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CHAMBERLAIN VOICES PEACE HOPE AS PALESTINE PARLEYS OPEN; ARAB RIFT SNAGS TALKS

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA)-- Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain today launched the Palestine conference by urging Arab and Jewish delegations at separate meetings to seek peace through "understanding" and "personal contact" and receiving promises of cooperation from both sides, but before the parallel negotiations on which Britain bases its last hope for an amicable agreement had gotten under way the first snag was struck on the Arab end.

Having failed so far to bring Palestine Arab extremists and moderates together, the Government was obliged to postpone this afternoon's session with the Arabs, which was scheduled to begin the discussions, and to announce that the conversations would instead open with a session tomorrow evening with the Jewish delegation.

The apparent inability of the dominant group, the followers of Haj Amin el Husseini, ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, to come together with the representatives of the Nashashibi moderates, the Arab National Defense Party, created a strong impression in London. The Daily Telegraph declared editorially: "The fierce rivalry between the Nashashibists and the Husseinis gives little warrant for imagining that even were the Jews not considered -- as is impossible -- Palestine could readily form an independent state."

The Nashashibi group was absent when the Husseini faction and the representatives of five Arab states -- Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Transjordan and Yemen -- gathered at 10:30 o'clock in the magnificent Picture Gallery of the St. James Palace to hear the Prime Minister urge the putting of "our united powers" to the admittedly difficult task of breaking the Arab-Jewish deadlock by compromise. (Text of Mr. Chamberlain's speech on another page.) Prince Abdul Moneim of Egypt replied for the Arabs by expressing the hope for a "solution which will be decisive as well as just."

After the Arabs had filed out, the Jews entered through a different door at noon to hear Mr. Chamberlain repeat his plea for cooperation. In his speech to the Jews, the Prime Minister used a Hebrew term, saying: "Sholom (peace) is our watchword in Palestine. I sincerely hope that the discussions which you and your colleagues will be conducting with the representatives also will contribute to the achievements of the same object." Replies which stressed the Jews' readiness to cooperate where made by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, president of the Jewish Agency; Dr. Stephen S. Wise, for the American Zionists; Isaac Ben-Zvi, president of the Jewish National Council of Palestine, for Palestine Jewry, and Lord Reading for the non-Zionists.

Dr. Weizmann pointed out that the conference was being held in the same room in which the League of Nations Council had approved the Palestine mandate. He asserted that the Jewish aspiration had always been for a peace in Palestine "compatible with the maintenance of our fundamental rights." He said: "We meet you at a dark hour in our history. It is no exaggeration to say that the hopes and prayers of millions of Jews scattered throughout the world are centered with unshaken confidence in British good faith and on these deliberations. We believe that all our work in Palestine has been the result of grim necessity in the face of realities. I would submit that no reality today is more bitter than that which the Jewish people are called on to face. We have endeavored through all these difficult years to maintain that cooperation with the British Government which has always been the cornerstone of our policy and we are approaching our present task in the same spirit."

Dr. Wise reminded Mr. Chamberlain of "the historic relation of my country to the policy embodied in the Balfour Declaration and the mandate, which are supported by the American people." Mr. Ben-Zvi promised that Palestine Jewry would do its utmost to preserve peace and justice in the Holy Land. Lord Reading declared that although the non-Zionists' approach to the problem was different, "at the same time we are deeply concerned, in the present state of world affairs, with the urgent and vital need to restore peace in Palestine."

Portraits of former monarchs gazed down on the colorful scene in the great gallery of the ancient abode of kings. The Prime Minister stood at a table drawn across the open end of a huge horseshoe, around which first sat the Arabs, many of them in flowing robes of white and gold, and then the Jews, in markedly contrasting Western attire. At the right of the Prime Minister sat Foreign Secretary Viscount Halifax and at the left, two young men who together have to bear the brunt of the conference's labors -- Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald and Foreign Under-secretary Richard A. Butler. The actual discussions will be held in the more intimate confines of smaller rooms, off the Picture Gallery. A handsome tapestried chamber has been assigned to Mr. MacDonald. The delegates will be able to confer privately in the Armory, a medieval chamber whose walls bear hundreds of ancient pistols, blunderbusses, swords, daggers and pieces of armor. The discussions with Jews and Arabs will not be held simultaneously. Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Butler will be present at every session, with Mr. Chamberlain available whenever his presence is deemed necessary.

Immediately after the end of the ceremony, the Jewish delegation centered its attention on the preparation of its case, which Dr. Weizmann will present in a lengthy exposition at tomorrow evening's opening session. The Jewish Agency had intended to advance no proposals, on the ground that the Jews had already made every conceivable concession, but the Agency was notified officially that all delegations were expected to put forth proposals. The Jewish Agency, accordingly, drafted proposals which are to be edited finally tomorrow.

The Jewish Agency informed the J.T.A. that it was not officially aware of any proposals on the Arab side since the Arabs did not wish to face the Jews directly, across the table, and added that it was not prepared to negotiate on any proposals which would endanger Jewish rights.

The Arabs discussed various proposals. The one most favored among the Arabs was to unite Palestine, Transjordan and Syria into a federated Arab state under a League of Nations mandate which would represent a modification of the British mandate over Palestine and Transjordan and the French mandate over Syria. Certain British circles believe that

such a scheme might provide for Jewish immigration into Transjordan and Syria in return for yielding of the Jewish claim in Palestine, but most of the Arab delegates adamantly insist on complete stoppage of Jewish entry, even to the Holy Land.

An unknown quantity in the situation -- which may turn out to be the most important factor, in view of the little likelihood of an agreement -- is the Government's intentions if the discussions should fail. Some newspapers here predict the institution of a "Canada-like provincial autonomy system" in Palestine in that event.

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Text of Chamberlain Statement

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Following is the text of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's address to the Arab delegates:

"I am happy to see here not only the political leaders of the Arabs of Palestine but distinguished representatives of neighboring countries who are cooperating with us in seeking a wise settlement of the present difficulties which will safeguard the rights and position of the Arabs in Palestine. Their presence implies recognition on our part of the community of interests and sentiment characterizing the Arab world and I trust that it may also be regarded as an assurance on the part of Egypt and the Arab countries represented of their desire to maintain and strengthen the bonds of friendship which have for so long united them with the British people.

"When His Majesty's government first announced their intention to invite the representatives of the Arabs and the Jews to separate discussions, they made it clear that the opportunity would be given both people to state their views and proposals without any reservations. Mr. MacDonald informed the House of Commons last November that the Government would enter into discussions bound by their obligations under the Mandate -- obligations to both the Arabs and Jews -- and bound by their duty to Parliament and other members of the League of Nations and to the United States, but the Government would not seek to prevent either Arab or Jewish representatives from presenting arguments if they were so disposed, as to why the Mandate could be changed.

"These discussions are to be full, frank and free. In conformity with this undertaking the representatives of the United Kingdom will not commence proceedings by laying down any basis for discussion nor will they offer their own views until both the Arabs and Jews in our separate discussion with them have been given full opportunity of putting their cases. Those of you who have followed the course of international affairs during the past few years will, I hope, need no assurance that the object underlying the policy of the Government of which I am the head is promotion of peace, peace in our relations with European countries and peace in the lands for whose administration we bear special responsibility -- a special attachment to Palestine -- and surely we all carry in our hearts a fervent hope that peace and prosperity will soon be restored.

"I have said that our talks are for peace. You will be aware that my particular method of approach to peace is a true understanding and the first essential step to understanding is personal contact. The problem before us is a difficult one. It has sometimes been called insoluble, but the more difficult the problem the more I am convinced of the importance of personal contact between the men of influence concerned. It is a task of statesmanship when faced with a situation that may appear to be a deadlock between two people to achieve a compromise on the basis of justice. This is the task before us -- difficult no doubt -- but surely not beyond the capacity of our united powers."

"But while not unmindful of our task let us concentrate on the realities of the present situation giving due weight to all essential facts and endeavoring to appreciate each others point of view. In this spirit lies our best hope of achieving a settlement of our present problem which will provide the foundation on which a mutual understanding may grow and peace in Palestine may at least be secure."

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Text of Communique on Arab Rift

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- The following communique was issued by the Colonial Office regarding the rift between the Arab moderates and extremists:

"His Majesty's Government has invited members of all political parties amongst the Palestine Arabs to come to London to partake in a discussion on the future policy in Palestine. Efforts have been made to arrange that these different parties should all be represented on one delegation. These efforts have not succeeded so far but endeavours to reach an agreement are being continued. In the meantime, as a settlement has not been reached, the representatives of the Defense Party informed His Majesty's Government that they would not attend the opening meeting of the conference this morning.

"His Majesty's Government do not seek to take sides in any difference of opinion which may exist between the parties in Palestine. On the contrary they are anxious that every party would have the opportunity of expressing their views during the forthcoming discussions. They are glad of the opportunity to enter into free and full consultations with the Palestine Arab leaders selected from parties other than the Defense Party.

"In view of their anxiety to exclude no important section of opinion from the discussions, they would be glad also, if agreement on the composition of one Palestine delegation proves impossible, to hold separate consultations with the delegation representing the Defense Party which has come to London."

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Chamberlain Address to Jews

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's address of greeting to the Jews, with a few exceptions, was the same as that to the Arabs. He started by welcoming the Jewish delegates, greeting Dr. Chaim Weizmann as "the distinguished president of the Jewish Agency" and "his colleagues of the Jewish Agency and the representatives of the Jewish communities of Palestine, South Africa, the United States and elsewhere" as "a representative gathering of all Jews interested in the Jewish National Home."

From there on the speech was the same as that to the Arabs, with the insertion of this remark, after deploring the unhappy events in Palestine: "I would here pay tribute to the discipline and restraint shown generally by the Jewish community during a period of extreme difficulty and danger in Palestine." For the part of the speech to the Arabs which reads, "The Arab people have a proud and ancient history," he substituted, in his speech to the Jews: "Your people, no less than ours, have cherished traditions of history stretching far back into the past."

CHRISTIANS PICKET PALACE, ASKING "SQUARE DEAL"

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- A picket line, its members bearing sandwich signs demanding a "square deal for Christians and a new policy for Palestine," marched in front of the St. James Palace today as the Palestine peace conferences got under way.

STATE DEPARTMENT WATCHES PALESTINE PARLEYS

NEW YORK, Feb. 8. (JTA) -- The United States Government is closely watching the Palestine discussions in London, it was revealed in a letter by the State Department to the United Palestine Appeal made public today by Chairman Abba Hillel Silver. The British Government has pledged itself to enter into discussion immediately with the United States if any question arises involving the "international character of the Palestine Mandate with which it has been entrusted," according to the letter from Wallace Murray, chief of the State Department's Division of Near Eastern Affairs. The declaration was in acknowledgement of resolutions adopted by the National Conference for Palestine.

2 JEWS KILLED IN CONTINUING PALESTINE VIOLENCE

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Terrorist operations continued in Palestine today, claiming two more Jewish victims, as the London conferences opened. A land mine exploded under a Jewish-owned truck near Kubab, on the Jerusalem-Jaffa highway, killing the driver, Abraham Likvas, 35, who came here from Germany 18 months ago. Joseph Weinreich, 23-year-old special policeman, an immigrant from Riga, was shot to death from ambush shortly after midnight while on duty in the Jewish colony of Beer Tuvia.

REFUGEES CAN MAKE ENGLAND INTELLECTUAL CENTER, HOARE ASSERTS

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Eleven thousand refugees have provided work for 15,000 Britons, Home Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare declared last night in addressing a public meeting of the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning. Sir Samuel asserted that many refugees, especially in the earlier days of the exodus from Germany, had brought substantial capital, skill and knowledge of foreign manufacturing processes to this country. He said special areas had particularly benefited from new factories they had established, the most important of which produced toys, leather goods and ladies' dresses.

Turning to contributions made by refugee scholars and scientists to British life, Sir Samuel declared there was no reason why they could not make England the intellectual center of the world. He paid warm tribute to Jewish scientists, thinkers and musicians who, he said, "helped keep alight the lamp of learning, brightening the lives of countless sufferers from such plagues of humanity as cholera, cancer, typhus and syphilis, giving brilliance to nineteenth century music and adding a glow to twentieth century philosophy."

ANTI-JEWISH BOYCOTT DRIVE OPENS IN DUBLIN AFTER ARRIVAL OF NAZI OFFICIAL

DUBLIN, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Large inscriptions calling upon the public to boycott the Jews suddenly appeared today throughout the city. The wall of a Hebrew school was daubed with anti-Semitic slogans. The outburst was attributed here to the arrival last week of an official of the German Propaganda Department, who reportedly has been charged with the "enlightenment" of Irish public opinion. It climaxed a campaign marked by private canvassing of members of the middle class who were called upon to boycott the Jews, and by issuance of a new monthly magazine purportedly representing the interests of traders and small farmers, which stirs anti-Jewish prejudice.

EXPULSION OF 500 JEWS FROM DANZIG DEFERRED A WEEK

DANZIG, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Yesterday's scheduled departure of 500 Jews, the first contingent of 1,000 slated for expulsion to an unknown destination, has been postponed for a week, it was learned today. It was understood that the postponement was necessitated by inability of an Italian steamship line, which was to transport the deportees from Genoa after a trip across Germany in a sealed train, to make the necessary arrangements.