

AMERICAN JEWISH CONFERENCE OPENED WITH APPEAL FOR UNITY; PROGRAM OF ACTION OUTLINED

NEW YORK, AUG. 29. (JTA)--A comprehensive program to serve as "a common basis for action" by American Jewry in the task of helping the Jews in Europe and in Palestine during and after the war, was outlined here today before an audience of 3,000 persons gathered at the opening session of the American Jewish Conference by Henry Monsky, chairman of the executive committee which organized the Conference and president of the B'nai B'rith.

Delivering the opening address at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, Mr. Monsky appealed for Jewish unity. He told the 500 delegates from all parts of the country, who represent more than sixty national Jewish organizations, that the Conference is expected:

1. To immediately inaugurate practical and effective measures of relief and rescue for the Jews in occupied Europe.

2. To formulate plans for post-war Jewish voluntary mass-emigration from Europe and colonization in other parts of the world.

3. To deal with problems of post-war Jewish reconstruction and rehabilitation in the devastated areas.

4. To devise ways and means of assuring civic, political, cultural, religious and social rights for Jews on the basis of equality with other inhabitants of the several countries in which they may find themselves.

5. To consider and recommend action upon all matters looking to the implementation of the rights of the Jewish people with respect to Palestine.

6. To elect a delegation to carry out the program of the American Jewish Conference in cooperation with the duly accredited representatives of Jews throughout the world.

Mr. Monsky emphasized that little diversity of opinion exists with regard to what the American Jewish Conference, in the name of the American Jewish community, is to do for the Jews in Europe. But there are different points of view represented in the Conference with respect to Palestine.

"The diversity of opinion," he said, "runs the whole course, from the minimum which subscribes to the support of Palestine as a haven of refuge and as a spiritual and cultural center, to the maximum represented by the concept of a Jewish State in Palestine." It will be the responsibility of the Conference to consider this problem with an attitude of tolerance toward and mutual respect for the diverse opinions and to determine what shall be the declared position of the American Jewish community, Monsky stated.

Predicts Friendly Relations with Arabs; Lauds Jews in Russia

Reviewing Jewish achievements in Palestine, Mr. Monsky indicated that no substantial difference of opinion exists among the Jews in America with regard to "the flagrant injustice" of the White Paper of 1939. There can be no question, he

said, that the Jews have a right to hope for and expect the victorious United Nations, in the name of justice and humanity, to make Palestine available to the greatest extent possible "to those of our people who desire to make it their homeland." He expressed his opinion that "after the complete triumph of the Democracies, there will be an opportunity for the realization of the purpose and the aims of the Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate."

The difficulties arising from Arab-Jewish relations were attributed by Mr. Monsky largely to "Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda and political stimulation." Once this cause is removed or dissipated after a United Nations victory and the sources of hate are annihilated, the attitude of the Arabs will completely change, Mr. Monsky believes. He criticized those Jews in America who spread anti-Zionist propaganda.

"I make bold to predict that with the advent of peace and the restoration of friendly relationships between the various peoples of the earth, this affliction of Arab-Jewish dissension will run its course and substantially disappear," he said. He termed "a grievous mistake" the attitude of some American Jews who view with anxiety any expression by the Jewish community on behalf of the Jews in time of war.

Mr. Monsky paid special tribute to the Jews in Russia stating that they "have played a magnificent role in the Red Army." He estimated that more than 600,000 Jews are now actively participating in the struggle on the Russian battle-fronts in addition to those engaged in guerilla warfare behind the German lines. Jews, he said, are also fighting in the ranks of the Chetniks and in the legions of the Greek guerillas as well as in the armies formed by various governments-in-exile.

Wise Urges Conference to Send Delegation to Roosevelt for Immediate Audience

Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, addressing the opening session of the Conference, suggested that the gathering appoint a delegation to seek an immediate audience with President Roosevelt in order to lay before him the demand of the organized Jewish community of this country for action without further delay to rescue the remnants of European Jewry.

An audience with the President while the American Jewish Conference is in session, Rabbi Wise said, might result in an assurance by President Roosevelt "that nothing will be left undone to save in one or another way the limited number of the surviving whom prompt rescue alone can keep from joining the armies of the Jewish dead."

There are no more than 3,000,000 Jews remaining in the countries where 8,000,000 Jews formerly lived, Rabbi Wise stated. Further delay in rescue, he said, would doubtless mean that there would be no Jews to save. He emphasized the contrast between the contribution which the Jews have made to the cause of democracy and the democracies' failure in ten years of Hitlerism to halt the war of destruction on the Jews. No people, he asserted, has suffered losses comparable to that of the Jewish people.

Demanding that as a first act of rescue the doors of Palestine be opened to Jewish exiles, Rabbi Wise said, "No act of relief on the part of the United Nations will seem sincere or be worth while as long as the gates of Palestine threaten to close. Whatever we may hope and plan is to be the future of Palestine, and there may be room for discussion, its gates must not be closed. There must be Jewish immigration under the control of the Mandatory and the Jewish agency." He pointed out that when two years ago Palestine stood under the shadow of terror of Nazi invasion, in all the vast Arab complex of populations and territories, great and small,

that section of Palestine which is Jewish stood out alone in passionate and unreserved support of freedom's cause.

He expressed the hope that in response to "the deepest promptings of humanity and in compliance with the will of the American people, our President together with Prime Minister Churchill will take the lead in performing the supremely imperative task of Jewish rescue." He called on the Jews to act in unison, and also to unite their action with that of Jews the world over, and "to reforge the old bonds with the Jewish population of the Soviet Union."

Judge Proskauer Stresses Importance of Unity of Action

Judge Joseph M. Proskauer, president of the American Jewish Committee, who was one of the principal speakers of the evening, emphasized the importance of unity of action.

"It is my devout hope" he said, that it (the conference) will be a success in the sense that it will develop a common program for this crisis to which the universal support of American Jewry will be accorded. Never before, I think, has there been so great a yearning in American Jewry for this unity of conduct. One basic reason for this is the horror of the foreign scene which has been portrayed to us. Another reason is that on the domestic scene we have in the last few years seen the continuance and the growth of organized anti-Semitic movements which have shocked the conscience not only of Jewry but of all right-thinking Americans. These organized movements have been clearly identified now as the first line of attack of Fascism on America. Just as the anti-Semitic cry was raised first by Hitler as an entering wedge, so these disciples of darkness in America have invoked bigotry and prejudice as the first step in the fight against the American way of life. And the impulse of self-preservation and of the preservation of our American ideals requires that we use here every effort to avoid schism and to achieve cooperation."

Pointing out that the American Jewish Conference is not legislating and is not decreeing for far into the future, but is trying to create a program to submit to those who shall frame the terms of peace, Judge Proskauer said that no man must be asked to sacrifice a principle. There is an enormous area on which all delegates agree, he declared.

"We agree," he said, "that the United Nations should give relief from the havoc and ruin inflicted by Axis barbarism on its millions of victims; that the processes of redress and rehabilitation be largely undertaken, as they must be, as governmental functions. We are as one in demanding the complete restoration and safeguarding of the equal civil and religious rights of Jews, as of all others. We stand together for the fundamental principle that Jewish citizens of every land shall be guaranteed the right of equality, so that, in the language of our Secretary of State, we shall have a world in which Jews, like all others, are free to abide in peace and in honor. Just as we all stood together against the revocation of the Cremlieux Decrees and have no patience with considerations of expediency such as led to temporizing with that intolerable action, so we must demand the fundamental rights of citizenship as the inalienable rights of every Jew in every country in the world."

Referring to Palestine, Judge Proskauer stated: "We are united in recognizing the superb achievement made by our people in Palestine, in our admiration for the skill and devotion which has transformed the desert into the farm, the factory, the vineyard and the orange grove. We rejoice to know that there are today 600,000 Jewish people living under their own vine and fig trees. Jews throughout the world, and particularly in America, regardless of their ideologies, have been glad and proud

to help in this epic achievement. And there are many in this room numbered among those to whom Jewry owes a deep debt of gratitude for this superb creation. We are as one in our concern for its preservation and upbuilding."

Judge Proskauer praised the activities of the Joint Distribution Committee, the HIAS, the ORT and the "Aliyah" work of the Hadassah for the assistance they have rendered in relieving the suffering of thousands of European Jews.

Other speakers include Jacob Weinberg, leader of the Jewish labor movement; Gedaliah Bublick, Mizrahi leader; Mrs. David de Sola Pool, president of Hadassah; Dr. Israel Goldstein, president of the Jewish National Fund in America and Baruch Zuckerman, leader of the Zionist Laborites. (Many of these addresses will be published in tomorrow's JTA Bulletin.)

The conference was opened with memorial services for the millions of Jews in Europe who have been murdered by the Axis powers.

WASHINGTON OFFICIAL LAUDS CONTRIBUTION OF REFUGEES TO WAR EFFORT

NEW YORK, Aug. 29. (JTA)--While refugee immigration to the United States during the ten years of the Hitler regime has increased the population of this country by less than two-tenths of one percent, the newcomers have made contributions to victory and the enrichment of American life out of all proportion to their numbers, it was reported at a meeting under the auspices of the National Refugee Service, held last night at the Belmont Plaza Hotel.

Edward J. Ennis, Director of the Alien Enemy Control Unit of the Department of Justice, addressing the meeting, declared that the newcomers have repaid this country for its hospitality by loyalty and devotion to the war effort. As evidence that the government's faith in admitting the refugees was well founded, Mr. Ennis revealed that among the 260,000 emigres from Europe who have reached our shores since 1933 the Department of Justice found only a scant handful whom it was necessary to detain as dangerous or potentially dangerous to the war effort.

ELIAHU TCHERIKOVER, JEWISH HISTORIAN, DEAD; FUNERAL TODAY

NEW YORK, Aug. 29. (JTA)--Funeral services will be held here tomorrow for Eliahu Tcherikover, 62, noted Jewish historian and one of the founders of the Yiddish Scientific Institute, who died Saturday from a heart attack while vacationing at Palenville, N.Y. He will be buried at the Workmens' Circle cemetery.

Born in 1881 in Poltava, in the Ukraine, Tcherikover studied in the University of St. Petersburg, in Russia, where he was arrested for revolutionary activities. When he was released after one year of imprisonment, he devoted himself to literary work. He came to New York in 1915 but returned to Russia in 1917 after the fall of the Czarist regime. During the Petlura pogroms against Jews in the Ukraine, he collected material which he published in Berlin in 1929 in a volume entitled "The History of the Pogrom Movement in the Ukraine." He also edited a three-volume "History of the Jews." Last year the Yiddish Scientific Institute published his two-volume work "Jews in France." Prior to his sudden death, he completed the second volume of the "History of the Jewish Labor Movement in the United States" which is now on the press.