

# JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

106 EAST 41st STREET, NEW YORK CITY

VOL. X, NO. 40

Wednesday, February 17, 1943

## BRITAIN OPENS TALKS WITH JEWS AND ARABS ON POST-WAR UNDERSTANDING IN PALESTINE

LONDON, Feb. 16. (JTA)-- Important conversations between British officials and Jewish leaders are reported today to have taken place recently, parallel with similar conversations between Government representatives and Arab spokesmen, in an attempt to pave the way for a post-war Jewish-Arab understanding, in which the British Government is particularly interested.

Though the conversations were not of an official nature, they apparently were initiated by the British Government as a prelude to more concrete negotiations which may clarify the basis on which Arabs and Jews can meet when presenting their post-war demands. With Palestine no longer in danger of invasion and with the pro-Nazi Arab elements in the Near East discouraged by the defeat of the German armies, it is felt in certain British circles that an attempt should be made, first through private talks and later through official parleys, to smooth out the sharp edges of the Arab-Jewish problem and thus bring about an Arab-Jewish understanding before the war is over.

British political leaders who do not sympathize with the White Paper under which no more than about 50,000 additional Jews can immigrate to Palestine, point out that this limitation is out of step with the Jewish situation created by the war. They argue that when the terms of the White Paper expire in 1944, the British Government will hardly be justified in leaving it up to the Arabs in Palestine to decide whether Jews from Europe should be admitted. It is obvious, they declare, that in the light of the present Nazi mass-executions of Jews, a large Jewish emigration to Palestine can be expected in 1944 when, it is hoped, Europe will be partly or wholly liberated from the Nazis.

As the White Paper, which was issued in 1939, has not been approved as yet by the League of Nations, which entrusted the mandate over Palestine to Britain, it is felt here that its provisions can still be legally contested by the Jewish Agency, especially since the majority of the Mandates' Commission of the League have never expressed agreement with these provisions. The White Paper, opposed by the Jews, was issued by the British Government shortly before the outbreak of the war. The Jewish Agency for Palestine was prepared to contest it before the Council of the League of Nations, but the war prevented the League from meeting. In the meantime the League is still the legal body to whom the British Government, as mandatory power, is responsible for all its actions with regard to Palestine.

The White Paper of 1939 provided for the admission to Palestine of some 75,000 Jewish immigrants between 1939 and 1944. "After the period of five years no further Jewish immigration will be permitted unless the Arabs of Palestine are prepared to acquiesce in it," the document stipulated.

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE'S STATEMENT ON PALESTINE EVOKES ZIONIST REPLY

NEW YORK, Feb. 16.(JTA)-- The American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs today issued the following statement in reply to the declaration adopted by the American Jewish Committee at its annual meeting:

"Not only does the statement of the American Jewish Committee offer no acceptable compromise on the essential demands of Zionism, but it represents a retrogression from previous positions taken by the Committee itself with regard to Palestine. On April 28, 1918, the Committee adopted a resolution which endorsed the Balfour Declaration, in which reference was made to the National Home of the Jewish people in Palestine. On March 1, 1919, the Committee joined in a memorandum submitted to President Wilson, asking that the Peace Conference recognize the aspirations and historic claims of the Jewish people in regard to Palestine. The present statement of the Committee makes no mention of these aspirations and historic claims, it does not allude to the National Home, nor does it take cognizance of the existence of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, officially recognized in the Mandate.

"The statement of the Committee cannot serve as the basis for united action with regard to Palestine because it is contradictory to or noncommittal on the program formulated in the Extraordinary Conference of all Zionist Organizations in America held at the Biltmore Hotel in April of 1942, which was thereafter endorsed by practically all groups within the World Zionist Organization.

"In the course of negotiations, over a period of fifteen months, the Committee was fully apprised of the Zionist position. The Zionist program presented a demand for a Jewish Commonwealth of Palestine. The Committee, however, expresses the view that there should be no preconceived formula at this time as to the permanent political structure which shall obtain there. The Zionist program asked that immigration to Palestine be under Jewish control in order that a maximum number of Jews may be enabled to settle in Palestine in as short a time as possible. The statement of the Committee is limited to a demand for safe-guarding the Jewish settlement in and Jewish immigration into Palestine under an international trusteeship.

"The Zionist position is based on the conviction that Palestine provides the basic solution of the problem of Jewish homelessness. The statement of the Committee specifically rejects this conclusion. Nor does the statement of the Committee give due consideration to the terrible plight of the Jews of Europe as a consequence of a decade of Nazi persecution, or to the implications of Jewish creative work in Palestine in the past twenty-five years, which now requires that the foundations of the Jewish Commonwealth be politically secured."

CZECHS URGED TO SHOW GREATER SOLIDARITY WITH JEWS DESPITE NAZI THREATS

LONDON, Feb. 16.(JTA)-- Replying to the latest Nazi decree, depriving Jews in the Czech Protectorate of their ration cards for most staple foods, the Czech Government-in-Exile today broadcast a message from here urging all the Czech people to show even greater solidarity with the Jews.

Pointing out that Hitler's treatment of the Jews is a warning to the Czechs as to what fate will befall them if they oppose the Nazis, the broadcast stated that, notwithstanding, "the only decent answer is full solidarity of the Czechs with their Jewish brethren."

RETREATING NAZIS USE POISON, MACHINE-GUNS, NOOSE, GAS TO KILL RUSSIAN JEWS

MOSCOW, Feb. 16. (JTA)-- Russian war correspondents attached to the armies that are advancing along the front from Moscow to the Sea of Azov are reporting almost unbelievable details of the evidences of Nazi terror against Jews discovered in the liberated towns and villages. The cold-blooded systematic murder of tens of thousands of Jews by fire, electricity, poison, machine-guns and the noose is revealed in authenticated stories appearing daily in the press here and elsewhere throughout the Soviet Union. The following accounts are merely a "sampling" of hundreds of similar reports:

In Remontnoye, in the Rostov district, which was wrested from the Germans only a few days ago, one correspondent was told how the Nazis placed the entire Jewish population of the town, mainly refugees who had fled from the Ukraine, in a specially constructed barbed-wire enclosure at the outskirts of the town. Scores of old men, women and children were forced to walk over strands of the wire which had been electrified and were electrocuted on the spot. When some of the prisoners asked for something to drink, they were given poisoned water, which killed most of them. Those who still survived were machine-gunned. In Remontnoye the Nazi score was 300 dead.

In Elista, all the Jews were loaded on trucks and taken to open fields outside the town, where all the adults were shot. The children were given poison. Here the Nazi score was 93 families, comprising more than 300 individuals. The official account even includes the names of many of the victims. In another small village, Zhutovo, in the Stalingrad district, hundreds of Jewish evacuees from the Ukraine, were driven into lethal gas chambers and suffocated. The bodies of the victims, including many children, were flung into a ravine three kilometers from the village. Here the number of dead is unknown.

In the village of Zaventoyo, however, it is known that the Nazis killed 200 Jews, after first harnessing them to carts and forcing them to drag heavy loads. In this village many Jews were locked in a large cellar where they were kept without food and water for several days before being executed. In Shenfold, in the Stepanov district, a group of S.S. men killed sixty Jewish women, after first raping the younger women and girls.

In Novol, a fairly large town adjoining Velikie Luki, a detachment of Gestapo men broke into the town in the middle of the night and drove hundreds of half-dressed Jews outside the town, beating them as they went along. Other Gestapo men plundered the houses of Jews and non-Jews alike. When a crowd of nearly 2,000, mostly Jews, had been lined up against the walls of the famous Novol sanatorium, they were ordered to undress. Hesitant girls and women were prodded with bayonets until they obeyed. Then they were ordered to lie face downward on the ground and the Nazis beat their naked victims with rods and iron bars. When they tired of this sport, the Germans lined up the survivors in front of a large ditch and several machineguns were turned loose on them. The cries of the massacred women and children could be heard for miles.

In Stavropol, on the Volga, during the several months that the village was under Nazi occupation, the entire Jewish population was exterminated by stabbing, hanging and shooting, with the exception of a few who were enabled by Russian neighbors to flee to the woods and join guerrilla bands and others who joined a band of young people who hid in the towns all during the occupation, constantly harrassing the Germans.

AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS CALL DEMONSTRATION TO ASK AID FOR JEWS IN NAZI COUNTRIES

NEW YORK, Feb. 16.(JTA)-- The governments of the United Nations, including the American Government, will be asked to take immediate action to rescue the Jews in Nazi Europe, at a mass-demonstration on March 1, at Madison Square Garden, arranged jointly by Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, it was announced today by Dr. Stephen S. Wise, president of the American Jewish Congress.

Similar demonstrations will be held throughout the country in a number of larger cities, the announcement said. In New York, the meeting will be held under the joint auspices of the American Jewish Congress, the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the Church Peace Union and other leading groups. The meeting will draw up a series of proposals of major importance for transmission to the authorities of the Allied governments, the announcement said.

SYNAGOGUES AND CHURCHES JOIN IN OBSERVING BROTHERHOOD WEEK THROUGHOUT COUNTRY

NEW YORK, Feb. 16.(JTA)-- More than 2,500 American communities will observe the tenth consecutive celebration of Brotherhood Week, Feb. 19-28, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, sponsors of the nation-wide program, announced today.

In New York, special programs will be conducted by every high school, and most synagogues and Protestant and Catholic Churches will use the theme of brotherhood in weekly services. Special radio programs will be carried by all networks. Dr. Robert A. Ashworth, Director of the National Brotherhood Week program, said that the response has been greater this year than ever before. He said 500 more communities than last year had pledged participation.

An Inter-Seminary Conference of theological students of all denominations to consider plans for the salvation of European Jewry will be held at Union Theological Seminary and the Jewish Theological Seminary during Brotherhood Week, on Monday, February 22. The all-day conference, which is in line with the increased agitation in religious circles both here and abroad for the amelioration of the lot of European Jewry, will discuss the challenge to religious humanity of Nazi Germany and will weigh proposals for aiding the Jewish victims of persecution. A joint committee representing the students of Union, Biblical, Berkeley, Drew, Princeton, St. Vladimir's, Yale Divinity School, Jewish Theological Seminary, and the Jewish Institute of Religion has drafted a program for the consideration of possibilities for providing havens of refuge for the Jews of Europe, and of sending them food.

Among the outstanding religious leaders and men of affairs who will address the Conference are: Rev. Henry Smith Leiper, executive secretary of the Universal Christian Council; Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, director of the Committee on Army and Navy Religious Activities of the Jewish Welfare Board; Howard Kershner, of the American Friends Society; Willard Johnson, assistant to the president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews; Doctor Louis Finkelstein, president of the Jewish Theological Seminary; Dr. Robert Gordis, associate professor of Bible at the same institution; and Varian Fry, of the Foreign Policy Association.

VETERAN JEWISH Flier IN R.C.A.F. OVERSEAS REPORTED KILLED IN ACTION

MONTREAL, Feb. 16.(JTA)-- Pilot Officer Michael Jacobs, son of the late Jewish parliamentarian S.W. Jacobs, has been reported killed in action. Jacobs participated in thirty raids over enemy territory and was a member of the famous Moose Squadron overseas.