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JEWS WILL NO LONGER BE A NATIONAL MINORITY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA; WILL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS

LONDON, Mar. 12. (JTA) -- Jews will not be considered a national minority in liberated Czechoslovakia, it was announced here today by Hubert Ripka, Czechoslovakian Minister of State, on the occasion of the ceremonial departure of President Benes for Czechoslovakia.

The special rights for national minorities which existed in Czechoslovakia before the outbreak of the war will be abolished, Ripka said in the course of a statement on his government's attitude towards the Jewish problem. This, he pointed out, will be applied even to the Jewish minority. "Jews will have full equality of rights with all citizens," he declared.

Czechoslovakia, he continued, is prepared to accept new international protection of minorities after the war, but only if this system of protection is applied to all states, large as well as small.

Reiterating the Czechoslovakian Government's sympathy for Zionism, the statement by Mr. Ripka said that emigration of Zionists from Czechoslovakia to "their own national state" will not be hindered. "Jews who do not desire to emigrate from Czechoslovakia will enjoy full and equal rights in the country, which is self-evident for any nation repudiating with disgust the barbarous Nazi racial doctrines," it emphasized.

Mr. Ripka pledged that all anti-Jewish laws and regulations, which were introduced in Czechoslovakia after the Munich pact, will be abolished, and that acts based on those laws will be declared void. "While there will be certain modifications in the economic system, these will affect everyone, regardless of origin and race," he added. Residents of Czechoslovakia who have taken an active part in persecuting the Jews and who exploited anti-Semitism for their personal advantage will be punished, the statement declared.

In explaining why the status of national minorities will be abolished, the statement says that "Hungarian and German minorities abused their minority rights, therefore members of national minorities will in the future be limited to equality as individuals." This would not affect freedom of religion nor the cultural interests of the Jews, the statement pointed out.

"As regards Zionists," it reads, "it follows from our fundamentally favourable attitude towards the national Zionist movement that its members, as in the past, will be able to leave for Palestine. The authorities will help in organizing the emigration plans."

Referring to the scarcity of news with regard to the fate of the Jews liberated in Ruthenia and in Slovakia, the statement emphasizes that technical difficulties and the dislocation of transport are preventing normal communication. "Our government will welcome the help of Jewish organizations abroad in easing the lot of the Jews in Czechoslovakia," the statement concludes.

400 JEWS FROM OSWIECIM CAMP REACH RUMANIA; 6,000 REPATRIATED JEWS HOLD CONFERENCE

BUCHAREST, Mar. 12. (JTA) -- About 400 Jews who were deported from Hungary to the notorious Oswiecim camp today reached the Rumanian city of Arad. They were among the first large group liberated from the camp by the Russian troops.

Six thousand Transylvanian Jews who have returned from Germany, of the 140,000 deported there, held a conference in Klausenberg over the week-end and set up a Union of Jewish Communities whose first task will be to organize relief for Jews and investigate the position of the 134,000 deportees who are still missing. Among those participating in the conference were ten survivors from the Oswiecim camp, including six women. The women were so badly mistreated that they have an almost inhuman appearance.

The "Voice of America" broadcast beamed here from New York today reported passage by the New York State Legislature of an anti-discrimination bill and drew the attention of the Rumanian public to it because, the broadcast said, Rumania was still showing signs of anti-Semitism and Hitlerism. "The place that Rumania will occupy among the democratic states will largely depend on its attitude towards these problems," the broadcast added.

Chief Rabbi Shafran of Rumania today announced that Rumanian Jews will join with Jews throughout the world in observing this coming Wednesday as a day of mourning and fasting for the murdered Jews of Europe.

AGUDAH LEADER CONFERS IN SWITZERLAND ON RESCUE OF MORE JEWS FROM GERMANY

LONDON, Mar. 12. (JTA) -- H. A. Goodman, leader of the Agudas Israel in Britain, who has just returned from Switzerland, revealed today that while there he conferred with Jean Masy, former Swiss federal councillor who was instrumental in securing the release of 1,200 Jews from Theresienstadt, concerning the possibility of future rescue activities. Masy is now in Berlin.

On the invitation of the Swiss Government, Mr. Goodman participated in a conference at Montreux of 400 delegates of refugee groups, welfare organizations and government agencies on various aspects of the refugee problem. While in Switzerland he also conferred with various Jewish bodies on the possibility of coordinating rescue activities.

"CONSIDERABLE QUANTITIES" OF OIL DISCOVERED IN PALESTINE BY BRITISH GROUP, ARAB PRESS SAY

JERUSALEM, Mar. 12. (JTA) -- The Arab press today reported the discovery of "considerable quantities of oil" somewhere between the Dead Sea and the Egyptian border. The discovery was made by members of a British oil research group which is conducting boring operations in that region, the report said.

An Iraqi trade delegation has arrived here to negotiate a treaty between Iraq and Palestine. At a reception for the delegates, Geoffrey Walsh, economic adviser of the Palestine Government and Food Controller, pointed out that while Iraq was a "supply" country, Palestine was a "demand" country and, therefore, the two could cooperate to their mutual benefit.

Palestine, he said, needed raw materials from Iraq, and could export to it manufactured products in return. In 1944, Palestine's imports from Iraq totalled about \$13,500,000, while its exports to Iraq amounted to only about \$1,500,000.

BRITISH WEEKLY WARNS AGAINST "RASH" PARTITIONING OF PALESTINE; WEIZMANN HAILED

LONDON, Mar. 12. (JTA) -- Apparently referring to the persistent rumors that a plan for the partitioning of Palestine is being considered, the liberal New Statesman and Nation warns today against "rash drawing of boundaries." Such action, it points out, could nullify the Lowdermilk scheme for irrigation and electrification of Palestine. It says that Palestine must be open to all Jews who wish to settle there and advises Britain to help in the development of the country and thus give the Arab inhabitants confidence that they will not be neglected in post-war plans.

The Sunday Observer yesterday paid tribute to Dr. Chaim Weizmann on the occasion of his return here from Palestine. Reviewing the tense situation there, the paper says that the dilemma created by the conflicting Arab-Jewish claims calls "for all of Weizmann's forbearance and sagacity. At 70," it concludes, "his task of steering his people to peace and security is not nearly done."

LATIN-AMERICAN ZIONIST CONGRESS HOLDS MEETING MARKING URUGUAY'S INDEPENDENCE

MONTEVIDEO, Mar. 12. (JTA) -- The 300 delegates from more than a dozen countries who are attending the first Latin-American Zionist Congress, now in session here, were the guests of honor yesterday at a mass meeting sponsored by the congress to mark the anniversary of Uruguay's struggle for independence. More than 8,000 Jews and non-Jews were in the audience. Five-hundred members of the Moabbi youth organization paraded in the stadium where the meeting was held.

Discussion at the congress has been chiefly centered so far on means of securing a Jewish national home in Palestine, and of obtaining Jewish representation at the forthcoming United Nations conference at San Francisco. One of the speakers, Rabbi Klein of Buenos Aires, also demanded that the Allied nations grant the Jewish people co-belligerent status. A sharp debate was precipitated by one delegate who suggested that the Zionists have faith in Britain's good intentions. The overwhelming majority of the delegates indicated that they believed the Zionists must depend on their own efforts if their aims are to be achieved.

RACE WITHIN AMERICAN ZIONIST MOVEMENT DEMANDED BY ZOA LEADERS IN THIRTY STATES

NEW YORK, Mar. 12. (JTA) -- Thirty-six members of the administrative committee of the Zionist Organization of America, and a number of other active members of the organization in thirty states, have addressed a telegram to the American Zionist Emergency Council and to Dr. Israel Goldstein, president of the ZEA, asking for the restoration to Zionist leadership of Dr. Abba Hillel Silver and for settlement of the dispute within the Zionist ranks in the United States, it was announced here today.

The telegram expressed the feeling of uneasiness prevailing among some Zionist leaders throughout the country in connection with the present political situation and asked for a "militant policy". "We are greatly disturbed over the remarks made by Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt with regard to Palestine; Zionists received these remarks with a feeling of great disappointment," the telegram said, emphasizing that the present rift in the American Zionist movement may spell danger for the entire Zionist cause.

DR. ISADORE LUBIN, WHITE HOUSE AIDE, NAMED U.S. MEMBER ON ALLIED REPARATIONS BODY

WASHINGTON, Mar. 12. (JTA) -- Dr. Isadore Lubin will represent the United States on the Reparations Commission in Moscow, Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius said today. On leave of absence as United States Commissioner of Labor Statistics, Dr. Lubin has been serving as White House aide. Dr. Stettinius said that it was a great personal satisfaction to have Dr. Lubin as his associate again and that he knew of no man better qualified for the job.

