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BAAL CHOFETZ CHAIM GREATEST RABBINICAL AUTHORITY OF OUR AGE
CRITICALLY ILL AT 91.

Varsaw, May 3rd. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

There is great concern in Polish Jewry over a report from Radin, that the venerable Gaon, the Baal Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Israel Meir HaCohen of Radin, who is 91 years of age, is critically ill there and in view of his great age is not expected to recover.

The Baal Chofetz Chaim as he is popularly known to indicate his authorship of the great work on the Jewish way of life by which he made his reputation, is honoured by orthodox Jewry throughout the world as the supreme rabbinical authority of the present age.

He has described himself as "a simple Jew, believing and following what the Torah says, and nothing more". He has made his home in the small out of the way town of Radin, not in any of the great centres, and has kept himself simple, meek and humble, and has refused all honours.

He has never held an official position as Rabbi, and has never taken any payment for his Rabbinical work. He used to travel over the country, visiting all the Jewish towns and villages, selling his books for whatever he was offered, in order to spread the knowledge of Judaism, but without disclosing his identity, and as if he were only an itinerant bookseller. All his life he has supported himself by selling things for his living. When he first settled in Radin he opened a herring shop, and afterwards a grocery shop, and all the Jews of the town became his customers. When he realised that the other shopkeepers were suffering as a result of that, he closed his shop, and again took to travelling the country with his books. The Jews of Radin then asked him to become their official Rabbi, but he refused to do that. He has since then repeatedly refused offers of important Rabbinical positions in big cities. When the Jews of Radin insisted that living among them he must be their Rabbi, he accepted the position on two conditions - the first, that he should not receive any salary from the Community, and the second that his decisions in religious matters must be obeyed by all of them. Once a Radin Jew refused to obey his judgment, rendered according to Jewish law, and the Chofetz Chaim immediately sent back his contract as Rabbi to the Community, and from that time has held no official post as Rabbi.

Of the Jewish organisations the only one with which the Chofetz Chaim identified himself was the Agudath Israel, because of its strict adhesion to Jewish law, and he was a member of its Rabbinical Council. He was greatly attached at the same time, to Palestine, and had several times contemplated settling there. He was a great peacemaker, and always endeavoured to make peace between Rabbis and other Jews, and he effected the reconciliation between the famous HaSsidic Rabbis of Ger and Belz.

The persecution of the Jewish faith in Soviet Russia has been a great source of sorrow to him, and he has repeatedly asked Jewish communities to recite special prayers of intercession in the synagogues on behalf of the Jews of Russia.

4/5/32.

CALLING A JEWISH WORLD CONFERENCE: DECISION ADOPTED AT MEETING OF AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANISATIONS: THERE ARE TWO PROBLEMS DR. STEPHEN WISE SAYS - PALESTINE AND GALUTH AND CONGRESS WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM OF GALUTH: TO COPE ON WORLD SCALE WITH ANTISEMITIC MOVEMENT IN ALL COUNTRIES: PROFESSOR TEDESCHI'S PROJECT FOR OUTLAWING ANTISEMITISM ENDORSED BY MEETING.

New York, May 2nd. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

A decision to convoke a Jewish World Conference in Geneva next July for the purpose of discussing the advisability of holding a Jewish World Congress has been adopted at a Conference held here called by the American Jewish Congress and attended by representatives of ten nation-wide Jewish organisations and 100 New York Jewish organisations.

A Jewish World Congress, the resolution adopted says, is an indispensable requisite for the defence of Jewish rights and the maintenance of Jewish morale in all countries and we accordingly pledge ourselves to promote the cause of such a Congress in anticipation as well as during the course of the proposed Conference.

Dr. Stephen S. Wise, Honorary President of the American Jewish Congress, in addressing the gathering, said that there were two problems, the problem of Palestine, and the problem of the Galuth, and it was the problem of the Galuth that the projected Jewish World Congress would have to deal with.

The purpose of the Jewish World Congress, the resolution further says, is to cope on a world scale with the attempt now being made by antisemites in all countries organised in a world movement, to degrade us and to undermine our existence. The Jewish World Congress, it proceeds, will maintain an organised Jewish world movement to help to bring about political, economic and social changes, which will strengthen the position of the Jewish people in all the lands where they reside, and also the upbuilding of our national home in Palestine.

The Conference has endorsed the plan for an International Convention to outlaw antisemitism put forward by Professor Tedeschi, of Rome (reported in the J.T.A. Bulletins of February 3rd, and March 29th.).

In 1927 a Jewish World Conference called on the initiative of the American Jewish Congress was held at Zurich, for the protection of minority rights, and Dr. Stephen S. Wise replied there to criticism of the Conference made by Chief Rabbi Israel Levi of France, the late Mr. Lucien Wolf and others who had opposed the idea of Jewish international action. The nations and Governments of the world expect Jews frankly to act together in defence of their fellow-Jews who are oppressed, he said. When we fail to do so, Governments expect insincerity rather than fearfulness. With the fullest understanding of the seriousness of my word, I maintain in the hearing of the Jewish world that the statements of the heads of the Joint Foreign Committee of England, the American Jewish Committee and others are documents of the Galuth.

The result of that Conference was the establishment of the Council on Jewish Minority Rights by a fusion of the activities of the Committee of Jewish Delegations, the American Jewish Committee and several other bodies, representing the Folkists.

About the time of the last Zionist Congress at Basle in July, the American Jewish Congress also took the initiative in holding a preliminary Conference there to make preparations for the projected Jewish World Congress, and it was decided to hold a Jewish World Conference next summer (the plan now endorsed by the New York Conference) when official representatives of Jewish institutions in all parts of the world will be invited to attend in order to draw up a programme for the Jewish World Congress.

IMPRISONMENT FOR LEADER OF PALESTINE REVISIONISTS: SEQUEL TO DISTURBANCE AT MR. NORMAN BENTWICH'S INAUGURAL LECTURE AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY: TEN OTHERS ELECT TO GO TO PRISON INSTEAD OF PAYING FINE.

Jerusalem, May 2nd. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

Mr. Achemeir, who was elected leader of the Palestine Revisionists at the recent Conference in Tel Aviv, has been sent to prison for 21 days, having refused to pay a fine of £3., and ten others put on trial with him to-day for creating a disturbance during Mr. Norman Bentwich's inaugural lecture at the Hebrew University in February, have been sentenced to several days' imprisonment or the payment of small fines. They have all elected to go to prison.

GERMAN PRO-PALESTINE COMMITTEE MEETS AND REAFFIRMS SUPPORT OF PALESTINE WORK.

Berlin, May 2nd. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

The German-Pro-Palestine Committee held its sixth annual meeting here to-day. Herr von Kardorff was in the chair, in the absence of Count Bernstorff, former Ambassador to America, who is ill, and sent a message. Among those present were Ministerial Director Dr. Dieckhoff, Privy Councillor Prueffer and Legation Councillor Professor Dr. Sobernheim, all of the Foreign Office, and Dr. Ruppel, the German member of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. A message was also received from Dr. Puender, State-Secretary to the Prime Minister's Office.

Unfortunately, I am ill, and cannot undertake the journey to Berlin to attend our annual meeting, the first I have ever missed, Count Bernstorff wrote. I have often taken the opportunity to declare myself in public in support of the great social idea of the reconstruction of Palestine, and for that reason I will now only repeat my avowal briefly, and add that my interest and participation in the cause have not in any way diminished. As soon as my health permits, I hope to continue to serve the cause in the coming years with the same devotion as previously.

Dr. Dernburg, former Federal Minister of the Interior, presided at a public gathering that followed the annual meeting held in the former Upper House of the German Parliament; among those present being Professor Otto Warburg, former President of the Zionist Organisation.

Palestine has experienced both good and bad years, Dr. Dernburg said. 1925 was an upward year, followed by a period of crisis which has now been overcome. Certain branches of agriculture and industry are developing steadily. The Jaffa orange is conquering the world market. Immigrants with a good deal of capital are coming into the country now not only from East European countries but also from the West and from overseas.

Fopes and prospects have now become reality. The great Haifa Harbour is nearing completion. Palestine has become a great centre on the air route to the East. The Rutenberg works are supplying electric light and power to the whole country. Palestine is being built, and there is a direct connection between this upbuilding and the solution of the Jewish question.

Count Bernstorff has been re-elected President of the German Pro-Palestine Committee, and Herr Heinrich Sahn, the Lord Mayor of Berlin, ex-Ambassador Dr. Solf, and Herr Leo Simon, one of the leading Jews in Germany, have accepted membership of the Committee.

NEW APPOINTED MEMBER OF ROUMANIAN GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC COUNCIL:
MR. LAZAR MARGULIS PROMINENT ZIONIST AND MEMBER OF
JEWISH AGENCY COUNCIL.

Bucharest, May 2nd. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

Mr. Lazar Margulis, one of the Zionist leaders in Roumania and a member of the Council of the Jewish Agency, has been appointed by the Government as a member of the newly-constituted Roumanian Government Economic Council.

The appointment has given immense satisfaction to Roumanian Jewry, not only because of the honour paid to a Jew, but because the presence of a Jewish representative is regarded as an important safeguard against antisemitic tendencies in the work of the Council, which will be responsible for all future legislation relating to economic life. No law can now be adopted by Parliament or by Government decree, relating to economic life without having been first submitted for consideration to the new Council. The Council consists of 25 members, and in effect is the Cabinet on Economic Affairs. The other members of the Council include the Minister of Finance, M. Argetoianu; the Minister of Trade and Industry, M. Vasilescu Karpen; the Minister of Agriculture, M. Jonescu Siesti, and the Minister of Labour, M. Valcovici; the ex-Minister of Finance, M. Antonescu; the ex-Minister of Trade and Industry, M. Madgearu; the ex-Minister of Agriculture, M. Mihalache, and several other ex-Ministers, and leading University professors.

M. Margulis has also been appointed as one of the two Rapporteurs to the Council dealing with industry.

ROUMANIAN NAZI PARTY FORMALLY CONSTITUTED.

Bucharest, May 2nd. (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).

A Roumanian Nazi Party has been formally constituted this week, Senator Stefan Tatarescu, a brother of M. Tatarescu, former Under-Secretary to the Ministry of the Interior, who was in charge of the investigations into the Oradeo-Mare pogrom in 1927, and was at the time accused of having helped to organise it, presided at the inaugural meeting. The new Party will issue an official organ, which will start publication on the 15th. inst.

Nothing emerged at the meeting to indicate whether the new Party is of a definitely antisemitic character, and whether it will, as has been reported, serve in fact as a new channel for the activities of the suppressed Iron Guard Organisation.