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BRITISH GOVERNMENT ASKED TO STATE DEFINITE POLICY ON PALESTINE

LONDON, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- A demand that the British Government immediately state its policy with regard to Palestine, in view of the fact that within three months that country will be closed to Jewish immigration under the terms of the White Paper of 1939, is voiced in the current issue of the influential financial weekly "The Economist" in an editorial strongly supporting a union of Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Transjordan.

The editorial, which is headed "A Middle-Eastern Opportunity," says that since March, 1944 has been fixed by the White Paper "to change conditions of Jewish immigration into Palestine," the government is placed under a positive obligation to state its policy in this regard. It asserts that most experts on the Middle East are agreed that the problem is "insoluble" in terms of Palestine alone, and must be approached from the wider concept "of a measure of Arab union" in the Middle East.

Reviewing the arguments in favor of a union of Palestine, Transjordan, Syria and Lebanon, the editorial says that although "it would not guarantee a settlement of the Jewish problem, it would at least put an end to a condition under which it seems the problem cannot be settled." It adds that such a union could be initiated now "since French obstacles have been removed." The last is evidently a reference to the agreement between the French Committee of National Liberation and the Syrian and Lebanese governments which grants independence to those states.

600 JEWISH REFUGEES EN ROUTE FROM LISBON TO PALESTINE

JERUSALEM, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- Jewish immigration groups here were informed today that 600 refugees have left Lisbon aboard the Portuguese steamer Nyassa en route to Palestine. Most of the refugees are reported to have been in Spain or Portugal since the beginning of the war. They are the first group ever to sail directly from Lisbon to Palestine.

The voyage of the Nyassa, which is the first ship to make a commercial trip through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal since Italy entered the war in June, 1940, has been financed by the Joint Distribution Committee. The refugees, who are in possession of Palestine immigration certificates, will be landed at Haifa.

RUSSIA URGED TO PERMIT CIVILIAN REFUGEES FROM POLAND TO EMIGRATE

LONDON, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- The Bishop of Chichester has voiced support of a demand advanced by the Manchester Guardian that the Soviet Government permit refugees from Poland, among whom are 600,000 Jews, to emigrate from Russia.

"However sharp the political controversies between Russia and Poland are," the Bishop told reporters, "there is no reason why the Soviet authorities should ignore the appeal to permit the emigration of refugees from Poland now on Russian soil since this appeal is based on good will among the Allied nations and mercy for helpless persons."

MANY NATIVE AND PALESTINIAN JEWS APPOINTED TO HIGH POSTS BY HAILE SELASSIE

CAIRO, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia has placed a large number of native Jews - Falashas - in important administrative posts as part of a large scale program to rebuild the internal administration of the country destroyed during the Italian occupation, it is learned here.

The Emperor is also utilizing the services of several Palestine Jews, who are now in the country operating and directing new industrial plants. Textile experts from the Arit textile concern in Palestine are operating the large fiber factory established in Addis Ababa. Some of the persons who are now in government posts are Prof. Kamrat, a Falasha, who is in the Department of Education; Jacob Tesedco, also a Falasha, on the staff of the Ministry of Finance; Dr. Alexander Katz, former German industrialist, in charge of the tax department of the Finance Ministry.

Prof. Norman Bentwich, former Attorney-General of Palestine, was recently in Addis Ababa as an adviser to the Emperor on international affairs, while an American Jewish attorney, Nathan Marcin, who represented Haile Selassie in Jerusalem when the Italians sued unsuccessfully for possession of the Emperor's property in Palestine, is now a judge of the Ethiopian High Court. Prof. Bentwich, incidentally, organized a branch of the Friends of the Hebrew University during his stay in Addis Ababa.

POLISH GOVERNMENT BANS DISTRIBUTION OF BOOK CONTAINING ANTI-SEMITIC MATERIAL

LONDON, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- The Polish Government has instructed civil and military authorities to cease distribution of a volume entitled "Polish Culture," which has been criticized for containing anti-Semitic statements, it was disclosed today by Emanuel Szerer, one of the two Jewish deputies in the Polish National Council.

Mr. Szerer revealed that he has received a communication from Home Minister Wladyslaw Banaczuk assuring him that distribution of the offending book will be stopped and that an investigation will be made to discover who is responsible for its publication and whether it was subsidized with government funds. The work was published in the United States.

AMERICAN SOLDIERS LAUD JEWISH ACHIEVEMENTS IN PALESTINE, BRICKNER REPORTS

TEL AVIV, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- American soldiers with whom he has spoken during his visit to army installations in the Middle East have described Tel Aviv as an "oasis of civilization" and have spoken highly of Jewish achievements in Palestine, Rabbi Barnett Brickner, who is visiting Jewish soldiers on all the fighting fronts throughout the world on behalf of the Jewish Welfare Board, today told Mayor Israel Rokach of this city.

Dr. Brickner, who will tour the Jewish settlements throughout the country, laid a wreath in the American military cemetery yesterday and visited United States camps "somewhere in Palestine." He also attended the Palestine Orchestra's first performance of a work by a local composer, Mark Lavria. Dr. Brickner said that he was impressed by the generally high morale of Jewish soldiers on all fronts.

The Palestine Victory League for Russia announced today that its "Palestine - Russia" exhibition will open in Jerusalem on Saturday. Soviet diplomatic representatives in neighboring countries have been invited to attend.

4,500 COMMUNITIES PARTICIPATED IN UNITED JEWISH APPEAL'S 1943 CAMPAIGN

NEW YORK, Jan. 4, (JTA) -- An unprecedented total of 4,500 Jewish communities throughout the country, the largest number ever to engage in any drive for Jewish rescue and reconstruction, participated in the record 1943 campaign of the United Jewish Appeal for Refugees, Overseas Needs and Palestine, it was announced today.

It was pointed out that through the efforts of the United Jewish Appeal the number of communities active in the nationwide drive in behalf of the Joint Distribution Committee, United Palestine Appeal and National Refugee Service, had increased from 2,900 in 1939 to the new high of 4,500 in the fifth year of the existence of the largest Jewish fund-raising organization in the world. It was also announced that a larger number of communities had gone over the top this year than in any previous year in the history of the U.J.A.

SWEDISH AND DANISH JEWS TO PLANT FOREST IN PALESTINE IN HONOR OF SWEDISH KING

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4, (JTA) -- The Stockholm radio said today that Swedish Jews and Danish Jewish refugees in Sweden planned to plant a forest in Palestine and name it "King Gustav The Fifth Woods" as a means of thanking the Swedish King for opening the nation's portals to the Jews from Denmark, the Federal Communications Commission reports.

"We have no great possibilities to honor Sweden's King and people," the broadcast quoted a famous Swedish Jew, "but for coming generations this wood shall be a testimony to a noble deed in the darkest phase of our time."

18TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF YIDDISH SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTE OPENING FRIDAY

NEW YORK, Jan. 4, (JTA) -- The 18th annual conference of the Yiddish Scientific Institute will open on Friday, at Hunter College, it was announced today. Dr. Paul Klapper, president of Queens College and a prominent educator, will be the guest speaker and will address the audience on the role of scholarship in the world today.

Dr. Samuel C. Kohn, director of the Bureau of War Records of the Jewish Welfare Board, will speak on "Jews in the American Army;" Dr. Max Weinreich, research director of the Yiddish Scientific Institute, on the Institute's place in Jewish life; and Dr. I. N. Steinberg, "father" of the Kimberly settlement project, on "Jewish Universalism." The conference will continue through Sunday.

CANADIAN JEWISH NATIONAL FUND RAISED \$100,000 IN 1943; SETS \$150,000 AS 1944 GOAL

MONTREAL, Jan. 4, (JTA) -- The Jewish National Fund of Canada raised \$100,000 during 1943, it was announced today in a year-end report by Rabbi Jesse Schwartz, executive director of the Zionist Organization of Canada. The Canadian JNF has set \$150,000 as its goal for 1944.

PUBLISHER OF LONDON JEWISH CHRONICLE DIES SUDDENLY IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK, Jan. 4, (JTA) -- Leopold Kessler, publisher of the London Jewish Chronicle, leading Anglo-Jewish publication in Great Britain, died in Roosevelt Hospital here yesterday from a heart attack. He was over 70. Mr. Kessler had been associated with the Chronicle, which is over 100 years old, for the past 30 years.

The publisher came to the United States early in 1940 on a visit, but was prevented from returning because of war-time conditions. He was a well known mining engineer and had written several authoritative texts on the subject. He leaves a daughter and two sons, one of whom, Capt. David F. Kessler, is serving with the British Army. Funeral services will be held Friday morning with Dr. David deSola Pool officiating.