

NEWS

from all over the world

VIA

CABLE
WIRELESS
TELEGRAPH
TELEPHONE

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

1560 BROADWAY, N.Y.C.

VOL. VIII. NO. 96.

Wednesday, April 2, 1941.

JEWS EVACUATING ZAGREB AS INVASION LOOMS; NAZIS THREATEN POGROMS

BELGRADE, April 1. (JTA) -- Fearing German invasion, the 12,000 Jews of Zagreb--largest Jewish population of any Yugoslav city--today were making every effort to evacuate into the interior.

The exodus of Jews from the Croatian city near the German and Italian frontiers was spurred by anonymous telephone threats received by Zagreb Jewish leaders in the past few days. The warnings, spoken in German, told them to leave the city "before the day of reckoning arrives." Zagreb has a large German population which is predominantly pro-Nazi.

The office of the Zionist Organization in Zagreb received anonymous calls warning of massacres "like those which took place in Bucharest." Some of the callers concluded their messages with anti-Jewish tirades and ended with "Heil Hitler!"

Rushing to seek safety in Belgrade and in other parts of the interior, many Zagreb Jews left behind their immovable property and part of their movable goods. They paid large sums for any means of transportation, traveling in automobiles, peasant carts and horse-drawn wagons.

Meanwhile, in Belgrade the 8,000 Jews remained calm, despite the influx from the frontier areas. Most of the Jews of Belgrade are poor artisans of Turkish and Near Eastern origin. Of the 75,000 Jews in Yugoslavia, half are located in Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo. There is a small number of Jews in Slovenia and virtually none in Montenegro.

CONDITIONS GROWING WORSE IN FRENCH REFUGEE CAMP; 700 DIE DURING WINTER

VICHY, April 1. (JTA) -- The fastest-growing Jewish cemetery in France is probably that of Camp de Gurs, refugee internment center in the Lower Pyrenees, where more than 700 graves were dug during the past Winter, when the internees suffered particularly from frost and hunger.

Conditions in the Gurs camp have deteriorated considerably following its transfer from the military to the civil authorities, it is reported by well-informed observers.

While the central administration takes a friendly attitude towards charitable bodies and facilitates their work in the camps, the local camp administration treats the internees like criminals, taking no account of the reasons for their detention, hinders efforts of charitable organizations and imposes intolerable discipline on the internees.

(Continued on reverse side)

For example, more than 12,000 Gurs internees are unable to communicate with each other unless they obtain special permits which are necessary to go from one group of barracks to another. The number of such permits does not exceed eight daily, although each group of barracks contains 200 internees. Thus members of a family are unable to communicate with each other more often than once monthly. Visits from outside, even those of the clergy, are permitted only in the presence of jailers.

Distribution of food parcels sent in by relatives is extremely irregular and private philanthropic bodies are unable to break the hostile spirit of the local camp administration.

Despite the large credits voted by the Government for camp welfare no improvement is noticeable, except for that which is due entirely to the efforts of the Joint Distribution Committee and other relief bodies.

With the Government funds comfortable premises were installed for members of the camp administration, while no improvement was made in the barracks for internees, who are badly off as ever.

The only bright exception to this situation is the Milles camp, to which refugees intending to emigrate are sent. They live there under conditions which are bearable but far from perfect.

TALKS IN WASHINGTON AIM AT RELEASE OF RUMANIAN FUNDS TO AID EMIGRATION

ZURICH, April 1. (JTA) -- A ray of hope for Rumanian Jews was seen today by Jewish leaders in Bucharest following advices which they received that negotiations were being conducted in Washington which might enable emigration of many Rumanian Jews to Palestine and other overseas lands.

The Jewish community in Bucharest was advised that the American Government may consider releasing part of the frozen Rumanian funds in the United States provided that the money be spent for facilitating Jewish emigration from Rumania. It is understood the Rumanian Government would not object to such an arrangement. The project is similar to the one in practice in Germany, where emigrating Jews receive their steamship tickets abroad, paid for in American dollars by the Joint Distribution Committee, provided they leave their funds in Germany for the use of charitable Jewish organizations there.

Since the Rumanian Government is now confiscating Jewish property and since Jews are not permitted to take out any cash from the country, the carrying out of the projected exchange plan would not meet with any technical complications. Any Rumanian Jew who could secure a visa to an overseas country could deposit his money and property with the Government and obtain in exchange a steamship ticket, paid for abroad from the Rumanian funds frozen in the United States.

Details of this plan are now in the hands of the State Department in Washington, according to the information from Jewish sources in Bucharest. Interested American Jewish leaders are negotiating with the Treasury Department for the approval of the plan, it is stated.

Should the project be approved, many Rumanian Jews would receive opportunities to emigrate from Rumania to various overseas countries, especially to Palestine. Despite the fact that relations between Rumania and Palestine are officially broken off, there are still many Jews in Rumania who would be admitted into Palestine since they possess Palestine immigration certificates.

BRITAIN PLANS TO INCREASE RECRUITING OF JEWS ABROAD

LONDON, April 1. (JTA) -- The British Government is considering plans for recruiting Jews abroad for active service in the British army, War Secretary David Margesson told the House of Commons today.

Consideration has been given to the possibility of offering further facilities for recruiting of Jews abroad, Captain Margesson said, but in view of the present pressure for resources, especially equipment, some time is likely to elapse before such a scheme can be instituted.

The War Secretary's statement was made in response to a question by H.B.T. Cox, Conservative.

Palestinian units played a prominent part in the battle for Keren, Eritrea, it was disclosed today by Leib Jaffe, director of the Palestine Foundation Fund, at a reception here. He said official reports had acknowledged that these units were composed almost exclusively of young Jews.

NAZI RADIO BLAMES JEWS FOR YUGOSLAV RESISTANCE

LONDON, April 1. (JTA) -- The anti-Jewish note is being struck increasingly in German radio atrocity propaganda against Yugoslavia.

A number of German stations and Nazi-controlled transmitters in occupied countries declare that anti-German "outrages" in Yugoslavia and alleged burning of German settlements were provoked by "Jewish, English and Polish agents working the Yugoslavs up into a state of fury."

CONTEMPORARY RECORD TELLS OF PETITION TO POPE ON POLISH JEWS

NEW YORK, April 1. (JTA) -- The Contemporary Jewish Record publishes in its current issue an account of a petition regarding Poland and the status of Jews there which was presented 25 years ago by the American Jewish Committee to Pope Benedict XV. The effects of the Pope's reply, delivered by means of a letter by Cardinal Gasparri, then Papal Secretary of State, are described in detail by Harry Schneiderman, author of the article and assistant secretary of the Committee.

This commemoration of a notable event of the first World War, according to Schneiderman, "is of interest not only because of the unusual nature of the Committee's action but also because a knowledge of these circumstances is essential to an understanding of some of the important factors involved in the successful solution of Jewish problems in a possible future Polish State." The Pope's expression of the inherent brotherhood of man and his subsequent admonition to the Catholic clergy of Poland to seek to end the persecutions, Schneiderman asserts, had a strong educational and moral influence.

• Prof. Morris R. Cohen, the philosopher, discusses the need for "Jewish Studies of Peace and Post-War Problems" in the same issue. Other articles are "Intercultural Education" by Stewart G. Cole, prominent educator; "Jewish History Nazified" by Bernard D. Weinryb, and "In Soviet Poland and Lithuania," an expose by David Grodner.

ROMANIAN MINISTER HAILS LAW BARRING JEWS FROM OWNING LAND

BUCHAREST, April 1. (JTA) -- Propaganda Minister Nichifor Crainic declared today in a radio address that the recent measures barring Jews from owning rural or urban property as fulfilling "the dreams of the greatest Rumanian patriots." He added that "the reform marked (Premier) Antonescu as the supreme exponent of Rumanian nationalism."

"GHETTO SUBURB" OF BRATISLAVA PLANNED

BUDAPEST, April 1. (JTA) -- Special houses, blocks and apartment houses for Jews will be built on the outskirts of Bratislava, the radio of the Slovak capital reported today.

HOBBS BILL REMAINS STYMIED

WASHINGTON, April 1. (JTA) -- The Hobbs bill, aimed at readjusting immigration and deportation procedure to meet war conditions, remained stymied in the House Rule Committee today despite pleas by its sponsor, Rep. Hobbs of Alabama, and Marshall Dimock of the Justice Department that it be granted immediate consideration because of emergency conditions.

PARIS. RABBI, AIDED TO ESCAPE BY CATHOLICS, ARRIVES HERE

NEW YORK, April 1. (JTA) -- Dr. N. J. Ovadia, Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Paris, arrived here Sunday on the Portuguese steamship Serpa Pinto with his wife, who related that their escape from France had been aided by officials of a Catholic seminary.

They left Paris the day before the German occupation, Mrs. Ovadia said, and found sanctuary in a Catholic seminary for four months while Gestapo agents sought the rabbi. The priests and nuns aided Dr. Ovadia to obtain an identity card so that he could evade the Nazis.

Another passenger on the Serpa Pinto was Naoum Aronson, famous Russian-born sculptor, who had lived in France for 50 years. The 67-year-old, white-bearded artist told with tears in his eyes that he could bring with him only photographs of his works. He had maintained six galleries in Paris before the Nazi invasion.

PALESTINE PAPERS MARK FIRST BIALIK POEM ANNIVERSARY

JERUSALEM, April 1. (JTA) -- The Hebrew press observed the 50th anniversary of the publication of the first poem of the late Hebrew poet laureate, Chaim Nachman Bialik, entitled "El Hamor" ("To the Bird").