israel which was not broad-based, which did not grow out of the collective judgment and assent of the Jewish people, all the Jewish people except for them who asphixiate themselves within the walls of their baseness.

"Welcome as is the Jewish Agency, thrice welcome as the Jewish Agency will be when it has been fully thought through, it must not be imagined that the Agency is the consummate proof of the need of uniform thinking in Jewish life. The Jewish Agency embodies what Jewish life ought to be—unity in action among them that think apart. The Agency not to become another step on the way to uniform Jewish thinking, which means no thinking at all. Collective action is a cherished thing, but individual thinking is a no less precious means. The concert of action which is had at the cost of surrender of personal reaction to Jewish problems is baneful indeed."

Urges Democracy in Proposed National Community Chest

Urging the principle of democracy in the proposed national community chest, the president of the American Jewish Congress said:

"This consideration will, we must be borne steadily in mind when the proposed National Jewish Community Chest is considered by us. That overlapping and duplication are abhorrently wasteful, that economy in fund-raising is a duty to every cause, hardly requires to be stressed by the democratic forces in Jewish life. For these have vainly protested in the past against the worst of extravagances, the extravagance of unconsidered effort for the sake of organization, and yet in earnest word with respect to the Jewish National Chest

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per cent of all its decisions have been accepted without appeal for reversal. This is a reminder of the days when the rabbi was the judge and arbiter in civil as well as religious law. Many were the instances when Gentiles came to Jewish rabbis to arbitrate their disputes because the red tape and injustice of the local courts were notorious, and the judgments of the rabbi were invariably honest and fair.

The Jews of New York have become a byword in the mouths of lawyers and judges, because it is a well known fact that they dog the courts with their economic disputes in greater numbers than any other element of the population. The only way in which this deplorable situation can be remedied is by restoring the ancient practice of arbitrating disputes between Jews outside of court.

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requires to be uttered at this early stage.

"The power of the purse is an awful power. It may be used fairly, it cannot be used greatly, it dare not be used unjustly and malignly. A Chest may be a coffer into which treasure is gathered for high purposes; a Chest may also be used to smother and suffocate the undesired and the uncherished. If the force majeure of the purse of American Israel is to be trusted to a few hands, they must not be the hands of partisanship and favoritism. The power of the purse is too terrible a power to vest in any man or group of men save under the most stringent of safeguards, those safeguards through which democracy alone can guarantee the perpetuity of its spirit through these instrumentalities which it zealously uses and controls."

Dr. Wise reviewed conditions in America during the last two years.

Reviews Conditions in America

"In our own land," he said, "there is little to record save the subsidence of the floods of racial and religious passion, which some years ago threatened to engulf America. One last stigma of the evil survives in the form of an unlesioned antagonism to the incoming of the foreigner and especially the immigrant from the despised because inferior Mediterranean lands, which have contributed little of moment to a civilization that lives by cotton, steel, and corn. Time and again we have called the attention of the Committees of the Congress to the cruellest of the hardships which the quota regime inflicts—the ruthless separation of family members—but thus far to little avail. The rigors are maximal, the mitigations are minimal."

"It almost seems as if the American Boxers or anti-foreigners were resolved to pursue their purposes until the torch upheld by the hand of the Statue of Liberty were extinguished. Lately it has been suggested that there be formulated a code of laws for the alien, or a 'foreign code.' Against this proposal to govern the foreign-born children of our country, even though they be 'naturalized,' we pit a law which goes back nearly 3,000 years 'and there shall be among you one law for the stranger and the homeborn.' Very different this from the proposal to enact and formulate a special code for the foreigners to make and keep inviolate the doctrine and practice of ill-will to the stranger. And, yet, it is unbelievable that America will forever forswear the tradition of asylum or sanctuary, wrought out of and in turn fortifying to one of the noblest moths of America."

Points to Changes

"In a sense, this session of the American Jewish Congress is preliminary to the European Conference on Jewish rights which an earlier Congress Session resolved to summon. It was the American Jewish Congress of 1918, which gave content and the largest measure of effectiveness to the Com-

mittee of Jewish Delegations in Paris, 1919. The latter, minus the representatives of the American Jewish Congress, had been incomplete and impotent as is the League of Nations minus the United States of America. The inclusion of the representatives of the American Jewish Congress within the Committee of Jewish Delegations did most to insure the safeguarding of minority rights by the terms of the Treaty.

"Nearly ten years have passed and the most decisive changes have come over the fortunes of Jews in so-called minority lands. We have learned afresh the axiom of historic experience that whereas wrong-doing may be automatic, the preservation of right, even of constitutional guaranteed rights, is never automatic. Wrong may be self-perpetuating, the right must be vigilantly cherished if it is to prevail and abide."

Much Expected of European Conference on Jewish Rights

"In 1918, in the midst of war's confusion, it was not possible to effect a completely democratic organization of the Jewries to be represented in the composition of the Committee of Jewish Delegations. Today it is more nearly, if not completely, possible. Moreover, we have had nearly ten years of life in the reconstituted lands of Europe, nearly a decade in which to learn the surest methods of enforcing rights and of averting infractions thereof. In these circumstances and with the fullest approval and support of these Jewish representatives from European lands, included within the Committee of Jewish Delegations, we have taken steps to call a Conference to be held in some European city in the month of August, which conference is to limit itself to the consideration of Jewish rights. The composition of the conference has not yet been fully determined, but it is certain that several groups will be included, the representatives of the lands in which Jews dwell under the regime of minority rights of the West European zone and farther still from the spirit of governmental inequity and legal inequality. That Conference will, it is hoped, be inclusive of the finest spirits in European Jewry. To it we must delegate our strongest and our wisest to the end that American Israel be fitly represented at a Conference, the purpose of which is to take counsel in order to end speedily every invasion and curtailment of Jewish rights," Dr. Wise declared.

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JEWISH COMMUNAL ACTIVITIES

A drive for \$100,000 to erect a new building for the Jewish Home for the Aged in Providence, R. I., will be launched by Mrs. Jacob A. Shein, President of the home.

Nearly one-half of the quota of \$2,500 for the United Palestine Appeal was subscribed by Linden and Rosell, N. J., Jews when their drive opened with a banquet in Scrary Manor, Newark, N. J.

Founders Day at the Dropsie College will be celebrated this year on Sunday, March 11. Addresses will be delivered by Professor Israel Davidson, of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, who has just returned from a year's travel in Palestine, Egypt and Europe, and by Doctor Cyrus Adler, the President of the College. Degrees will be awarded.

At the last meeting of the Board of Governors, it was reported that at the close of the first term of the year, January 30, sixty students received credit for attendance. Besides the courses that had been announced, additional courses in Egyptology and Mishna were conducted by Fellows of the College.

Through the cooperation of a number of men, under the leadership of Harry G. Sundheim, a fund was raised for the College to enable Doctor Ephraim A. Speiser, now the Annual Professor at the American School of Oriental Research in Bagdad, to carry on archaeological work in the neighborhood of that ancient city.

The Librarian reported the total count of the Library to be 32,049. Among the more recent acquisitions were mentioned a copy of Moses ben Maimon's Mishna Torah published by Soncino in 1490, and a copy of the second edition of the Mechilta, Venice 1845.

BREVITIES

Mrs. Sarah Zerersky, 111 years old, said to have been the oldest Jewish woman in Baltimore, died last Thursday at the Hebrew Home for Incurables, where she had lived for many years.

Mrs. Zerersky's husband, Bessah Zerersky, died two years ago, at the age of 111.

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