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NO SPECIFIC JEWISH PROBLEM IN LATVIA PRIME MINISTER TELLS J.T.A.
MANAGING DIRECTOR: NATIONAL MINORITIES INCLUDING JEWS ENJOY
EQUALITY: SPECIAL JEWISH DEPARTMENT EXISTS FOR ATTENDING TO
JEWISH CULTURAL INTERESTS: LATVIA "WILL NEVER FORGET HELP
SHE WAS GIVEN DURING WAR BY AMERICAN JEWRY THROUGH JOINT
DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE PREMIER DECLARES.

Riga, Mar. 11th. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

There is no specific Jewish problem in Latvia, the Prime Minister, Mr. Fugo Celmins, whose coalition Government formed in 1928 has just been reconstituted under his Premiership, said to-day when he received Mr. Jacob Landau, the Managing Director of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, and Mr. B. Smolar, J.T.A. Special Representative, at the Parliament House (Saeima).

The national minorities enjoy equality, the Premier declared. Their schools and theatres, including the Jewish schools and theatres, are subsidised by the Government. There is also a special Jewish Department in existence for the purpose of looking after Jewish cultural interests.

Latvia will never forget the relief which the American Jews, through the Joint Distribution Committee, gave our country during the war, the Prime Minister continued. We appreciate especially the reconstruction work of the Joint Distribution Committee in building a large number of houses in Dwinsk and other cities which were destroyed by the war, the Premier said. Nor shall we forget the relief on behalf of the children and the war orphans. The Jewish Hospital in Riga, which was built by the funds of the Joint Distribution Committee, he added, is one of our best medical institutions, treating all people without distinction of Jew or Christian. It is an institution of which our capital is proud, and it deserves the splendid reputation which it enjoys throughout the country.

Asked why there is no law in Latvia to enable the Jewish Communities to impose a tax of their own on their members, as is done in other countries, for the upkeep of the local Jewish social welfare institutions, the Prime Minister said that such a project is now under consideration by the Government.

J.T.A. MISSION BEEN OF TREMENDOUS VALUE IN OBTAINING MINISTER OF
INTERIOR'S ASSURANCE ON STAATENLOSE EDITOR OF KOVNO JEWISH
DAILY DECLARES.

Kovno, Mar. 11th. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

The signed statement given by the Minister of the Interior, M. Aravichus, to Mr. Jacob Landau and Mr. B. Smolar (reported in the J.T.A. Bulletin of the 10th. inst.) on the position of the Staatenlose in Lithuania will be welcomed by the Jewish population with great satisfaction, Mr. R. Rubinstein, the editor-in-chief of the "Yiddische Stimme" here, one of the leaders of Lithuanian Jewry, writes in an editorial in his paper to-day. The J.T.A. mission to Kovno has been of tremendous value to the Jews of Lithuania, he says, in having obtained such a declaration.

That Jewish reader does not know the initials J.T.A., Mr. Rubinstein writes further. They stand for the name of the valuable, well-tried, and exhaustive news service of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency from all parts of the Jewish world. Until the J.T.A. started it little over ten years ago, the Jewish press could not boast of such a luxury as a world-wide Jewish news service. The success of the now enterprise proved its need. Jewish life in the post-war period was most complex. New Jewish communities grew up, new social and national movements came into being. The struggle for existence waged by the Jews became harder than ever. The Jewish press developed on a large scale and before long hundreds of Jewish newspapers were being published. A regular objective Jewish news-service is to-day a vital necessity to the Jewish press which serves millions of Jewish readers. This is the work done by the J.T.A. It has become the vital nerve of the Jewish newspaper. It joins together the scattered Jewish communities of the world. It links Kovno with Buenos Aires; Warsaw with San Francisco. Without the J.T.A. one could not now conceive of a normal Jewish daily press. In addition, the J.T.A. serves a large part of the non-Jewish press on happenings relating to Jews and Jewry obtained from a reliable source, which helps to improve relations between peoples and to make for an understanding of Jewish ideals, sufferings, hopes.

There is another work in which the J.T.A. is engaged to its great honour, the "Stimme" continues. The J.T.A. service is also read by politicians and diplomats and very often it happens that the Roumanian or Polish Ambassador in the United States or elsewhere learns through the J.T.A. service of persecutions inflicted on the Jews of his own country. Knowing how such news is damaging to the interests of his country, he generally brings it to the notice of his Government. Trying to deny the J.T.A. reports has been shown by experience to be ineffective, because the J.T.A. maintaining its own correspondents all over the world is in a position to substantiate its reports.

We Lithuanian Jews could tell many an interesting story of this direct effect of the J.T.A. service on Governmental policy in Jewish affairs, the "Stimme" writes. Governments and diplomats know that there is an eye that sees, an ear that hears, and that the telegraph and the telephone immediately make what has been seen and heard known throughout the world. Also the interviews which the special representatives of the J.T.A. have obtained with Ministers and leading politicians concerning the political and legal status of their Jewish communities are of inestimable value. As a famous Jewish journalist once put it, the J.T.A. is a Jewish Ambassador without a State.

OUTLOOK FOR POLISH JEWRY: PRIME MINISTER TELLS JEWISH PRO-GOVERNMENT DEPUTIES HE IS GIVING CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO THEIR DEMANDS FOR AMELIORATION OF JEWISH CONDITIONS: DEPUTIES URGED ON HIM FACILITIES FOR JEWIS ENGLING IN AGRICULTURE STATE CREDITS FOR JEWISH CO-OPERATIVES REMOVAL OF BURDEN OF TAXATION AND MODIFICATION OF SUNDAY CLOSING LAW.

Warsaw, Mar. 11th. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

The Prime Minister, Colonel Slawek, after a long conference with the Jewish members of the Pro-Government Parliamentary Club, Deputies Wislicki, Minzberg, and Jeger, and Senator Hendelsohn, who were joined by Deputy Rabbi Levin, the Agudist representative, has given them an assurance that he will give careful and favourable consideration to the various proposals which they urged on him for the amelioration of the position of the Jewish population, the Jewish Deputies of the Pro-Government Club have to-day informed the Jewish Telegraphic Agency here.

The Jewish Deputies inform the J.T.A. that they urged on the Prime Minister the need of giving facilities for Jews to engage in agriculture in Poland, of providing State credit-aids for the Jewish co-operatives, of remitting the burden of old taxation, which leads to actions against many Jews unable to pay the large amounts of back-arrears, of modifying the compulsory Sunday Closing Law, postponing the process of compulsory introduction of machinery into the bakeries which result in large number of Jewish bakeries all over the country being closed down, because they cannot afford the modern machinery required under the new regulations, and the provision of kosher food for Jews while doing their military service.

The Prime Minister, Colonel Slawek, had an interview at the end of January with Deputy Rabbi Dr. Thon, the President of the Club of Jewish Deputies, and Deputy Dr. Rosmarin, the Vice-President of the Club, in which he discussed with them at length the various Jewish demands set out by Rabbi Thon in a detailed expose in which he emphasised the present distress of the Jewish population and their needs in the economic, political and cultural fields. The Prime Minister assured the Jewish Deputies that he was going to enquire into the Jewish postulates in regard to the most urgent points affecting the economic position, the organisation of the Jewish communities and the Jewish school system, with a view to seeing what could be done to satisfy the Jewish demands. The relations between the Poles and Jews have improved so much that it is now possible to give effect to the Jewish postulates step by step, the Prime Minister told Dr. Thon and Dr. Rosmarin in the course of the conversation.

Rabbi Dr. Thon, speaking with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency after the conversations with the Prime Minister, said that the conversation had been most satisfactory and explained that the principal demands which Dr. Rosmarin and he had put to the Premier were: a modification of the Compulsory Sunday Closing Law, to enable the Jews who keep closed on Saturday to pursue their business for a number of hours on Sunday and Christian holidays, facilities for Jews to obtain employment in the State service, which at present is practically closed to Jews, and a reduction of the turnover-tax, which imposes a heavy burden on the commercial and industrial sections of the population, in which the Jews are largely represented, and which is tending to intensify the economic distress among Polish Jewry.

WE APPRECIATE ASSURANCES WHICH HAVE COME THROUGH POLISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND INTENTIONS OF POLISH GOVERNMENT TO GIVE FAIR TREATMENT TO JEWISH POPULATION MR. FELIX M. WARBURG HEAD OF JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE WRITES: WHATEVER GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO DO MUST BE SATISFACTORY TO US AND WE WATCH WITH GREAT DEAL OF INTEREST: WE ASK NO SPECIAL FAVOURS FOR JEWISH POPULATION BUT MERELY EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

New York, Mar. 4th. (J.T.A. Mail Service).

We appreciate the assurances which have come through the Polish Government officials and the intentions of the Polish Government to give fair treatment to the Jewish population, which is naturally intensely interested in the further development of Poland. Whatever the Government decides to do must be satisfactory to us and we are watching with a great deal of interest, Mr. Felix M. Warburg, Chairman of the Joint Distribution Committee of America, has written in a letter to Mr. Sigismund Stoyovsky, Chairman of the Kolo Polskie (Polish Circle) a local Polish cultural group which had invited Mr. Warburg to a gathering held in honour of Dr. Titus Zbyszewski, former Polish Consul-General in Palestine who has now assumed the duties of Polish Consul in Chicago.

It goes without saying, Mr. Warburg's letter continues, that, with the different Government monopolies established in Poland, the world-wide tendency to drive out the middle man has affected the Jewish population unfavourably and, if we may suggest it, some of us hope that in these Government monopolies, the Jews may receive a fair share of the employment, so that they may be enabled to put their good qualities at the disposal of the Government to the advantage of the country which is theirs. They love it as their country and they surely desire to give it every patriotic support. We would not ask any special favours for the Jewish population, but merely equal opportunities. It is naturally our hope that the "special laws", harking back to the Russian Czarist times, may soon be abolished, as advised, as I understand, by the Polish Lower House.

I am writing you these lines, Mr. Warburg goes on, in case you want to communicate them to your colleagues, and I wish once more to express to you my appreciation for giving these matters your valuable consideration. I would have done so in person but, upon my doctor's orders, I must try to be out-of-doors as much as I can and I expect to spend next week-end away from New York.

It goes without saying, Mr. Warburg further writes, that I am very much gratified that your circle finds it worth while to discuss the relationship between the Polish Government and the Jewish people at one of your gatherings. As Chairman of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, it has been my duty to watch over the conditions of living of the Jewish population in Poland ever since the World War, and I am, of course, acquainted with some of the different phases through which that population has been obliged to pass. When the armies swept to and fro, our units went to the refugee districts to help with food and medicine to support the sufferers. When, driven by the armies, some of them fled to Austria, we took care of these refugees in large numbers in Vienna and elsewhere. When hospitals and other buildings had to be reconstructed, we provided sanatoria, clinics and medical aid; thousands of orphan children had to be provided for and later given training for various occupations. During the period from 1914 to 1919, the Joint Distribution Committee expended in Poland and its environs over 11½ million dollars, and since 1920 over 12½ million dollars - an aggregate of approximately 24 million dollars. When railroad and post connections were disorganised, we established a transfer system through which over 8½ million dollars were sent by relatives to their friends in Poland for relief.

At all times, Mr. Warburg says, we have tried in every way to co-operate with the Government which, fortunately, has grown stronger and stronger all the time, and we have taken great satisfaction in seeing the industrial developments and improvements as they have taken place. During the period of reconstruction, we established in Poland 528 loan kassas and co-operatives and 609 free loan societies, which assisted a tremendously large number of people with credits which they might not have received otherwise.

I have the privilege of being one of the not numerous Gentiles who have had the opportunity of knowing intimately the two most important Jewish centres in the Old World - Poland and Palestine, Dr. Zbyszewsky said at the meeting. Now I am in the third, perhaps the most important, certainly the largest and the richest. I shall certainly try to maintain in Chicago my friendship with the Jews. But I realise that the task of a Polish official towards the Jews here is very different and perhaps more difficult than the task of a Polish representative in Palestine. There the Jews are weak. They need protection; they need assistance - you want to assist, to help your brethren in Poland. Instead of a policy of protection, of friendly help, a policy of collaboration, of mutual confidence is needed. I am sure, he concluded, that the day when the aims of the Good-Will Committee will be realised is no longer distant, and that a new era in Polish-Jewish relations must come soon. I mean by that era not only the absence of friction, not only a satisfactory settlement of the Jewish hopes, but a sincere, deep heartfelt friendship and collaboration.

FIFTY YEARS OF JEWISH MASS IMMIGRATION TO AMERICA: FIFTY YEARS SINCE POGROMS IN RUSSIA BEGAN PRESIDENT OF HEBREW IMMIGRANT AID SOCIETY RECALLS AT NEW YORK COMMEMORATION GATHERING: UNITED STATES WAS JEWISH HAVEN OF REFUGE: DOORS OF AMERICA WERE WIDE OPEN: WHEN IMMIGRATION MOVEMENT STARTED THERE WERE QUARTER MILLION JEWS IN AMERICA: TO-DAY THERE ARE 4½ MILLION: IMMIGRANTS ARE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT AMERICA HAS GIVEN THEM BOUNTIFULLY: BUT AMERICA HAS EQUAL REASON TO BE THANKFUL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO HER WEALTH AND POSITION MADE BY IMMIGRANTS: NOW IMMIGRANTS MADE SC. PEGOAT FOR DEPRESSION: THIS AT BOTTOM OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION STILL FURTHER TO LIMIT IMMIGRATION: ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANT FOR MORE RESTRICTION MR. HERMAN DECLARES.

New York, Mar. 1st. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

This year is a year of jubilee - marking half a century since the beginning of mass immigration from Eastern Europe into the United States, Mr. Abraham Herman, the President of the Hias (Hebrew Immigrant Aid and Sheltering Society) began his presidential address to the 22nd. annual meeting of the Hias held here to-day (briefly reported by cable in the J.T.A. Bulletin of the 3rd. inst.). It is fifty years, Mr. Herman went on, since the pogroms in Russia began. It was at Balta that the first outbreak against the Jews occurred. This was the beginning of the most terrible persecutions to which Jews were subjected. Pogrom followed pogrom. Then came the hateful May Laws which to all intents and purposes outlawed millions of Jews in the Russian Empire.

Almost from its very beginning this country was regarded as the land to which the oppressed and the persecuted among all peoples could come freely. It was but natural that Jews should look to the United States as a haven of refuge. And, indeed, they were not disappointed. The doors of America were wide open. The Goddess of Liberty, holding aloft the flaming Torch of Freedom welcomed the refugees. These defenceless men, women and children, fleeing from man's inhumanity to man, hoped to find, and did find, here the opportunities and the peace denied them in their native country.

In 1881 the total Jewish population of the United States was 250,000 out of a total of 45 million. To-day there are approximately 4½ million Jews out of a general population of more than 120 million.

It is well to ask what these fifty years have meant both to us Jews and to America. What have these immigrants accomplished? What has their coming here meant to America? We think the answer is written in large and indelible letters in the pages of the story of the development of America. We are grateful for what America has given us bountifully. We believe that America has equal reason to be thankful for the manifold contributions to her wealth and her position through the endeavours and the energies of these immigrants who have become so closely interwoven with the American fabric.

There is unfortunately an animosity to-day against the alien, against the foreign-born, Mr. Herman proceeded. The world is awry. There is depression, and it is world-wide; there is strife; there are upheavals. The United States is no exception to this state of restlessness so characteristic of our age. And when conditions are bad, someone is looked for to blame for this sorry state of affairs, a scapegoat. And so in this present crisis, the shout is "blame the immigrant". This is the cry of the demagogue and of the unthinking. Instead of looking for the basic trouble, since the entire world is affected, we scan the surface and blame the next man for what may be our own shortcomings. Prejudices are thus stirred and hatreds engendered. In time of stress it is the easiest thing to light and apply the torch of propaganda. This is what is being done to-day. This is at the bottom of the proposed legislation still further to limit immigration. There is absolutely no warrant for any more restriction.

Although the year had been a very difficult one, Mr. Herman went on, the Hias had saved tens of thousands of Jews from -- it is no exaggeration -- destruction, and afforded them a new chance.

34,803 Jews had emigrated during last year from Europe and had settled in the United States, the Argentine, Brazil, Uruguay, Canada, France, Cuba, Mexico, Chile and other countries. 12,563 came to the United States, Mr. Herman reported.

In speaking of the various activities carried on by the Hias on behalf of the emigrants, Mr. Herman mentioned that the Society has a deficit of 16,539 dollars for the current year, which added to the deficits of previous years aggravates the Society's financial burden. The income for the year had been 321,061 dollars and the expenditure has mounted to 337,601 dollars.

ACTION AGAINST PALESTINE ARAB PAPER FOR PUBLISHING BLOOD LIBEL
DISMISSED: EDITOR'S PLEA THAT IT WAS PUBLISHED "WITHOUT HIS
KNOWLEDGE SUCCEEDS."

Jerusalem, Mar. 12th. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

The criminal proceedings which were started against Mr. Issa el Issa, the editor of the Palestine Arab organ "Felestin", for publishing the blood libel story last week (reported in the J.T.A. Bulletin of the 3rd. inst.), has been dismissed on the plea, corroborated by witnesses that the libel was printed without his knowledge, and without evil intent. A large crowd of Arabs present in court applauded the magistrate's ruling in dismissing the case.

The "Felestin" continues to be suspended for the present.

ABSENCE OF FAIR WAGE CLAUSE AND PROVISION FOR PROPER LABOUR CONDI-
TIONS IN CONVENTION FOR TAKING IRAQ OIL-PIPE LINE TO HAIFA
KNOWN TO COLONIAL SECRETARY DR. DRUMMOND SHIELDS SAYS "WHEN
QUESTIONED IN HOUSE OF COMMONS: POINT IS ENGAGING ATTENTION
HE ADDS."

London, Mar. 12th. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

The Secretary for the Colonies is aware that there is no such clause in the agreement. The point is engaging attention, Dr. Drummond Shields, the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, said in the House of Commons this afternoon, when Mr. Will Thorne, the veteran Labour leader asked whether his attention had been called to the fact that the convention regulating the transit of the mineral oil of the Iraq Petroleum Company through the territory of Palestine contained no clause for safeguarding fair wages and labour conditions or for labour legislation under the convention, and what steps did he intend to take with a view to rectifying the omission.

We are going into the matter now, Dr. Shields added, when Mr. Thorne put a further question whether he would do his level best to see that Arabs and Jews should have the minimum rate of pay while putting down this pipe tract.

The convention shows how anxious the British authorities in Palestine are to be as accommodating as possible to induce the company to carry the pipe line over Palestine territory and have it terminate in the Haifa Bay, Palestine Labour circles complained (reported in the J.T.A. Bulletin of February 13th.) immediately the terms of the convention became known. Palestine Labour is perturbed over the fact, it was stated, that the provision with regard to employment of Palestine Labour is not qualified by any demand for the protection of the labourer, such as a fair wage clause or insurance. If the convention were one which required the ratification of the British Parliament, it was argued, the rights of the workers would not have been so disregarded.

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