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ROOSEVELT FORMING 'SUPER-COMMITTEE' TO ACT ON POLITICAL REFUGEES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- A "super-committee" to pass upon applications of political refugees for admission to the United States is being chosen in Washington, under orders of President Roosevelt, it was learned today.

The committee is being formed to settle the differences of opinion between, the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees in New York and certain groups within the Government as to exactly who and how many should be admitted as political refugees.

Assistant Secretary of State Breckenridge Long has been placed in charge of selecting the personnel of the new committee, which will include representatives of the State, Justice, War and Navy Departments.

The committee will also act as a court of final appeal for political refugees whose admission into the U.S. has been recommended by the President's Advisory Committee but whose applications for visas have been turned down by consuls abroad. Formation of the committee is expected by interested circles here to break a "bottleneck" which has handicapped admission of political refugees.

Under the procedure to be followed after announcement of the committee's personnel, all visa applications approved by the President's Advisory Committee will immediately be routed to the new committee. All applications for admission must be approved by both committees before recommendations will be cabled to consuls abroad.

Placing of representatives of the Justice, Navy and War Departments on the new committee is designed to forestall any possibility that fifth columnists would enter the country in the guise of refugees, it was learned.

Meanwhile, it was learned that the President has turned thumbs down on the proposal that the Interior Department, through independent action, establish the Virgin Islands as a temporary haven for financially independent refugees.

The Chief Executive's action came after the State Department had blocked the effort of the department's Territories and Possessions Division to have the haven

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established through proclamation by Governor Cramer on the ground that the proclamation would be superseded by the authority of the inter-departmental committee now being formed.

The State Department took the resultant dispute to the White House for settlement shortly before the President sailed for his West Indian inspection tour. After receiving reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Army and Navy intelligence which stressed that Communist and Nazi agents and other undesirables had been found in refugee groups seeking emergency visitors' visas, the President ruled out the entire idea unless some plan could be developed which would meet the State Department's approval.

100,000 DRAFTED JEWS IN HUNGARY BEING DEMOBILIZED FOR WINTER

BUDAPEST, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- Approximately 100,000 Jews serving in labor battalions are being demobilized for the Winter, but will be redrafted next Spring, it was learned today. The demobilization is expected to be completed by Dec. 20.

The younger men, aged 21 to 25, who have not performed military service will be mobilized after Christmas for three months' military training. They will then be transferred to military labor battalions where they will serve two years. Men aged 25 to 42 are expected to be remobilized in special Jewish labor gangs next Spring, as soon as weather permits.

Since September Jewish labor gangs have been utilized in the newly-acquired Transylvanian areas for building roads, railways, parks and fortifications.

4,000 POLISH JEWS IN RUMANIA FACE DEPORTATION

TEL AVIV, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- Four thousand Polish Jewish refugees in Rumania have been ordered by the Siguranza, Rumanian secret police, to leave the country immediately or face deportation to Poland, it was reported today by Ben Zion Zangen, former J.T.A. correspondent in Lwow, Poland, who arrived here from Rumania.

Zangen said the refugees were desperate. Many had immigration certificates for Palestine but were unable to proceed because of lack of Turkish transit visas and were appealing for immediate assistance.

The Turkish Government has begun issuance of transit visas to citizens of Baltic countries seeking to emigrate to Palestine, but this does not affect Polish citizens.

175 JEWS DENATIONALIZED BY REICH

ZURICH, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- The official gazette in Berlin today published names of 175 Jews and "persons related with Jews" who have been deprived of German nationality by the Interior Ministry. The gazette said they were persons who had immigrated to the Reich and obtained naturalization before the advent of the Hitler regime.

AXIS CHARGES 2,800 DIED IN PATRIA SINKING

BUDAPEST, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- Axis propagandists are seeking to raise feeling against Britain by spreading a fantastic story that 2,800 Jewish refugees perished in the explosion and sinking of the refugee ship Patria at Haifa on Nov. 25.

It has been established that 56 of the 1,771 refugees who were on board the ship died and most of the rest were saved by heroic action of British forces in the port. The survivors have received permission to remain in Palestine.

Nevertheless, the Nazi-dominated Bucharest newspaper Curentul today published a purported interview with seamen returned from Haifa who said there were 3,800 Jews aboard the Patria and that nearly 3,000 of them died in the sinking of the ship.

The Italian radio went even further, claiming that British troops machine-gunned refugees as they swam in the water of the harbor following the sinking of the ship.

PALESTINE FARM WORKERS APPEAL FOR AID

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- The need of raising £30,000 for urgent relief for Jewish agricultural workers was stressed last night by Samuel Dayan, opening the Histadruth farm conference at Kfar Saba.

Dayan appealed to American Jews to intensify assistance to Palestine Jewish agriculture as fundamental for absorption of refugees from Europe. He demanded Government aid for extension of Jewish agriculture.

Z. Ahronovitz, representing the Histadruth's general secretariat, reporting on aid to unemployed farm workers, said 29,000 were receiving full or partial assistance.

Seek Land for Grodzienski Colony

TEL AVIV, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- A committee here is negotiating for acquisition of 4,000 dunams of land near Safed for establishment of a colony named Achiezer in memory of the late Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzienski of Wilno. Lithuania it was disclosed today. Funds for the colony are being raised in the United States by the Poale Agudath Israel religious labor organization. The committee here includes Meir Karles Eliaz Hamazur Benjamin Mintz and Jacob Landa.

JEWISH COLONY CLEARED IN TORAH DESECRATION

JERUSALEM, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- A committee of rabbis which investigated the alleged desecration of Torah scrolls at Magdiel on Nov. 11 reported today that there was no deliberate desecration, but said the colonists were not sufficiently careful about parts of a scroll received by a settler from his father still in Russia. The committee included Rabbis Meir Berlin, Jacob Fishman and Aaron Weber.

VICE-CHAIRMEN, 2 BOARD MEMBERS ADDED BY J.D.C. AT ANNUAL MEETING

NEW YORK, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- Officers of the Joint Distribution Committee were re-elected today, with the addition of two vice-chairmen, two board members and 664 national council members, at the J.D.C.'s 26th annual meeting, held at the organization's headquarters here.

The new vice-chairmen are Alfred Jaretski Jr. and Harold F. Linder, both of New York. The new board members are Armand May, Atlanta, and William W. Goodman, Memphis. The new members of the national council increase the total of that body to 2,849.

Paul Baerwald was relected chairman and Edward M.M. Warburg co-chairman. Others relected include Mrs. Felix M. Warburg, honorary chairman; James N. Rosenberg, chairman of executive committee; James H. Becker, chairman of national council; Joseph C. Hyman, executive vice-chairman; Governor Herbert H. Lehman, George Backer, David M. Bressler, Alexander Kahn, Solomon Lowenstein, William Rosenwald, William J. Schroder, M.C. Sloss and Rabbi Jonah B. Wise, vice-chairmen; I. Edwin Goldwasser and Marco F. Hellman, treasurers; Moses A. Leavitt, secretary; and Morris C. Troper, Dr. Bernhard Kahn and Joseph J. Schwartz, chairman, honorary chairman and vice-chairman, respectively, of the European council.

Becker, in his report as national council chairman, stressed that a million persons in 50 countries had received J.D.C. assistance during 1940. The J.D.C.'s aid averted many deaths and other tragedies, he said, stressing the need for increased support of the relief activities.

CHRISTIAN GROUP URGES FIGHT AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J., Dec. 9. (JTA) -- An intensified program to combat anti-Semitism and increase Christian-Jewish understanding, including emphasis on teaching of Jewish history in theological seminaries, was contained today in a report to the Home Missions Council, representing 24 Protestant denominations, by its Joint Committee of Cooperating Boards on the Christian Approach to the Jews.

FRANKFURTER ADOPTS 3 BRITISH CHILDREN

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter has adopted three British children for the duration of the war, it was disclosed today. The children, who are being sheltered at the jurist's Georgetown home, are Ann and Venetia Murray, 12 and 8, daughters of Prof. Gilbert Murray of Oxford, and Oliver Gates, 3, son of Mrs. Sylvester Gates of London.

B'NAI B'RITH AIDS RED CROSS HOME SERVICE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9. (JTA) -- B'nai B'rith has joined hands with the American Red Cross in helping to execute the Red Cross's home service program for the families of men called into the armed service of the United States. Henry Monsky, president of B'nai B'rith, announced consummation of arrangements by which the manpower and machinery of the more than 800 B'nai B'rith lodges and auxiliaries throughout the country will be placed at the immediate disposal of the home service sections of local Red Cross chapters.

"We have assured the Red Cross," Monsky said, "that this offer is not confined to members of the Jewish faith because B'nai B'rith is desirous of helping wherever and whenever it can in the Government's national defense undertaking, especially by way of preserving morale in the armed services and on the home front."

RECREATION CENTER OPENED AT FT. McCLELLAN

ANNISTON, Ala., Dec. 9. (JTA) -- The first recreation center established by a welfare agency for the benefit of soldiers of the 27th Division of New York encamped at Fort McClellan was opened here by the Jewish Welfare Board on authorization of its Army and Navy Committee, headed by John M. Schiff. The center is in charge of Rabbi Abba M. Fineberg, J.W.B. welfare worker, who is a first lieutenant in the Chaplains Reserve Corps.