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PEASANTS, ARMED WITH CRUDE WEAPONS, SAVED 1,000 JEWS FROM BUCHAREST POGROM

(Editor's Note: This is the fourth of a series of uncensored, eyewitness stories of the Iron Guard uprising in Rumania, in which thousands of persons lost their lives in one of the most barbarous massacres in history. It is the first detailed account to reach the outside world on the events last week in Bucharest.)

SOFIA, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- Rumanian peasants, defying Iron Guard marauders with rabbit guns, clubs and stones, transformed their little village of Dudesti Coplea into a safe haven for an estimated 1,000 Jews during the Bucharest pogrom last week.

The unselfish action of the peasants was one of the most stirring incidents which occurred during the terrible hours of Wednesday and Thursday of last week when the Guardists attacked the Jewish quarter.

The village is on the outskirts of Bucharest, not far from the periphery of the Jewish area of the capital. It is populated by peasant dairymen whose wives come into Bucharest on little troikas every morning to distribute milk throughout the city.

On Wednesday night the inhabitants of the village sent emissaries into the Jewish quarter with offers of sanctuary to anyone able to escape. This correspondent was unable to learn how many Jews were able to take advantage of the villagers' offer but their number must have been near a thousand.

Not a single Jew who sought refuge in the village came to any harm. The milkmen and peasants, armed with shotguns customarily used for shooting rabbits, formed a cordon around the village and resolutely refused to let any Guardists enter it.

The pogrom produced many other heroes and martyrs, both Christian and Jewish. Many Christians were killed or wounded when they attempted to save the lives of Jews and literally thousands devoted themselves during the massacre to the protection of threatened Jewish interests. The most common instance of heroism was that practised by many Christians who went to live in the homes of Jewish friends in order to appear in the doorways when the Guardist killers arrived and trick them into believing the house was occupied by a Christian family. Many lost their lives when the Guardists discovered they had been duped and that they were sheltering Jews.

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The outstanding Christian hero probably was a Rumanian officer whose name this correspondent was unable to learn.

The officer, a refugee from Bessarabia, had been living with Jewish friends in Bucharest since his demobilization from the Rumanian Army at the end of November. Since he had not received orders to join his Army unit and assist in putting down the rebellion he was at home on the night of Jan. 22 when the massacre got under way.

He hastily donned his uniform and armed himself with a revolver when it became obvious that the Guardist mobs would visit the house. Ordering his friends to hide in the cellar, he waited near the doorway until the mob began pounding on it. He then flung it open and barring the way with outstretched arms warned the Greenshirts not to enter. He admitted that the house was owned by Jews but pointed out that he was a Rumanian Army officer who had been given sanctuary by Jewish friends after the loss of Bessarabia to Russia. He appealed to the marauders to put down their arms, go home and cease killing.

For a moment the mob surging in front of the house was silent. Then someone shouted "Jew lover." Others began to laugh and hurl insults at the officer. Pulling out his revolver, the officer warned he would shoot the first man attempting to cross the threshold. Before he had a chance to carry out his threat someone in the mob shot him dead and the Guardists surged into the house across his body. They found the Jews in the cellar and, needless to say, killed all of them. The Guardists stripped the house of all valuables, sprinkled the floors and walls with gasoline and set it afire.

The Jewish hero who towered above all others was a Rabbi Gutmann, who refused to be cowed by the Guardists and stood in the doorway of his house, thundering warnings of God's wrath.

His wife being absent, he picked up his two young children and holding them in either arm appeared fearlessly in his doorway when the Guardists approached the house. The mob was taken aback for a moment when the huge, bearded man began to scold them for their folly, showing no interest whatever in his own safety.

The rabbi failed, as did the lieutenant, to bring the mobsters to their senses. After a brief period of hesitation, Guardists fired several shots at Gutmann but when he failed to fall the mob became confused and left without ransacking the house.

Reliable witnesses of the incident told this correspondent that an old woman, who had been caught by the mob hysteria and had trailed along with the Guardists, suddenly fell to her knees at the sight of the venerable rabbi upbraiding the throng before her eyes.

Apparently confusing the rabbi with an orthodox priest--both wear beards and similar vestments--the crazed old woman cried out "Father, don't condemn us all. We are not all guilty."

Gutmann, himself half-crazed with emotion, staggered back into the house where he discovered that the Guardist bullets had killed both of his children but only creased his body in several places.

Refusing to succumb to his grief, the rabbi then became the Moses of the Jewish community, visiting stricken homes and giving comfort to the victims. Last Friday, Saturday and Sunday after quiet had been restored, it was this rabbi who officiated at most of the Jewish funerals. On Friday he read the funeral service at the burial of his own little sons.

All Bucharest devoted last week-end to the burial of the dead. The city resounded to the toll of churchbells and the clatter of horse-drawn hearses as thousands of dead were transported to various cemeteries. Every church remained open 24 hours daily for funeral services and to permit the bereaved to pray. The Jews were deprived of even this consolation, however, as not a single synagogue was left in all Bucharest except those which escaped destruction because they were occupied as barracks by German troops. These were not available for religious services.

♦ INTOLERANCE MENACES ALL AMERICANS, FINKELSTEIN TELLS WELFARE PARLEY

ATLANTA, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- A warning that religious intolerance "must be exposed and resisted" as a "threat to all Americans" was voiced today by Dr. Louis Finkelstein, president of the Jewish Theological Seminary, at a session of the eighth annual general assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. The conference opened at the Biltmore Hotel here last night with some 500 Jewish welfare and communal leaders present.

Addressing a luncheon session on "Cooperation of Religious Faiths for American Democracy," under the chairmanship of Alan M. Stroock, of the American Jewish Committee's survey committee, Dr. Finkelstein said:

"Every one of us, Catholic, Protestant or Jew, owes too much to our country to permit himself to become an instrument (however unwitting) in the destruction of her liberties. The attack on any group is an attack on all, for America knows no majority and minority. We are all minorities, and we are all members of the totality of America. America has meant to us all freedom, opportunity, and an opportunity for creative life. The preservation of America and her institutions constitute a moral imperative for us. Any threat to her safety is a threat to civilization itself."

Other scheduled speakers at today's sessions were Mrs. Vera Micheles Dean, of the Foreign Policy Association; William J. Shroder, chairman of the Council's Board; Jacob Blaustein, president of the Overseas News Agency; Dr. Solomon Lowenstein, Council treasurer, Sidney Hollander, Council president, and H.L. Lurie, who delivered his report as executive director.

Discussion of "Social Planning for Defense" featured the opening session last night of the three-day assembly. John M. Schiff, chairman of the Jewish Welfare Board's Army and Navy Committee, reported that the committee had undertaken "intensive organization of Jewish communities, primarily near cantonments" in order to maintain the "civilian spirit" among the draftees.

♦ Other speakers last night were Robert E. Bondy, president of the National Social Work Council, and Edward M.M. Warburg, who presided.

♦ WEIZMANN IN LISBON EN ROUTE TO NEW YORK

LISBON, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- Dr. Chaim Weizmann, president of the Jewish Agency, has arrived in Lisbon en route to New York. While here he conferred with Jewish relief and emigration officials.

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BRITAIN SEEN READY TO STATE PALESTINE AIMS SOON

LONDON, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- Early issuance by the British Government of a statement on the projected Palestine Army corps and the war aims with regard to the Holy Land was predicted today by Reynolds News, which said the statement would "once again attempt to hold the balance between Jews and Arabs." The Government was also expected, the newspaper said, to make an "important readjustment of the Palestine Administration."

REPORT 1,000 JEWISH FAMILIES TO BE SETTLED IN BIRO-BIDJAN THIS YEAR

STOCKHOLM, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- Soviet newspapers reported today that 1,000 more Jewish families will be settled on cooperative farms in the Biro-Bidjan area of Soviet Siberia during the current year. Four new settlements will be established in the same period, the papers said.

FUNERAL RITES HELD HERE FOR SOLOVEITCHIK, NOTED TALMUDIST

NEW YORK, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- Funeral services were held today for Rabbi Moses Soloveitchik, senior Professor of Talmud at Yeshiva College, who died Friday at Mt. Sinai Hospital, at the age of 62, of complications that followed pneumonia.

JEWISH AVIATION SCHOOL OPENS ON LONG ISLAND

EDGEWATER, L.I. Feb. 2. (JTA) -- The Jewish Aviation School and League officially opened at the Rockaway Airport here today with an initial class of 25 students. The school is sponsored by the Brith Trumpeldor, Zionist youth organization, and is designed to aid the national defense movement.

HIAS AIDED 14,000 REFUGEES HERE

NEW YORK, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- More than 14,000 Jewish refugees of the total admitted into the United States during 1940 received guidance and assistance from the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, according to a statement made public today by the HIAS. Of these, 5,097 received temporary shelter at the Society's quarters in New York prior to their departure for various parts of the country.

OXFORD PARLEY AIRS HANDICAPS IMPOSED BY WAR ON JEWISH EDUCATION

LONDON, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- A conference on "Jewish Education under War-time Conditions" was under way at Oxford today with discussions centering around the pedagogical and financial difficulties resulting from dislocation of the Jewish educational system through aerial warfare and evacuation. The conference is being sponsored by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Central Committee on Jewish Education and the Joint Emergency Committee. Neville Laski, former president of the Board of Deputies, presided at the opening session, which was addressed by Prof. Selig Brodetsky, president of the Board, and others.

HISTADRUTH PARLEY DEFERS ACTION ON POLITICAL ISSUES

TEL AVIV, Feb. 2. (JTA) -- The 20th anniversary of the Histadruth Council closed Friday, postponing until next month its political session. Among the resolutions adopted were: (1) to proclaim the month of Shevat as the period for a fund-raising campaign to establish an agricultural settlement in southern Palestine in memory of Vice-Mayor Dov Hoz of Tel Aviv; (2) to establish a publishing enterprise, with Berl Katanelson as editor; (3) to take steps for security of superannuated workers.