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ROOSEVELT SAYS HIS POSITION ON ZIONISM UNCHANGED; REITERATES SUPPORT OF COMMONWEALTH

WASHINGTON, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- President Roosevelt said today that his position on Zionism is unchanged from that which he outlined in a message to the convention of the Zionist Organization of America last October, in which he favored unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization in Palestine, and a policy which would result in the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth there.

The President authorized Dr. Stephen S. Wise, to issue in his name the following statement: "I made my position on Zionism clear in October. That position I have not changed and shall continue to seek to bring about its earliest realization." The statement was initialed by Mr. Roosevelt.

Dr. Wise, who was received by the President in his capacity as chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council, spent three-quarters of an hour with him discussing various questions concerning Palestine. Hayim Greenberg, chairman of the administrative committee of the Council and Herman Shulman, chairman of its economic committee, who arrived here from New York with Dr. Wise, told the press that "the President's statement speaks for itself" and that further comment will have to wait "until consideration of Dr. Wise's report by the executive of the Zionist Emergency Council."

The statement to which Mr. Roosevelt referred today was made by him on October 15, in a message to the 47th annual convention of the Zionist Organization of America held in Atlantic City. Addressed to Senator Robert Wagner, it read as follows:

"Knowing that you are to attend the 47th annual convention of the Zionist Organization of America, I ask you to convey to the delegates assembled my most cordial greetings. Please express my satisfaction that in accord with traditional American policy, and in keeping with the spirit of the Four Freedoms, the Democratic Party at its July convention this year included the following plank in its platform: 'We favor the opening of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization, and such a policy as to result in the establishment there of a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth.'

"Efforts will be made to find appropriate ways and means of effectuating this policy as soon as practicable. I know how long and ardently the Jewish people have worked and prayed for the establishment of Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth. I am convinced that the American people give their support to this aim and if re-elected I shall help to bring about this realization."

Arab Congress Opens In Cairo; Will Study Several Proposals On Palestine

CAIRO, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- The pan-Arab Congress which opens here tomorrow will study, among other things, a number of proposals concerning Arab-Jewish relations and the future of Palestine, it was reported today. Husa el Alani, Palestine Arab leader, will participate in the congress as a full-fledged delegate, the report said.

FRENCH ASSEMBLY APPROVES BILL FOR RESTITUTION OF CONFISCATED JEWISH PROPERTY

PARIS, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- The French Consultative Assembly today approved a bill providing for a "speedy referee procedure" for the restitution to Jewish owners of property lost through German or Vichy anti-Jewish legislation. The bill constitutes a combination of the drafts of the restitution laws submitted by the French Government and by the French Socialist Party. It recommends:

1. All confiscations, as well as sales of property made by Jews under duress, are to be considered void.
2. Legitimate profits from confiscated Jewish enterprises are to be refunded to the owners. Illegitimate profits are to be confiscated by the state.
3. All sales of Jewish property allegedly made with the consent of the owners are to be considered as having been made under duress, unless the buyer produces evidence to the contrary.
4. Damage caused by an absent or insolvent buyer of Jewish property is to be paid by the state under the rules applied to war damages.
5. The former Jewish owners have the choice of bringing their cases either before a civil court, or before a commercial court, which acts more rapidly. It is to either of these courts that the rightful owners must apply for both annulment of compulsory sales of property and for restitution of property.
6. All cases are to be studied by the state prosecutor for eventual criminal action against those who acquired Jewish property. All bankruptcy cases affecting Jewish firms which were decided under the Vichy regime are to be reviewed.

The combined bill is considered an improvement over the government draft and embodies part of the suggestions voiced by the Representative Council of French Jews. Its speedy promulgation is anticipated.

OVER 500,000 JEWS STILL IN GERMAN HANDS, HITLER REVEALS; RESCUE EFFORTS PRESSED

LONDON, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- Germany still has more than 500,000 Jews under its control, it was disclosed here today on the basis of a statement by Gestapo Chief Heinrich Himmler.

Himmler is reported to have given these figures to Jean Musy, former Swiss federal councillor, who was instrumental in securing the release of 1,200 Jews from Theresienstadt. Musy revealed the information to H. A. Goodman, political secretary of the Agudas Israel, who was in Switzerland for several weeks conferring on rescue matters.

Reporting on his activities in Switzerland, Mr. Goodman said today that there are still possibilities of rescuing these half-million Jews and that vigorous efforts in their behalf must continue. He paid tribute to Switzerland for the assistance it is giving 30,000 Jewish refugees.

Mr. Goodman said that he was embarrassed, as a Briton, to find that there was no British diplomat in Switzerland assigned to rescue matters, while representatives of the United States War Refugee Board and the Joint Distribution Committee were very active.

JEWISH FEDERATIONS DISCUSS EFFECT OF U.J.A. BREAK-UP; URGE U.J.A. RECONSTITUTION

GALVESTON, Texas, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- The effect of the recent break-up of the United Jewish Appeal on local federations and welfare funds was given careful consideration at the executive session of the Southwestern Region of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds held here this week, with 43 delegates in attendance.

A vigorous resolution was adopted deploring the break in the United Jewish Appeal and urging that an immediate effort be made to reconstitute this joint effort -- by the appointment of an impartial arbitration committee, if necessary. The waste and duplication of independent campaigns was condemned and community representatives, in resolving to do their utmost in raising funds for overseas work, demanded that the JDC, UPA, and NRS get together and assume their share of this responsibility through a joint campaign.

Of major importance to the delegates was the decision to endorse the establishment of a regional community relations office under the auspices of the Southwestern communities. The proposed office will operate under the direction of a professional executive. Discussion was based upon the special survey of civic-protective work in the southwestern area which clearly indicated the need for an organized program of intercommunity cooperation in this important field.

Additional action at the meeting included a resolution urging the CJFWF to hasten its review of national budgeting plans and to work out a satisfactory formula so that communities allocating their funds might have the benefit of the best service available. Consideration was given also to the local needs of the Southwestern communities. The 1944 officers of the Southwestern Region of the CJFWF who will continue in the same posts in 1945 are: Sol Brachman of Ft. Worth, regional chairman; M. M. Feld of Houston, and Julius Livingston of Tulsa, vice-chairman; N. Dan Dreobon of San Antonio, treasurer; and Jacob H. Kravitz of Dallas, secretary.

Conference of Jewish Federations Proposes Allotment Committee for JDC-UPA

LOS ANGELES, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- A resolution calling for the appointment of a committee to explore monetary needs of the JDC and UPA, the two former partners of the recently dissolved United Jewish Appeal, was passed at the executive conference of the Western States Region of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds held here this week. Thirty-seven delegates representing 13 communities participated.

It is proposed that the committee, which will number seven members acceptable to both the JDC and the UPA, be appointed by the CJFWF. The resolution also provides for the issuance of a statement advising member communities of the findings of the investigation into the two agencies' monetary needs. This statement would be permissive and its recommendation would not be binding upon the Council's member agencies. The resolution asks the Council's other regions to consider this proposal.

A further resolution was passed allowing for reconsideration of the situation by the region if the matter has not been clarified nationally within six weeks. At that time the regional executive board will reconvene and other proposals, such as the Central Atlantic Regional proposal for a regional allotment committee, will also be considered.

LATIN-AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS URGED TO SUPPORT ZIONIST DEMANDS AT SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE

MONTEVIDEO, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- The closing session of the Latin-American Zionist Congress last night adopted a resolution appealing to the governments of Latin-America to support the demands of the Jewish Agency at the forthcoming United Nations Conference at San Francisco. The delegates also voted to send cables to the governments of the United States, Britain and Russia asking their support for Zionist aims.

BRIG. GENERAL FELDMAN GETS LEGION OF MERIT MEDAL FOR WORK IN MEDITERRANEAN AREA

NEW YORK, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- Brig. Gen. Herman Feldman, 55, of Washington, D.C., has been awarded the Legion of Merit, it was reported today by the National Jewish Welfare Board. He was responsible for the planning, coordination and operation of the supply functions of the Mediterranean Base Section.

"Largely due to his untiring efforts and diligence," said the award citation, "supplies and equipment have been made available to the combat units in adequate quantities and with proper timing." Gen. Feldman has been a professional soldier for the past thirty-seven years.

"I AM AN AMERICAN DAY" PROCLAIMED BY ROOSEVELT FOR MAY 20; LAUDS NATURALIZED AMERICANS

WASHINGTON, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- President Roosevelt today proclaimed May 20 as "I Am An American Day." His proclamation reads:

"Whereas within the last twelve months we have granted citizenship with its many privileges to thousands of foreign-born men and women through naturalization, and have received into full citizenship the great numbers of native-born youth who have come of age; and

"Whereas these citizens are giving strength to our democracy in its struggle against tyranny and in its striving to make secure through international organization the rights and opportunities of citizens in our own and in other sovereign nations; and

"Whereas the Congress, by Public Resolution 67, approved May 3, 1940, has recognized the third Sunday in May of each year as "I Am An American Day" and has requested that the President issue a proclamation setting aside that day for the special recognition of those who have been naturalized or have attained their majority during the past year;

"Now, therefore, I, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, in order that we may honor those who have recently become members of our body politic and at the same time reaffirm our allegiance to the principles of American citizenship, do hereby proclaim Sunday, May 20, 1945, as "I Am An American Day."

U.S. RABBIS SEND FUNDS TO JEWS IN FRANCE "TO SAVE JEWISH CHILDREN FROM CONVERSION"

NEW YORK, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- The Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada today made public the text of a cable received from leaders of orthodox Jewry in France, disclosing that "it is impossible to rescue Jewish children from the Catholic convents and from private non-Jewish homes" where they were given shelter during the German occupation of the country. The Union decided to send 100,000 francs as an initial contribution "to save Jewish children from conversion."

ALEXANDER GRANACH, JEWISH REFUGEE ACTOR, DIES; WAS IN CAST OF CURRENT HIT

NEW YORK, Mar. 16. (JTA) -- Funeral services will be held at the Park West Memorial Chapel here on Sunday for Alexander Granach, German-Jewish refugee actor, who died on Wednesday. He was 66. Mr. Granach had a major role in the current production of "A Bell for Adano."

Although he spoke no English when he came to the United States in 1938, Mr. Granach soon secured roles in several major films. Born in the Ukraine, he went to Germany in 1906 and until the rise of Hitler he was prominent in the German theatre. He fled from Germany to Austria, then to the Soviet Union and finally came here via Switzerland.