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NO ORGANIZED ANTI-SEMITISM FOUND IN BULGARIA DESPITE ANTI-JEWISH LAW

SOFIA, Jan. 19. (JTA) -- There has been no organized anti-Semitism in Bulgaria since the third century. Despite the new anti-Jewish law, there is no organized anti-Semitism today.

As one Bulgarian Jew put it, "Almost everybody, from King Boris down, is opposed to anti-Semitism; yet we have an anti-Semitic law." It is the Bulgarian version of appeasement.

There was no official mention of anti-Semitism in Bulgaria until last August, when Premier Bogdan Filoff and Foreign Minister I. Popoff visited Hitler at Berchtesgaden. During the visit the German station, Radio Donau, remarked that Bulgaria could not be a friend of Germany until she had passed a law against the Jews.

Immediately afterward, Interior Minister Peter Gabrovsky, who was master of the Bulgarian Masonic lodge, assembled the Bulgarian Masons and told them that, "in the interests of Bulgaria," it was best to dissolve the organization.

A few weeks later Gabrovsky introduced in Parliament the first anti-Semitic bill in this country's history. The bill was opposed by the Association of Bulgarian Writers, the Bar Association, the Medical Association, the National Workers and the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church. Even the Officers' Reserve went on record against the bill.

The only groups in the entire country who favored the bill were the pro-Nazi Ratnik, the "Combatants for Progress in Bulgaria" and the National Youth Legion. But the total membership of these organizations is fewer than 40,000.

In Yugoslavia, where German influence is stronger, there has always been a certain amount of anti-Semitism, especially among the Croats and Slovenes, who formerly pertained to the Austro-Hungarian empire. Even there, however, anti-Semitism was limited more or less to the German, Polish and Hungarian Jews, who form less than one-third of the country's Jewish population of 70,000. The Spanish Jews, who have been living in Yugoslavia over four centuries and are almost wholly assimilated, were excepted from the more stringent provisions of the anti-Jewish law.

On the other hand, more than 90 per cent of Bulgaria's 40,000 Jews are Sephardim who have been living in the country since the 16th century, when they were expelled from Spain by the Inquisition. Since Bulgaria's liberation from Turkey 62 years ago the Jews have become so highly Bulgarianized that their traditional Spanish-Hebrew dialect, Ladino, is beginning to disappear.

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NAZIS ORDER REGISTRATION OF ALL JEWS IN HOLLAND

STOCKHOLM, Jan. 19. (JTA) -- German Commissioner Arthur Seyss-Inquart has ordered registration of all persons of Jewish blood in Holland within 30 days, beginning Jan. 24. On pain of imprisonment up to five years and confiscation of property, it was reported here today.

FRENCH PRESS HAILS BERGSON; EVEN ANTI-SEMITIC PAPERS JOIN IN PRAISE

VICHY, Jan. 19. (JTA) -- Sixteen days after the death of Prof. Henri Bergson, newspapers in both occupied and unoccupied France continue publishing extensive articles on the philosopher's life and work, hailing him as "a great Frenchman," although playing down his Jewish origin.

A typical article in La Petite Gironde of Bordeaux, in occupied France, does not hesitate to declare that Bergson's existence proved the French were not a degenerate people. Papers which usually engage in Jew-baiting, such as Candide, join in the chorus of eulogy.

PALESTINE PUTS NEW TAX ON CITRUS

JERUSALEM, Jan. 19. (JTA) -- The Government announced today a new tax on Palestine citrus amounting to £2 per ton, payable by the consumers. The proceeds, estimated at approximately £75,000, will be used by the Government to improve the situation of the citrus growers.

NATIONAL REFUGEE SERVICE LAUNCHES ITS FIRST DRIVE FOR FUNDS

CLEVELAND, Jan. 19. (ONA) -- Jewish communities all over America were called upon today to aid victims of racial and religious persecution who find asylum in the United States in a message issued by William Rosenwald, President of the National Refugee Service, at the meeting of the NRS Board of Directors here today.

A national campaign for funds to continue the work of guiding the immigrants from refugee ship to citizenship was proclaimed by Rosenwald. This is the first time that the National Refugee Service has made a direct appeal for funds.

"The Board of Directors of the National Refugee Service, consisting of community leaders from every section of the United States, authorized the campaign at their meeting here under the chairmanship of Prof. Joseph P. Chamberlain of the Columbia University Law School," he said.

He pointed out that discontinuation of the United Jewish Appeal, from which the National Refugee Service received its funds in 1939 and 1940, has made it necessary for the National Refugee Service to seek funds on its own behalf.

In a message addressed to community leaders throughout the country, Rosenwald declared that the program of aid and guidance of refugees continues to be a primary responsibility. Thanks to the recognition of this principle by the Welfare Funds and other campaigns, the responsibility for the refugees in this country has remained in channels of private philanthropy, he continued.

"This is the only coordinated program for intelligent guidance of the immigrant 'from refugee ship to citizenship,'" he stated.

The National Refugee Service will confer in advance with community leaders to the extent of the contributions to be asked for in their localities, it was stated. It was emphasized that the appeal would in all cases be made as part of unified local Welfare Fund activities or similar campaigns.

The national drive for funds will be headed by Rosenwald. Executive posts will be filled by community leaders from all parts of the country, including Prof. Chamberlain, Albert D. Lasker of Chicago, Louis E. Kirstein of Boston and Robert K. Straus of New York.

Harry Greenstein, executive director of the Associated Jewish Charities of Baltimore, told the assembled officials at yesterday's opening session that "the refugee problem is not a New York problem but one of national import and responsibility which necessitates a partnership between the National Refugee Service and the rest of the country in support of the National Refugee Service."

Prof. William Heber, executive director of the NRS, said "we must maintain America as a country of refuge," adding: "The National Refugee Service is not solely a relief organization. Our work is not declining. There is every reason to expect full quotas during 1941. We expect 1,000 a month from Germany alone." He declared the National Refugee Service had ended the year with a cash deficit of \$300,000.

William J. Schroder, chairman of the board of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, said:

"The Jews of America will be judged by the manner in which they handle the American refugee problem. Whatever is necessary must be done in handling the problem. Refugees must not be excluded from the normal channels of American life if they are to become good Americans. We owe it as Americans to prepare the newcomers to enrich American life. Our first duty as Americans is the support of the American needs."

Jews in Nazi Poland Total 1,700,000; Half Seen in Need of Relief

LISBON, Jan. 19. (JTA) -- The number of Jews living in the Government-General area of Nazi-occupied Poland is now 1,700,000, about half of whom require relief in various forms, according to recent advices from Cracow.

The information was contained in a letter, dated Dec. 20, from Dr. Tisch, of the praesidium of the Jewish Social Self-Help in Cracow, which said relief funds were meager and appealed to Jews in the United States to hasten collection of money with which to buy food, clothing and medicine in neutral countries. The German authorities have guaranteed shipment to Cracow without duty or freight charges, it was said.

According to the agreed distribution quota, 17 per cent of gift packages received through the International Red Cross and the American Commission for Polish Relief have been distributed to needy Jews, the letter said. Although the Jews form only 10 to 12 per cent of the population, they receive the increased proportion because their distress is greater than that of the Poles, it was said.

12 Payless Work Days Ordered For Male Jews in Cracow Area

ZURICH, Jan. 19. (JTA) -- All male Jews over 16 years of age in the Cracow district of Nazi-occupied Poland will be compelled to serve 12 eight-hour days in January without pay at snow-shoveling under guard, according to the newspaper Krakauer Zeitung.

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GREATER POST-WAR AID TO ZIONISM ASKED OF BRITAIN AS MONTREAL PARLEY OPENS

MONTREAL, Jan. 18. (JTA) -- Opening the 20th national convention of the Zionist Organization of Canada, President A.J. Freiman today demanded greater assurance for the Zionist cause from Britain after the present war. He addressed about 500 delegates assembled at the Mount Royal Hotel.

"Our first thought now," Freiman said, "is to do everything in our power to assure victory in this war for our great Empire, a victory that will forever destroy the power of those who seek to dominate the world. When the victory is won--as I know it will be won--we will carry on with new hope and vigor. The Balfour Declaration came out of the first Great War. We look forward to more encouragement and more assurance for the success of our cause out of the present war, for it is unthinkable that the first victims of Nazism will be overlooked when the injustices of the world are righted."

He added that "in the happier world which Mr. Churchill sees, a happy, progressive Jewish national homeland in Palestine must have a distinct place."

Speaking of the war in Palestine, Freiman asserted: "Let no man doubt that Britain's enemies will meet a resistance both fierce and loyal should they try to set foot upon the sacred soil of that strategic British outpost."

Dr. Nahm Goldmann, of the Jewish Agency Executive, asserted that "through Palestine, Jews are making a specific contribution to the waging of the war." For the first time in centuries, he said, the Jews had "a homeland where we are able to defend our rights."

Messages of greeting were read from Menachem M. Ussishkin, world president of the Jewish National Fund; Leib Jaffe, director of the Palestine Foundation Fund, who is now in South Africa, and Edmund I. Kaufmann, president of the Zionist Organization of America.

A.F.I. AID TO NAZI VICTIMS PLEDGED AT JEWISH LABOR BODY'S PARLEY

NEW YORK, Jan. 19. (JTA) -- William Green has pledged to the Jewish Labor Committee the assistance of the American Federation of Labor's 5,000,000 members in combating Nazi persecution and finding haven for the victims of Hitlerism in the United States.

"We are not so engrossed in abstract policies and theories that we fail to hear the cries of individual sufferers," Green told 2,000 persons attending a national conference of the committee at Carnegie Hall on Friday night. "We have exercised our influence upon the Government and have enlisted the aid of the State Department in the mission of mercy of the Jewish Labor Committee. We have helped to rescue from the wrath of the dictators groups of outstanding men of all faiths and nationalities.

"Four hundred of these refugees have been brought to America as the guests of our country. They are here in this hall tonight. They have not come to America as immigrants or settlers but as temporary visitors to the land which throughout its history has been a haven and a refuge for the oppressed...I am ready, I am anxious to render any service that lies within my power in behalf of those refugees who are driven like animals, whose lives are sought by a ruthless dictator in the occupied and unoccupied countries of continental Europe."

President Roosevelt sent a message to the conference expressing the hope that "the deliberations will be fruitful of wise counsels and constructive action."