

Vol. 17

Section I : 1939; 1940;
undated material

fols. 1 — 270, 270a-c,
271—274

Section II : post-7 May 1940
(Postgate correspondence)

fols. 275—370 ;
1955 (Library correspondence)

fols. 371 — 377

(to precede fol. 1)

Vol. 17

Section I

1939

(fols. 1-153)

and

1940
(fols. 154-266)

and

undated material

(fols. 267-274)

(1)

Home Office,
Whitehall,
S.W. 1.

5th January, 1939.

Dear Private Secretary,

I return the enclosed letter which you sent to me on the 11th December.

The position is that we are still awaiting a report on the case of Erich Stern from the German Jewish Aid Committee, and I am afraid it is not possible for the Home Office to act until we hear from the Committee whether there is anything which can be done in regard to his future welfare.

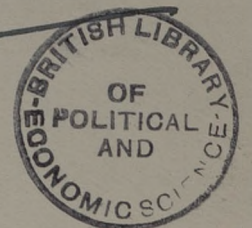
You mentioned in your letter that Stern was to be sent back to Germany on the 20th December.

I hope this has not, in fact, occurred, and I think some comfort can be derived from the fact that ~~he~~ *we* ~~was~~ *was* told in November that he must leave Trieste on the 17th of that month.

Yours sincerely,

A. Strickland

The Private Secretary to
the Right Hon. G. Lansbury, M.P.



(2)

Tel. No.: VICTORIA 8585.

Please quote reference
number—

HOME OFFICE (ALIENS DEPARTMENT),
STANLEY HOUSE,
MARSHAM STREET,
LONDON, S.W.1.

K. 13531.

9th January, 1939.

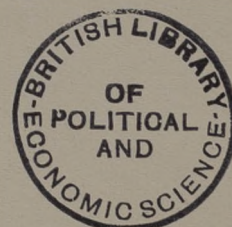
Dear Mr. Lansbury,

With reference to your letter of the 22nd November last, addressed to Mr. Cooper, regarding the relatives of Mr. D.H. Klausner whom it is desired to bring over to this country, I am writing to let you know that a communication has been sent to the appropriate British Passport Control Officer in Germany authorising visas for Mr. Hirsch Klausner of 1, Ulhandstrasse, Frankfurt-on-Main, and his family.

Yours very truly,

M. Stewart

The Right Honourable G. Lansbury, M.P.



M449

Mrs. Joseph Fels

(3)

Villa Mirka, Boulevard Frederick Sperling
Cimiez, Nice, A.M. — Jan. 15, 1939.

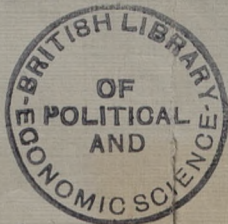
Dear George, —

It was so good to hear from you again. The letters bespoke the rare good man that you are. What you wrote about Alma and Eileen impels me to send the enclosed from Anna Barnes. Anna's allusion to what she wrote about Joe has reference to the revised edition of the Life of Joseph Fels which I am about getting published. The first edition did not satisfy me, so I have made it all over. I have taken out much and added much. I am sure you too will like it far better than the former one. But your part in it remains unchanged and you know what large, excellent part you had in it. As soon as it is out I shall of course send you a copy. It is being

done in America. Louis Wallis and his wife have the publishing in hand. Its appearance will be very timely - has so much to do with the problems of today. I have been at work on it for a long time but held back bringing it out until now. You will like especially the way I close it.

How Joe's spirit remains with us! It is twenty-five years since he left us but through the many days I have felt him always present, always helpful. I think their light unfailingly lights up ours here.

I wish you would tell me what you think of Mussolini. I have such deep faith in him, in his great goodness. In another letter I will send you copy of what I wrote about him, long ago, to Joe Barnes.
Sincerely,
Mary.



M449

Telegrams: Enhearten, Norwest, London

Telephone: Euston 2730

Cablegrams: Enhearten, London

(4)

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Germany Emergency Committee

(Appointed by Friends Service Council and Meeting for Sufferings)

FRIENDS HOUSE, EUSTON ROAD, LONDON, N.W.1.

Chairman:

GEORGE B. JEFFERY

Vice-Chairman:

EDITH M. PYE

Secretary:

BERTHA L. BRACEY

Treasurers:

MARY ORMEROD

WM. F. NICHOLSON

31st January, 1939

Dear Friend,

I have heard from Erwin Strunz, a young Austrian, whom I knew well in Vienna, that you have kindly intervened in his behalf with the New Zealand Government. Erwin Strunz has received a very favourable communication from the New Zealand Government and thinks that if you could speak further on his behalf, he would receive the permit for New Zealand at once.

I hesitate to trouble you further knowing how busy you are and how many you must have to help; but if you should have a further opportunity of putting in a word for Erwin Strunz and his family, I should be very grateful.

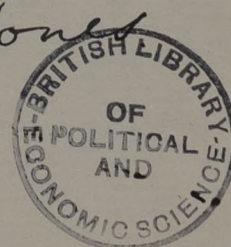
I returned from a week in Vienna, last Friday. I saw one or two Pacifists, among them Olga Misar and Walter Mudrak. Frau Misar hopes to come to England soon. The situation in Vienna has certainly not improved since I left in August and there is a great feeling of unrest. Two strikes were reported in large factories while I was there and there were a great many soldiers out on the streets.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

p.p. MARY CAMPBELL.

The Right Hon.
George Lansbury, M.P.
39, Bow Road,
E. 3.



M449

31th of January, 1939

Erwin Strunz,
Ardmore, Co. Waterford,
Ireland

(5)

Dear Mr. L a n s b u r y,

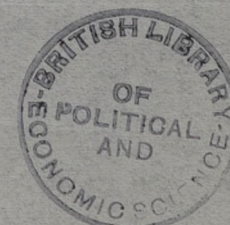
Ever since your kindness in mentioning me to the High Commissioner in New Zealand House, there has been a chance of my obtaining a permit to emigrate to that country.

The latest is that I have received the following encouraging reply from the New Zealand Federation of Labour :

" I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 11th November requesting assistance in obtaining a permit to allow you to enter New Zealand.

In reply I beg to advise that I am placing your request before the Minister of Customs, and you will be advised of the decision in connection with the same as early as possible. There are many difficulties in the way at the present moment as the government claim it has already received its quota of refugees when we made an application for permission to allow seven families of Austrian refugees to enter New Zealand. We have not yet received permission for them, but would advise you to keep in touch with the High Commissioner's Office London, who I think in the final analysis will grant the application. With best wishes, Yours faithfully : F. Cornwell, Secretary,
31 Trades Hall, Vivian Street,
Wellington C 2 "

As you will gather from this letter, you would only have to be good enough to mention my name again the High Commissioner in New Zealand House for me to be granted the permit, which your great personal influence would render absolutely certainty.



M449

Erwin Strunz

~~2)~~

31 Jan. 1939

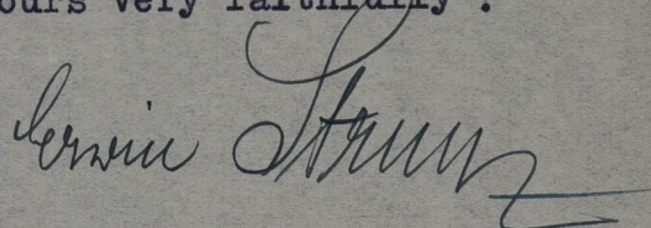
6

I hope you will forgive my troubling you with this new request, and that you will see your way to performing this very great service to myself and my family. You will doubtless remember my having been recommended to you by my friend Hubert Butler and also by Mary Campbell and other friends.

I have a new address, and am at present acting as head of the two Irish homes for refugees, Ardmore and Cappagh. My present address is : Erwin Strunz, Ardmore, Co. Waterford, Ireland.

With my very warmest thanks for the great trouble you have taken, I remain always

Yours very faithfully :



Erwin Strunz

And Now, What . . . !

The week's routine comes to a close . . . and, now, how to fill precious hours with the utmost enjoyment?

What a lot of possible answers there are: *Sport*, as a spectator or as a participant. . . *Shows*—the cinema; the theatre; variety or revue; concert hall or cabaret. . . *Home* itself, with its own attractions—gramophone, radio, television set—social pleasures, with yourself as host or hostess amid hospitable surroundings.

Whatever your mood, whatever your tastes, the advertisements in *The Evening News* make choice simple. Amusement Guide, Sportsman's Guide, Announcements offering the essential adjuncts of hospitality. . . these will help you not only to make the most of your week-ends, but also to plan next week's shopping advantageously and in advance.

The Evening News and Evening Mail

Editorial Offices: Carmelite House, London,
E.C.4. Telephone: Central 6000

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1939

LOOKING FORWARD

THERE is still optimism in the world. That cheerful indefatigable man, Mr. George Lansbury, who is eighty years old, said this week: "I wish I could live for another fifty years to see the developments which will take place in that time."

Looking forward is a pastime in which few people nowadays indulge; yet, if one considers the developments of the past fifty years, they are—in spite of all setbacks, discouragements, wars and disasters—immense, and it is possible that the next fifty years may hold developments in store just as numerous and just as vast.

Anyone who in February, 1889, had looked forward, as Mr. Lansbury has been doing, would never have been able to imagine changes in all departments of life as tremendous and sweeping as have occurred.

He would never have visualised that machines would be hurtling through the air at more than three hundred miles an hour: that by means of television it would be possible to watch on a small screen events in a studio up to 50 miles away: that telephone conversations across the Atlantic would be the commonplace of big business: that the invention of the motor-car would have revolutionised transport.

No more could he have foreseen that there would be in constant use home labour-saving devices such as the vacuum cleaner and the refrigerator: that the conquest of pain by anaesthesia would have marched on by leaps and bounds: that London would have grown from something over four million to nine million inhabitants: that there would stretch out from this London miles of new suburbs along great traffic highways, and that in its centre there would rise vast blocks of flats like townships in themselves.

Fifty years stretch out between now and February, 1989, and between then and now in many aspects of man's conditions and circumstances there will be more than superficial changes. Someone of thirty to-day will then be an octogenarian like Mr. Lansbury; he will have witnessed, through the swift years of his maturity, most of these changes, have shared in them and taken a part in their moulding.

What political, economic, social and material progress will he have seen? It is rash to prophesy. Not in 1889, but a few years later the romantic prophets were very busy, in novels and pamphlets, putting the world to rights and proving that the millennium was only half a century off. The years have gone by, and the millennium is still just as far away.

It is not simply for that now that thinking men look. The manners and modes of life change, but its spirit does not. No-one expects political or economic revolutions now to bring universal bliss; no-one thinks that some new kind of push-button gadget, some swifter method of communication, will make everybody happy and generous and good. Human progress in the ultimate things is imponderable and slow; in smaller matters it is swift and unpredictable and exciting, and for that none the less worth living through and watching.

not till 21 Feb.

7a

Joseph Weingarten

12. Briarwood Rd, (8)
S. W. 4.

[see Home Office of 13 May above] 9. Feb. February, 1939.
with 13 May 1939

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

At the earnest request of my Prof. Stanley Chapple I sent in my application to the Home Office of which I enclose here a copy / yesterday as there is a meeting of the J. C. M. on Friday and Saturday.

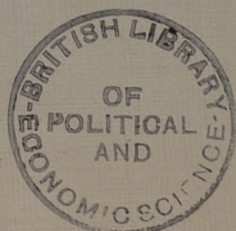
With my sincerest gratitude for your kind interest,

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Weingarten

The Rt. Hon.
George Lansbury, M. P.
39. Bow Road.
E. 3.



M449

Can you ring up

(9)

8th February 1939.

Home office whom I hope they will give him

The Under Secretary of State,
Alien Department,
Home Office,
S.W. 1.

Perman

Dear Sir,

I would like to apply for a permit to stay and to work with a view to taking up our naturalization papers when my five years are completed.

I do not wish to take work from English musicians, but merely to be allowed to give lessons to my friends and their acquaintances and to have the right to take my chance with other soloists in obtaining concert engagements.

I came to England in August 1934 and since then have been studying and giving concerts. I had an arrangement with Mr. W. Block (Block and Anderson Ltd. 30 Farringdon St. E.C.) that he should provide me with the necessary funds for living expenses & studies, while staying in England. My parents repaid him in Hungary.

(9)

with his of 9 Feb. 1939
October 1938, my parents (although about 48
years resident in Budapest, where I was
born) and myself were officially exiled
from Hungary owing to their being Jews and
originated from Poland.

There is a possibility of my Parents
staying there owing to my father being well
over 70.

English friends have very kindly
"adopted" me, making themselves responsible
for my keep, but I should like to be able
to continue my studies at the Guildhall
School of Music and to be able to do
something towards my future ^{as an} artist.

May I offer as references: Sir
Robert Mayer, Prof. Stanley Chapple
(Guildhall School of Music). J. R. Battley, D.C.C.
J. Smetelin, (7. St. Mary Abbots place,).

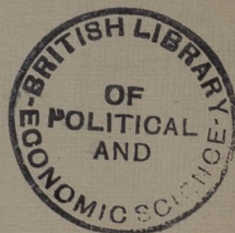
I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Joseph Weingarten

And:

Hungarian exile notice,
criticisms.



M449

William Joseph Jordan
(1879 -)

10

HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR NEW ZEALAND.

and
New Zealand



NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT OFFICES,
415, STRAND,
LONDON, W.C.2.

13th February, 1939.

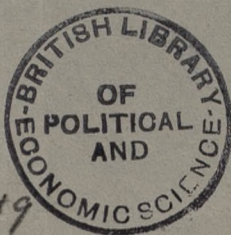
Dear Mr. Lansbury,

With reference to your letter of the 2nd instant recommending Mr. Ernst Mandl to me, this is to let you know that I have forwarded Mr. Mandl's application for permit to enter New Zealand and also that of his friend, Dr. Munk, to the Minister of Customs in New Zealand with a personal letter asking that, if possible, their cases be given favourable consideration.

I have received so many requests to support individual applications that I have found it necessary to make a general rule not to personally recommend applications when the applicants are not known to me, but in view of the special recommendation you have made in this case, I have decided to make an exception.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



M449

Wilhelm Wolf

Vienna, 19th February, 1939

The Right Honorable

Sir George Lansbury, M.P.

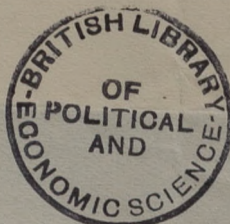
L o n d o n

Honoured Sir,

May I have the honour to address this letter to you as unknown but I am appealing to your humanity.

Owing to the existing conditions today I was and am forced like many other of my race to seek an asylum in some other country. All the various attempts I have made to obtain a visa have proved up to the present fruitless. Therefore I am compelled as a last resort to apply to you and hope you may be willing to help me out of my difficulties. I fought for this country as soldier and front-officer, was wounded and several times decorated. I take the liberty of approaching you in this matter in the hope that you will see your way to grant me a visa or permit in England or abroad or a situation. Naturally I am ready any kind of work that may come my way.

I am 40 years of age, unmarried and thoroughly healthy. I am civil engineer and civil architect, with diploma, licensed and authorized by the Government, I have 15 years of practice. I was born in Vienna,



M449

Wilhelm Wolf

7.11.1898. My permanent adress:Vienna, IX.Porzellangasse 22a.
I am German subject and have a valid passport No.39318
issued Polizeidirektion Vienna, 8.Oct.1938. I am the
only son of my mother, 78 years of age. In the last
months I must spent all reserves, am in despair and so
this letter has the sign S O S.

I have the honour to be,
honoured Sir, your most devoted and obedient servant

W. Wolf



Official and authorized civil-engineer and civil-architect with diploma, M.I.C. Vienna, Member of: Zentralvereinigung der Architekten Oesterreichs, Federation Internationale des ingenieurs-conseils Member and cofounder of "Revue Internationale d'Architecture" Oesterr. Ingenieur und Architektenverein etc.

C u r r i c u l u m - v i t a e

Name: Wilhelm Wolf,
Sex: Masculine
Date of birth: 7th November 1898
~~Place of birth: Vienna,~~
Nationality and passport: German
Passport issued Pol. Dion Vienna,
No. 39318
State of health: Testimonial of a
British Consular physician,

Permanent address: Vienna, IX/I.
Porzellangasse 22a
Speaks: English, French
Experience: 15 years practice.
Profession: engineer and architect
Special qualifications:
Examination of the state
Technical University 1923
Examination with the Government
1930 Degree as civil-engineer

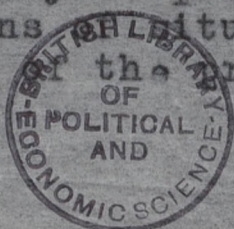
Joint the Austria army, 1916, left the army as lieutenant, one year front-service, wounded and decorated. Finished the Technical University 1923, 1923-25 journeys in all Europe etc.

Until 1929 employed with several architects, building contractors, stone industry, film industry, furnisher factories, interior decorators etc.

From 1929 until 1934 with Mrssrs. N. Rella & Neffe Bau A.G. Vienna, one of the biggest building firms of Austria as managing architect and engineer leader of the office of architecture, specialist of worker-houses of the city of Vienna, planing and designing about 300 different projects as: workerhouses, factories, industry buildings, appartements houses and electric works, villas and private houses, railway stations and settlements, schools and concert buildings, cinemas, bridges, bungalows weekendhouses etc.

1930 planing the first sky-scraper of Vienna, Herrengasse, further: Villa director Sogl, Mauer b/Wien, Schlossgartenstr. 3, Villa Dozent Dr. Robert Lenk, Vienna-Haifa, Starkfriedgasse 49, Livinghouse with garage for Mr. A. Amber, film producer, Vienna, VI. Gumpendorferstr. 132, Livinghouse with garage for Mr. Otto Swadlo factory for the same, Vienna, XII. Schönbrunner Schlossallee 33, Factory Lichtblau, Vienna, VI. Millergasse No. 1 different sketches and designs for H.H. the Maharajah of Jaipur 1937, about 200 memorial monuments of stone, prizes in different competitions as school Birkfeld, Styria, 1935-1936 working in Palestine as architect.

According Ministry Law the degree entitles: To make plans and to calculate to manage all works in connection with building and architecture, to collaude such works and to controll works of others to make recharches which are necessary to plan and to execute, futher measurements, calculations, plans and situations and geodatical, plans to act as expert in all branches of the profession, to certify and to legalize etc.



THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Broadcasting House, London, W. 1

TELEPHONE: WELBECK 4468 TELEGRAMS: BROADCASTS, LONDON

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Reference: AP/RB

22nd February, 1939

The Rt. Honble George Lansbury, M.P.,
39, Bow Road,
E. 3.

Dear Sir,

We understand from Mr. Pringle that you have kindly agreed to broadcast a five-minute talk in our programme "The World Goes By" to-night between 7.45 and 8.15 p.m.

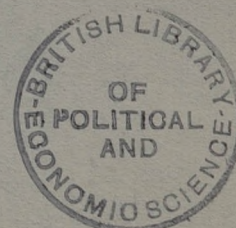
It is our usual practice to offer a fee of five guineas to all speakers contributing a five-minute talk to this programme. If you would care to accept this fee, we should be much obliged if, as a matter of form, you would kindly sign and return the reply sheet attached to the enclosed contract form.

Yours faithfully,

pp R. Boswell
MIB

for Programme Contracts Executive.

Tudor
6420
EWDB



M449

THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Broadcasting House, London, W.1

TELEPHONE: LONDON 2533 TELEGRAMS: BROADCASTS LONDON

ADVERTISING DIVISION

*Chimo Dept
Mr Fisher*

Feb 9 65

B.B.C.

15

24, HAYMARKET,
LONDON, S. W. 1.
TELEPHONE ABBEY 5028.

DAC/JT

23rd/2/39.

Rt. Hon. George Lansbury M.P.,
39, Bow road,
E.3.

Dear Mr Lansbury,

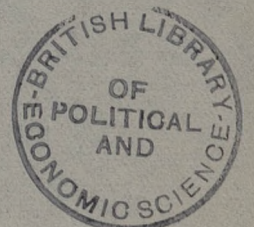
This is to confirm the telephone conversation with you yesterday, when you were so good as to agree to take part in the television programme, "Picture Page", at Alexandra Palace to-night. I will call for you and your two daughters at the House of Commons at 7.15.

The broadcast is to be an informal interview, and probably you will be asked for some of the outstanding and happiest memories of your life; though may we discuss this during the half-hour's journey to the studios?

Very truly yours,

Dorothy A. Cannell.

George



M449

about is damned and we are going to
like the gadarene swine to destruction.
Only men with singular faith in the
goodness of mankind can stop it"
(cheers).

Penwortham,
Near Preston,
25 February, 1939.

16

O. N. Stee

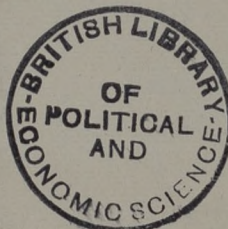
To the Rt. Hon. Geo. Lansbury, M.P.
House of Commons.

Sir,

In view of your professed devotion to the cause of peace, and to your uncompromising hostility to war for whatever purpose waged, it would naturally be assumed that the unwearied efforts of the Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain during recent months, not forgetting his personal visits to Munich and Rome would have met with your enthusiastic support; and that you would, both in Parliament and in the country, have voiced your approval of those efforts. Instead of this however, you have - at least to judge by the newspapers, which always report your speeches - studiously avoided giving any expression whatever to your feelings; and never once in the many debates in the House of Commons have you expressed gratitude for, or approval of, what the Prime Minister has done. If, as a member of the Socialist party, whose adherents have to be slaves of the Caucus and are not permitted to express opinions of their own (e.g. Cripps) you are forced to disagree with the Prime Minister's efforts and to hold the view that he "is leading the country into war" why don't you say so? If however you are really in sympathy with what he has done, and are firmly of the opinion that his efforts are making for real peace, why do you refuse to open your mouth and show that you are consistent in your devotion to the cause of peace? Why even comrade Mc Laren has more moral courage than you - read his speech reported above.

If you continue your silence much longer, i.e. if, while agreeing with the Prime Minister you refuse to make a public statement to that effect, the electors will write you down as a humbug; as one more devoted to party politics than the cause of peace. Genuine peace lovers would rather see you hostile to Chamberlain than that you should continue to sit on the fence, afraid to express yourself either one way or the other. **S**peak out man, and let the country know what you think about it all.

O. N. Stee.



M479

"God Bless Premier," Says
Socialist Labour M.P.

Mr. McLaren (Burslem, Lab) said that he saw in the Chancellor's figures a threat to the future of civilisation. "Is it too late even now for the statesmen of Europe to come together to do something to check the progress of this horror?" he asked. "God bless the Prime Minister—I say that now for what he did at Munich. We are discussing this passively because of his singular courage (cheers). Can he not even now call a conference of European statesmen.

"I cannot believe that we are so lost in the real spiritual reaction against this thing that we are going to remain here passively voting millions. The time has come when the House must bestir itself and every man and woman in its must back the Prime Minister and those who think like him to face Europe seriously and valiantly with vital force behind them to see if something cannot be done. In this vote I see the red light for civilisation in Europe, yet the men and women in the street seem more intent on the amusement of the moment than on the great tragedy which is being performed here to-day. The significance of this expenditure is that all we have dreamt about is damned and we are going down like the gadarene swine to destruction. Only men with singular faith in the goodness of mankind can stop it" (cheers).

Katowice (Poland) 27th. II. 1939.
Feb.

Artur Proskauer

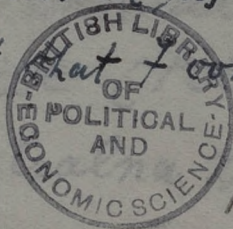
17

Dear Sirs. [see 20 Mar. below from Embassies
of Reconciliation]

The Germany Emergency Committee has send me
your honorable address and wrote me, that you are
able to help me. I had already written to the "Germany Emergen-
cy Committee of the Society of Friends" and I am repeating once
more my petition now to your philanthropic organisation.

I am a German citizen, a protestant Christian, but not Arier.
I am apothekary with a diploma and have a wife and
a daughter of 18 years old. My wife is occupied in the
trade of art and my daughter is student of the same trade
We live already about 5 years in Poland. I have prepared
many chemical specialities and my wife is still busy in
the trade. According to the rule here, the German citi-
zen are expelled systematically from the country, we
must therefore count every day that our stay here will be
limited, what was announced us by the Polish authority.

With regard to the fact that I come from jews, I could



M449

27 Feb. 1939

(18)

be exposed to the greatest danger, if I would be obliged to return to Germany. All organisations of help in Poland for emigrants are Jewish and give their help only to persons of Jewish descent. In my great need I beg to apply to you to do me kindly the favour by giving me your help and as I believe that thanks to the power of your organisation, which is the world over known as this, that gives her help to those poor men, who ask you a favour like that, and as I dare to hope, you will kindly contribute to get for us the permission of our coming to England. The English Consulates in Poland give visas of going to England only to those, who have estates in England. Thanks to our possibilities and abilities we shall not be obliged in England as we are convinced to get help from anybody. I beg you herewith once more kindly to give me your help in this matter, and to honour me with your kind answer and I beg to remain,

Dear Sirs

Yours respectfully

Artur Proskauer

Katorice (Poland)

ul. Teatralna 2. m. 4.

(19)

GL to H. Holiness Pope Pius XI
(1857 -

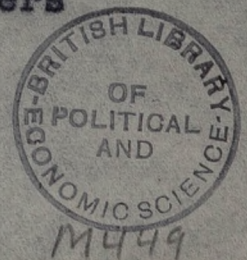
4th March, 1939.

Your Holiness,

May I most respectfully and sincerely thank Your Holiness for your broadcast appeal to the nations on behalf of peace? Your voice and words came over the air breathing peace to a world stricken with the palsy of fear, hatred and self-destruction. Will Your Holiness kindly bear with me while I make an appeal to you to carry your message of love, peace and goodwill a step farther?

I have met face to face most of the leading statesmen of the world. Each one of these great men acknowledged that unless the present arms race and reliance on brute force is ended the result will be universal destruction - no victors, all will be vanquished. Dictators, democrats, monarchs, all agree about this. Yet, as if struck by the frenzied madness of despair, they one and all continue to pursue the path which leads to annihilation. Strangely enough, these men who control the destinies of the human race, also without exception agree that all the questions - territorial, economic, financial - which divide governments and may lead to war, could and would be settled if responsible statesmen would gather together in conference and by discussion, reason and common sense determine to find a peaceful solution of their differences. But unfortunately no one of them will as yet take his courage in both hands and fling out to the world the challenging call, "Come, let us reason together!"

Consequently I am constrained to appeal to Your Holiness, as in August 1935 I appealed to your universally revered predecessor, that you will without delay call upon the religious leaders of the world, including the leaders



GL. K. H. H. Pope Pius XI - 2 -

20

of Judaism, immediately to meet you in conference to discuss in what way pressure may be brought upon the statesmen of the world to cease this insane march to destruction: in fact, how they may unite to preserve Christendom and civilisation, and not how they may destroy it.

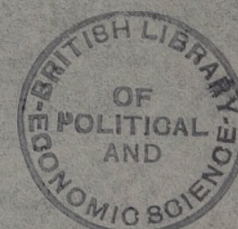
I am confident that if Your Holiness could call such a conference at Easter to assemble in Jerusalem, and from the Mount of Olives could on behalf of the conference send out such a call in the name of our Heavenly Father and his Blessed Son, the call would be responded to.

I make this appeal because the sands of time are running out; nations are bankrupting themselves in a vain effort to secure safety through armaments. My proposal may not in the judgment of Your Holiness be the best way of approach. All I am concerned about is that now, before it is too late, the entire voice of religion shall be heard by statesmen, bidding them accept the truce of God and resolve to adopt as the law of our being the gospel of love, equity and peace.

I trust Your Holiness will forgive my intrusion on your time and kindly give attention to my plea, and also accept my very best wishes that you may be long spared to guide and direct the affairs of the Church along the pathway of peace.

I have the honour to remain,

His Holiness the Pope,
The Vatican,
ROME.



M449

Mrs. Joseph Fels

Villa Mirka

Boulevard Frédéric Sper-
ling

Cimiez

Nice (A.M.)

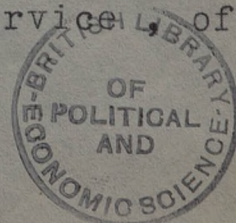
March 9th 1939

Dear George, -

Will you not arrange a question in the House of
Commons to ask :

" Why in all the proceedings at the Conference nothing is being mentioned of the "Nili", a secret organisation of Palestinian Jews who during the great war have supplied the British military authorities with information that was of considerable importance. General Allenby has declared later on that the work of the "Nili" was invaluable. This organisation working for the liberation of Palestine from the Turks, and with the hope that the British Government will bring an era of peace and prosperity to the Holy Land, have been animated by the noblest of ideals and sacrificed their all for the sake of their faith in Great Britain. The leaders of the organisation, the Aaronsohn family, have paid a terrible price. Sarah Aaronsohn died a martyr. Her father, an old man, tortured by the Turks, refused to reveal anything in spite of his tortures and of his daughter's tortures before his eyes. His son Zevi was terribly tortured, and died later from its consequences. Other members of the organisation were hanged by the Turks. Yet nothing has been revealed by any of them.

It is a great surprise that the Zionist leaders are not mentioning the "Nili" as a further claim, a claim of heroic service of



M449

Mrs. Joseph Fels

9 March 1939

-2-

22

holy aspiration, and of great assistance to the British by Palestinian Jews. With practically no cost to the British Government the "Nili" has done for the Empire as much as Lawrence's Bedouins. It is time that the H.M.G. reveals and recognizes these services which were so devoted and devoid of self-advertisement that they have remained until this day unknown to the great public."

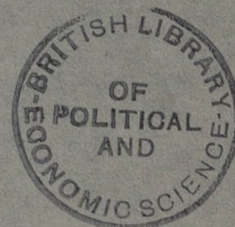
And please consult General Gribbon, who knows all this at first hand, Regency Cottage, Sandgate, Kent, Tel. Sandgate 78317, and read what Douglas Duff has about it in his books, "Palestine Picture" and "Poor Knight's Saddle". I will have these books sent to you.

As always

Devotedly yours

Mary
Mary Fels

It is indeed high time that the noble work of the Saronsohns and those who worked with them, is made public. I know how your spirit will respond.



M449

Copy

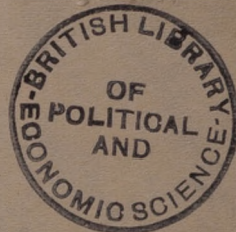
Ethel Halpin
[see below under date

March 8th - 1939
11 March

12, MONTFORT HOUSE,

BETHNAL GREEN, E.2.

23



Dear Mr. Lausbury.

M449

Mr. Legge requested an interview with

Sir Wyndham Beeders & myself to discuss his difficulties, with regard to Pilgrim House, as Sir Wyndham was unable to come yesterday evening. I had to see Mr. Legge alone, I think, in case he should refer the matter to you, it is well for you to know, that in the course of the 1 1/2 hours conversation, he spoke of Sir Wyndham & me having "invited him to become a member of the Pilgrim House Cttee" - I explained that you are chairman, Sir Wyndham President. & I. only an ordinary member, so that he & I alone, could have no power to suggest his becoming a member.

He began his talk by saying - that if - after hearing all he would have to say, we felt it would be better for him not to be on the committee he "would have no feelings about it" - but I am certain that he is very anxious to be put on, and am afraid that other members are much against it - Mr. Legge said that

15, MONTFORT HOUSE,

BETHNAL GREEN, E.2.

You "had been very put out with him" - because
some-one had told you that he was jealous
that the Bernhardt Baron Trust, had given
a grant to Pilgrim House - & not to St. Mark's
Church -

Yours sincerely

W. H. H. H.

24

South American Settlement for Refugees

CHAIRMAN: THE Rt. Rev. THE LORD BISHOP OF CHICHESTER

Deputy-Chairman: H. Runham Brown

Treasurer: Dame Sybil Thorndike

Hon. Solicitor: Ambrose E. Appelbe, M.A., LL.B.

Hon. Sec.: Grace M. Beaton

The Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, J.P., P.C., M.P.

Telephone: LABURNUM 1686

Kenneth G. Grubb
Auriol L. Lee
E. B. Hibberd
John van Druten
Barbara Murray
Rev. N. Levison, B.D.

**11, ABBEY ROAD
ENFIELD, MIDDLESEX
ENGLAND**

COLOMBIA

Rudolph P. Messel
Colonia Internacional
Pital
Popayan

Grace M. Beaton
GMB/PC.

9th. March, 1939.

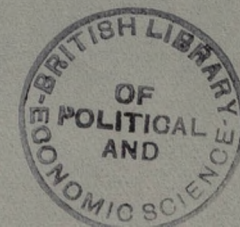
The Rt. Hon. George Lansbury M.P.,
39, Bow Road,
London E. 3.

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I attach, separately, from the bulk of papers now sent out to the "Settlement" Committee members, the papers referring to the questions of visas for Colombia. It seems quite likely that your last letter to the authorities in Colombia set them going at last. I should particularly like your advice on this new situation, because if we can only send trained agriculturalists as such, and none of Semitic origin, the position is almost impossible. The proposed draft has been submitted for the signature of the Bishop as Chairman. I am not very hopeful of the result. Would it be practical to send another letter signed by yourself to reinforce our request? Would you suggest something, or perhaps give me a word or two by 'phone. I want to worry you as little as possible, but *must* come with this request.

Yours,

Grace M. Beaton



M449

with letter from S. Amer. Settlement
for Refugees of 9 March 1939

(25)

C O P Y .

COLOMBIA.

22. 2. 39.

From Foreign Affairs Ministry, Colombia,

VISAS.

The Rt. Rev. The Bishop of Chichester.

Sir,

I have to acknowledge your Grace's notes re immigrants to the German Agricultural Colony at Cajibío (Cauca)

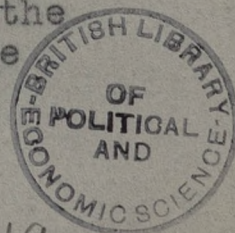
The investigation of this matter has been delayed owing to the fact that the Chancellery has been trying to find a satisfactory solution to the conflicting nature of the Decrees 1723 and 306 of 1933 and 1935 respectively - the former expressly restricting the facilities given to the Colombian Consul General in Paris by the latter.

Prior to the Decree of 1933, persons who, owing to force of circumstances were unable to obtain passports from the authorities in the land of their birth, but who, nevertheless, were respectable and hardworking according to the information received by this Ministry, might immigrate.

The problem raised by the later exodus from Germany and some other Central European countries led the Government of Colombia to restrict these favourable measures in view of the impossibility of making a selection in the best interests of this country.

But as the Cajibío Colony may in the near future represent an advance in the sphere of Agriculture, we are disposed to make some concessions so that it shall not fade out for want of the human ~~to~~ element and we are agreeable to facilitate the entry into Colombia of refugees who are agriculturalists by occupation and are NOT of Semitic origin.

If these conditions, which will be subject to selection (i.e. approval) by the Committee and the Colombian Consular Agent, are satisfactory, perhaps your Grace would let the Ministry know so that the necessary instructions may be given immediately.



M449

with 9 Mar. 1939 from C.M. Beaton

(26)

The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Chichester.

22.2.39.

The number of immigrants who may be sent under the above conditions can (or may) be numerous and they will be given every facility so that they arrive at the above-mentioned colony without mishap.

Yours etc.,

Secretary to the Minister.

with letter from G.M. Beaton
of 9 March 1939

(27)

DRAFT. — Suggested reply

Secretary to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

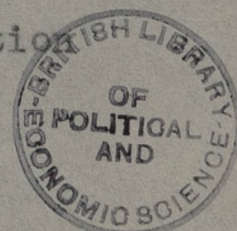
Sir,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your cable of the 22nd. February followed by your letter of the same date, and note with appreciation your remarks on the very satisfactory progress of the Cajibío Colony.

May I therefore be permitted to suggest that the Colony cannot exist unless it is steadily fed with a certain number of new people and would submit that the two stipulations you have laid down make it extremely difficult to select the most suitable persons. All the people on the Committee's waiting list have been very carefully selected because they all possess qualifications needed by the Settlement. They are not, however, all of the kind to be termed "agriculturalists"

As the Settlement is being run on a collective basis with large machinery, certain mechanics are equally necessary.

For instance, we desire to send out a Spaniard, a mechanic of special ability, and his son. They are in France and we should like to know if you would have any objection to their coming.



M449

with 9 Mar. 1939 from G.M. Beaton

(28)

-2-

The more serious thing, however, is that you stipulate none may be of Semitic origin. We have a man who is Aryan, but has a Jewish wife - no children. He is a mechanic with some agricultural knowledge. We particularly want to send them. They are in England.

Then we have a Jewish man and his wife and child. They have a little money. He has not only agricultural knowledge, but he has been in charge of an agricultural settlement in Austria for seven years, and in fact has been doing agricultural work since the age of 17. He is a man we specially need at the Settlement. He also has a special administrative ability which is particularly needed. His wife is a medical doctor who would be of great value to the Settlement in its isolated position. This family is at present in Cuba.

We know all these people personally, and others like them. We quite appreciate that this Settlement must not be predominantly Jewish, nor even largely Jewish, but we do respectfully request that for the good of the Settlement which has now achieved such remarkable success, in a ~~short~~ short period, ~~that~~ you should consider accepting such people as we have mentioned subject to your Consul's satisfaction in each case.

with 9 Mar. 1939 from G M Beaton

(29)

-3-

If you would be good enough to ease your restrictions in this way, and instruct your respective consuls accordingly we can arrange for the people the Settlement needs, to proceed immediately.

In anticipation of your kind consideration of these proposals and of your early reply.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

Chairman.

Mr. Hansbury

This letter is of greater
importance than he other rather long one

G. N. B.

Sir Wyndham Deedes
(1883 —)

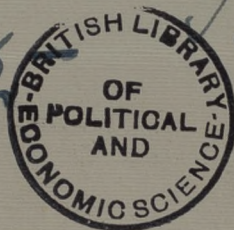
30

UNIVERSITY HOUSE,
17, VICTORIA PARK SQUARE,
BETHNAL GREEN,
E.2.

11 March
1939

Dear Mr Fansbury

Miss Halperin sent me this
report a few days ago but
I have only been able to
read it today. I am sorry



M449

UNIVERSITY HOUSE
17 VICTORIA PARK SQUARE
BETHNAL GREEN
E2

that you should be burdened
with it but I fear
that this will go on "so long
as we have a leg (90) to
stand on"!

Yours sincerely
W. J. R. [Signature]

with Sir Wymoutham Deedes
of 11 Mar. 1939

(31)

Report of Conversation with W. Legge. March 7th 1939.

W. Legge arrived punctually at 6.0'c & we talked without intermission till 7.30. After a preliminary remark, that, if after hearing all he had to say, we thought he had better not be on the Committee, he would have no feelings about it - he raised the following points -

1 - That the Committee had been constructed. Miss Kelly had spoken of changes - but he had never been told anything. I told him that absolutely the only change was that you are now President & W. Lausbury Chairman

M449



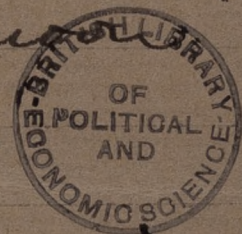
2 That ever since Mr. Jensen came there had seemed to be "a change in policy". He had always wanted a settlement on the Island & when Miss Kelly through Miss Loring (?) ^{spoke} about it - he visualized Pilgrim House working in close Co-operation though he did not expect the Settlement workers to be Church-workers.

11 March 39

(32) 2

He says he made a generous offer in giving the use of the Hall. Through it smashed up his men's club, because they objected going up to the Church Hall & it broke up his Sunday afternoon service.

M449



3. He wishes the matter of the Chairmanship of the Care & after-care, cleared up. Says he had been Chairman of one (or both) & when he came back after an absence of several months, was told that he was not, & never had been Chairman. Miss Kelly, invited him to St. Margaret's House to meet & discuss it with Miss Hussey. & that Miss Corcoran burst into the room, & accused him of having spoken against other religious bodies. I said I thought if you were absent from a Committee 6 months your appointment lapsed. I believe he was very rude to Miss Corcoran that occasion. Mr. Legge complained that, through an arrangement with St. Margaret's House, Mr. Jensen had been put in charge of

11 Mar. 1939

(33) B

all the Care Committee work in the district & was on every cttee. - He said he did not know that the schools were grouped, & that you attend committees at each one in turn.

4. He much objects to the L.C.C. classes being affiliated to the Lga St. Institute - because it is in Portman Green & not to Somers Road - as Mrs. Jensen is on the Cttee of the latter. - He partly attributes the dismissal of Mr. Borden, Headmaster at Somers Rd. to things said by Pilgrim House.

5. He says the boys Club at Pilgrim House draws them away from his Church Club & that Mrs. Jensen does not mind what kind of people she admits to it. - He went down to speak there about one boy who had tried to wreck his club & wanted to join Pilgrim House. - & says Mrs. Jensen created bad feeling by saying "I will tell the boy you do not want me to let him join" - Mrs. Jensen says she told him she would not let the boy join -



M449

11 Mar. 1939

34/A

6. There had been a lot of nasty gossip about various things - which did him harm in the district -
- (a) - Some-one had said that he had told people at S. Mark's not to buy at Pilgrims House Sale - & Miss being said women had complained that such things were said.
- (b) - People said he only put notices in the Parish Magazine about Pilgrims House to give the impression that the activities were being carried on by the Church & Miss being advised him to discontinue them -
- W^m. Jensen did say that to me, in the summer.
- (c) - Some-one had told W. Lausbury that W. Legge was jealous, & said why should the B. Baron trust give £1,000 to Pilgrims House & not to S. Mark's Church.
- (d) - Some-one must have said something to the Bp: of Stepney about him, as the former hinted that W. Legge had been difficult, whereas no-one could have done more -
- (e) - W^m. Jensen had never reported to him on arrival & he did not know for several weeks that she was in the



M449

11 Mar. 1839

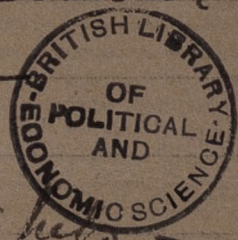
(35) \$

district - He said he did not know whether she was a member of the Church of England - as she never came to Church. I said I know for certain that she was, & had made her Communion in his Church. He said he did not know - but I think it is true that he wrote to D. Curzon saying how seldom she had been -

(f). He said there had been a lot of nasty gossip when Mrs. Jensen came, on which he had put his foot - because people thought it odd that a married woman should hold the post - & not be with her husband - I said "Because he is a Dane & under the Alien's Act cannot stay permanently in England" -

He then reverted to the Committee members here -

M449



I said now that she had not belonged to the Church - perhaps things would work more easily - we were most anxious they should - it would not be our fault if they did not - but if he could not approve of Pelgrim House - he must agree to differ -

11 March 1939

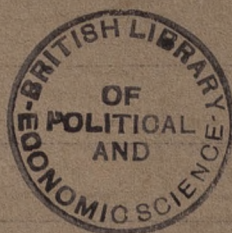
(36) 6

He did not like my saying that Lunders told
he was carrying on all his organizations
as usual (he does at free of cost) - & just
glanced over it - I told him I had tried
to explain things as truthfully as I possibly
could - & hoped he believed me -

My conclusions are -

Miss Loring is not the late-leaver he represents her.
Much of what "Some-one" said - was by himself -
That the statements which seem least accurate
he wishes to be regarded as Confidential -

Thal Halperin;



M449

Sandgate 78317.

Walter Harold Gibbon
(1881-1944)

37

Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

12/3/39.

Dear Mr. Lausbury,

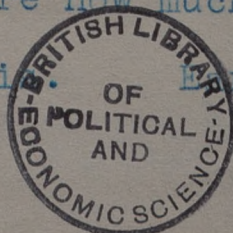
I was glad to get you on the 'phone last night. Before I say anything else, let me explain that I fully realise how preoccupied you must be with other affairs and how little time you have to spare.

I was as surprised as you probably were to hear from Mrs Fels yesterday, and I do not know what she has told you. She told me she has sent you a copy of a question which Captain Alex. Aaronsohn, whom I understand you have met, desired to be asked in the House, and asked me to send you the books and papers, which I did send yesterday; though apparently the newspapers had not yet arrived when I 'phoned last night. A note of these is attached.

I will be as brief as possible. As I understand it, the question is not really so much one of "recognition" as the utilisation of a force of proved goodwill to the British Empire, and moderation, which is at present being completely wasted in this unfortunate question of Palestine.

The story which I tell you is from my personal knowledge as an officer of the General Staff concerned at the time, or substantiated by documents which are not "secret", and which I have Sir Herbert Creedy's written permission to refer to in the press.

I am unaware how much of it is already known to you. Briefly it is this. Early in 1915 Aaron Aaronsohn,



M449

W.H. Grubban

12 March 1939

38

Sandgate 78317.

Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

2.

a renowned botanist and agriculturist, and the recognised leader of the pre-war Jewish Colonists in Palestine, actuated by horror of the Turkish rule under the German influence which prevailed, faith in British principles and the obvious ignorance of the British Government as to the true situation in Syria, Palestine and Turkey in general, decided to throw the whole weight of the Palestinians (Jews), as well as of world Jewry as far as he could influence it, on to the side, and in active assistance, of Allied Arms. In this intention he established a remarkable organisation in Palestine known as NILI to provide the British with information from behind the Turkish lines, and in July 1915, it was managed that his younger brother, (now Captain) Alex. Aaronsohn, with his younger sister, Rifka, should reach Egypt to gain contact with British Headquarters. Here Alex. was received with suspicion and had to leave Egypt, finding his way to America where he worked strenuously in the Allied interests, amongst other activities publishing his book "With the Turks in Palestine" which was later adopted by Lord Northcliffe's propaganda organisation. But Alex was unable to communicate with Aaron in Palestine, who after the failure of his own Secretary (who later lost his life in a second attempt) to reach Egypt, decided in July 1916 to get out of the country himself and make his way to London.

Sandgate 78317.

W. H. Gibbon

12 March 1939
Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent. 3.

After an amazing journey through Constantinople, Berlin and Copenhagen, late in October, he reached Scotland Yard and the War Office, where it was my duty to interrogate him. After imparting most valuable information he was sent on to Egypt where he was able, through his organisation, to provide British Headquarters with detailed and accurate military information which was warmly acknowledged by Lord Allenby, when presenting Alex Aaronsohn with the D.S.O. for gallantry and daring in the field, in terms which recognised the "entire disregard of self" of the Aaronsohn family "who endured all - even to martyrdom, and whose courage and devotion were largely instrumental in carrying the cause of Civilisation and Humanity to final success".

For in 1917 the organisation had been betrayed to the Turks leading to the torture and death of its members. This included the torture of Aaronsohn's father and another brother as well as the elder sister Sarah, who took her own life to avoid the risk of betraying her comrades under further prolongation of the torture to which she was subjected. Sarah is now regarded as a National martyr in Palestine. The service to Palestine and the British Empire had been self initiated and carried through at no cost to the British Government - even a grant subsequently made towards a memorial for Aaron was returned in full to the War Office by Captain Alex Aaronsohn.

Sandgate 78317.

W. H. Gibbon

12 March 1939

Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

40
4.

Aaron after visiting the United States where he exerted effective influence amongst leading American Jews, went to Egypt with the original Zionist Commission in March 1918 and eventually attended the Peace Conference. He lost his life in a mysterious aeroplane accident flying from London to Paris in 1919.

But, though, much capital was made at the time of the military service of the Aaronsohns they were never really received into the fold of official Zionism, and since the establishment of the Jewish Agency they have been consistently ignored and their record suppressed, Dr. Weizman and the materially minded leaders of Official Zionism allowing it to be assumed that they were paid spies who had worked for money and self interest.

The motive for this, I believe to be jealousy and dislike of their idealism. For the Aaronsohns are genuine Palestinians who had demonstrated their ability to live peaceably with the Arabs, employing and helping them, and had sacrificed themselves in the hope of bringing benefit to Palestine on the lines of mutual cooperative advantage for Arab and Jew. They do not hold with the exclusive policy of Official Zionism.

The point is that owing to this strange silence on the part of the Jewish Delegation, which I am told does not include a single Palestinian born Jew, full advantage is taken by the

Sandgate 78317.

W.H. Gribbon

12 March 1939

41

Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

5.

Arabs of the exaggerated accounts of their participation in the Great War while the Palestinian Jews get no credit for the decisive services rendered by the NILI organisation.

Although the Aaronsohns have always withdrawn from publicity and kept out of politics,
I believe that the number of Jews in Palestine not represented by the Jewish Agency or the Revisionists is an important one, and that if the services of the Aaronsohns received their due recognition this might lead to the formation of a party of moderating influence which would be of great assistance to H.M.G. in settling their difficult problem.

Perhaps this explains the silence of Dr. Weizman!

It is good of you to offer to give me an appointment, and I will 'phone you on Tuesday morning as you suggested. In the meantime I hope the newspapers which are noted on the attached list will have reached you and that you will find the book references helpful.

As I have not got the page references of the newspapers, I enclose my own copies of the cuttings concerned, together with a cutting from the Daily Telegraph of the 13th Aug. 1938, which is not included amongst the newspapers sent.

Yours sincerely,

W.H. Gribbon

(Brigadier W.H. Gribbon)

Retired.

Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, P.C. M.P.,
39 Bow Road,
London, E.3.

with W.H. Gibbon
References.

12 March 1939

(42)

A-) Newspapers.

Daily Telegraph & M.P. 13/8/38.

Cutting attached.

2/2/39.@

Copy sent to 39,
Bow Road; 11/3/39.

8/2/39.@

Do.

Jewish Chronicle.

3/2/39.@

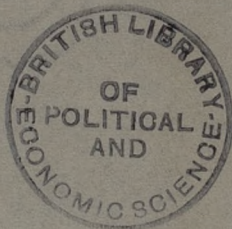
Do.

B-) Books.

Palestine Picture. (Duff) See pp. 155, 156.

Poor Knight's Saddle. (Duff) See pp. 275 - 298.

@ Cuttings now enclosed may be returned when done with, please.



M449

Jews' Share in Palestine

Not Out to Despoil the Arabs

13/2/38

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph
and Morning Post"

SIR—Mr. M. W. Osborne, who refers to Zionist aspirations in Palestine as the cause of the present troubles, is apparently unaware of the fact that the Zionist Congress has repeatedly declared that the Jews in Palestine want to live with the Arabs on the basis of friendly co-operation, and on condition that the Jews should not be dominated by the Arabs nor the Arabs by the Jews.

The partition scheme of the Royal Commission proposed a Jewish State that would occupy only one-fifth of Western Palestine and only one-twentieth of the entire area of Palestine and Transjordan, which, according to the findings of the Commission, originally represented the territory within which the National Home of the Jewish people was to be established.

Mr. Osborne refers to the qualification of the Balfour Declaration—"Nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine"—as though this qualification had been violated. In point of fact those rights have not been interfered with but rather improved.

Does he seriously suggest that the Arabs' rights under British Administration are inferior to those that they had during six centuries of subjugation—first under the Mameluks of Egypt, and then under the Turks? Does he know that the Arabs under the Turks had to submit to military conscription and could obtain exemption only at the price of £50 per head?

Non-Employment of Arabs

As regards the non-employment of Arab labour on Jewish land, it may be pointed out that in a memorandum issued in the early 'twenties by an Arab Committee objection was taken to Jewish settlement on the ground that the Jews would be unable to cultivate the land without Arab labour. Now the complaint is that the Jews do not want to employ such labour.

It is only natural that the Jews should wish to build up their National Home with their own labour and should regard this as a matter of honour and principle. That is why Arab workers are not allowed on the land of the Jewish National Fund, which is acquired as the inalienable property of the Jewish people by voluntary contributions from Jews all over the world. The Jewish National Fund leases only as much land to Jews as they can work themselves, and since there is no Jewish hired labour on this land there is no reason to complain if there is no hired Arab labour on it.

On the other hand, before the outbreak of the present troubles, there were 8,000 Arabs employed in 12 Jewish agricultural settlements, in some of which they were actually in the majority. Does Mr. Osborne know of any Jews employed by Arabs?

Mr. Broadhurst alleges that the Palestinian Arabs have been dispossessed. Having lived in the country, he ought surely to know better. There has been no case of dispossession, but a Government Commission ascertained that over a period of 12 years only some 600 heads of Arab families—tenants, not owners—had been displaced by Jewish settlers.

Although those tenants were in every case adequately compensated, after a year's notice, by the Jewish land-purchasing company, the Government also provided a sum of £250,000 for their settlement on fresh holdings. But not more than about 50 availed themselves of that offer, as the large majority had become absorbed again in agriculture or found other employment. The Government was, therefore, left with more than half of the allotted sum in its hands.

The McMahon Promise

It is absurd to suggest that the Arabs (who, by the way, invaded Palestine not 2,000, but less than 1,300 years, ago) are fighting against the introduction of modes of life alien to them, unless Mr. Broadhurst alludes to the well-known hostility of the effendis to just and humane treatment of the fellahen.

With regard to the footnote in Col. Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," to which Lt.-Cmdr. Robert Goldrich referred in his letter on Monday, I should like to point out that there was apparently an inadvertent slip, as in the 1935 edition the footnote is on page 276.

Lt.-Col. N. P. Clarke gives a very truncated version of the conditional promise made by Sir Henry McMahon, the text of which has never been officially published owing to considerations not connected with Palestine. His Majesty's Government and Sir Henry himself have repeatedly declared that Palestine was excluded from the areas to which independence was promised on condition that the Arabs revolted. Besides, the Arabs of Palestine never revolted.

Lt.-Col. Clarke alleges that the Arabs of Palestine "gave valuable military information, and many were shot by the Turks in consequence." He does not cite a single specific case in support of this allegation.

On the other hand, the Jews supplied the British forces with three battalions whose exploits in the Palestine campaign were mentioned in despatches; and many a Jewish colonist risked his life in rendering the most valuable services to the military operations.

It was to one such colonist, Mr. Aaronson, of Zichron Jacob (whose sister had been tortured to death by the Turks), that Gen. Allenby, in presenting him with a decoration after the war, declared that he owed the conquest of Palestine.

Yours faithfully,
ISRAEL COHEN.

Zionist Organisation, 77, Great Russell-street, W.C. 1, Aug. 12.

OTHER CORRESPONDENCE—PAGE 9

STANDARD SPEECH AND DIALECT (F. W. Chambers, Ernest G. Cove, J. W. Marriott).
TRAFFIC IN NARROW STREETS (Mrs. Margaret Bourdillon).
BEDFORDSHIRE REGIMENT (John Wolte Lydell).
GRANTS TO OFFICERS' WIDOWS, OLD YEW TREES, &c.

150 Years Ago

From the MORNING POST

AUG. 13, 1788.

PRINCE OF WALES'S BIRTH-DAY.

In the morning the different bells rang their peals; and in the evening the different houses in the employ of his ROYAL HIGHNESS were lighted up with their usual splendour.

In Pall-mall, NEWCOMBE, his Royal Highness's Boot-maker, was highly conspicuous; we ought also to add, that among the many illuminations in honour of the PRINCE OF WALES, Mr. RISPINI's, in Pall-mall, though simple, was extremely elegant.

In the Hay-market, the THEATRE, and OPERA-HOUSE, drew crowds. EGGS, the Gunsmith, was extremely brilliant.



with Gibbon, 12 Mar 1939
Daily Telegraph and Morning Post
Tuesday 2/2/39

44

DEATHS

AARONSOHN.—On Jan 27, 1939, at Zichron Yaqov, Palestine, EPHRAIM FISHL AARONSOHN, aged 90.

Obituary

EPHRAIM FISHL AARONSOHN

PALESTINE PIONEER'S WORK FOR BRITAIN

The death in Palestine of Ephraim Fishl Aaronsohn at the age of 90 reveals one of the most remarkable stories of the Great War. He and his family headed the British espionage system in Palestine, and nothing could break their courage in the hardships they endured.

Old Ephraim Aaronsohn was a man of sterling character, and the last survivor of the Jewish pioneers who left Rumania for Palestine in 1881. His powerful influence asserted itself from the moment he set out to help in developing, with the benevolent assistance of Baron Edmund de Rothschild, the organisation known as P.I.C.A. (the Palestine Jewish Colonisation Association).

An ardent agriculturist, he had been drawn to Palestine by a genuine desire to cultivate the soil in simple, natural surroundings among similarly minded companions.

Their spirit of colonisation was that of community of interests with the Arabs and all other Palestinians, and it expressed itself so strongly that suspicion and hostility were overcome. The Arabs even brought their disputes to the Jewish courts which, with the approval of the Turks, had been set up for the settlement of internal affairs.

When the Great War came Aaronsohn and the members of his family proved active and enduring friends of the British. An espionage organisation conducted by his elder son Aaron, a celebrated botanist, operated behind the lines, and was of the greatest assistance to Lord Allenby.

PUT TO TORTURE

Ephraim, however, was discovered to be helping his son's work and was seized by the Turks, who resorted to long-continued torture of a terrible kind in their effort to make him reveal his associates. He refused to betray them.

His daughter Sarah was also submitted to prolonged torture, and she, rather than face the danger of weakening under it, committed suicide. To-day she is revered throughout Palestine as a heroine. Another daughter, Rifkah, succeeded in escaping in an American cruiser.

The elder son, after service of the most devoted kind to Palestine and the Empire, lost his life shortly after the war. The aeroplane in which he flew from London to Paris during the Peace Conference disappeared. His younger brother, Capt. Alexander Aaronsohn, was awarded the D.S.O. His gallant conduct and daring in September, 1918, in penetrating the enemy lines and carrying out a very valuable reconnaissance led to his receiving an honour that was unique, for he was technically a Turkish subject.

Palestine Pioneer's Death

Ephraim Fishl Aaronsohn, last survivor of the Jewish pioneers who left Rumania for Palestine in 1881, has died at the age of 90. He headed the British espionage system in Palestine during the Great War. (Page 15.)

FAITHFUL IN FACE OF TORTURE

A Story of Ephraim Aaronsohn

Sir—The obituary notice of Ephraim Aaronsohn which you publish brings back a vivid memory of my visit to this remarkable man in his home at Zichron Jacob, some 20 miles south of Haifa.

Following up Allenby's push in the autumn of 1918, in company with other officers of the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration, I was sent to Haifa, and deputed to open up administratively the district round the Jewish colony of Zichron Jacob, or, to give it its Arab name, Zummarrin. Soon after my arrival I received a visit from Capt. Aaronsohn, D.S.O., who invited me to call on his father. It was on a Saturday, and out of deference to the religious scruples of the old man, who was an orthodox Jew, I was requested not to strike a light in the house, which I might unthinkingly have done for the purpose of smoking.

There I heard the story of the torturing of both father and daughter. I will not relate the revolting details, but as an indication of its severity it was told to me that in the process of his last beating the old man was heard by his tormentors to be muttering something. Thinking he was about to confess they asked what he was saying, only to be told that he was repeating the prayer of a pious Jew about to die.

Realising that he was "in extremis" they ceased their foul work, saying it was of no use trying to extract secrets from one who (as they and he himself evidently thought) was about to die. How he recovered is something of a marvel, but for three months afterwards he could only get about on his hands and knees. It is astonishing to think that he could have reached the ripe old age of 90.

His daughter Sarah carried out her work for the British Intelligence in a most daring manner. To give an instance—seated one day in the Hotel Fast in Jerusalem, she appeared to be innocently writing letters, but was actually making notes of the interesting items of conversation overheard from German officers in the room, who often glanced in her direction but obviously with no suspicion of what she was doing.

Truly, the Aaronsohns were a remarkable family.—Yours faithfully,

A. W. HARRINGTON, Major.
Formerly Asst. Governor of Galilee.
122, Hill-lane, Southampton, Feb. 2.



M449

45

with Gibbon, 12 Mar. 1939

Yishuv

CHRONICLE

FEBRUARY 3, 1939

Obituary

A FATHER OF HEROES

Death of Fischel Aaronsohn

HIS WORK FOR THE WAR OFFICE

A Correspondent writes :

The death, at the age of ninety-one, of Ephraim Fischel Aaronsohn, the head of the Aaronsohn family, of Zichron Jacob, has removed a figure who had already become a legend in the Yishuv and in the history of Jewry during the Great War. He was one of the earliest settlers from Rumania soon after Laurence Oliphant, the diplomat and author of the "Land of Gilead," had advocated the return of Jewry to their ancient homeland; and he was the last survivor of these pioneers. He was drawn to Palestine by a genuine love of the soil and a desire to cultivate it in simple surroundings. He did much to assist the development of the Palestine Jewish Colonisation Association (P.I.C.A.).

Aaronsohn's children were all farmers, typical of a new and free generation which had thrown off the ghetto spirit. His eldest son, Aaron (who was killed in an aeroplane accident while flying to the Peace Conference in 1919) was a most remarkable man. His fame, as the discoverer of "wild wheat," is secure in the publications of the U.S.A. Department of Agriculture, 1910. William Bullitt, the American Ambassador, was a personal friend, and wrote of him: "I think Aaron Aaronsohn the greatest man I have ever met; a giant resembling Prometheus." His knowledge of every inch of the Palestinian soil, his gift for dealing with Turks and Arabs, combined with his Jewish patriotic fervour, led him to the establishment of the famous "Nili Organisation" in 1915 and 1916. General Macdonagh, the Director of Military Intelligence during the Great War, has testified to the invaluable aid given by Aaronsohn's information in Allenby's campaign.

The Aaronsohn family, from the father down, were the leaders of this secret organisation, which set itself to maintain friendly relations with the Turks, while communicating their movements to the British forces in Cairo and the War Office in London. They did not go unscathed. Fischel Aaronsohn and his daughter Sara were arrested and tortured, as the Turks knew how to torture, to make them reveal their fellow-conspirators. The father and daughter were compelled to witness each other's sufferings. When the daughter feared that the father would speak, he rebuked her, saying: "Am I not a Jew?"

Sara shot herself rather than give away her friends. Her grave is now the scene of an annual pilgrimage of Palestinian Jewish Youth. So is the Jewish Joan of Arc, and her life story has been written by the French novelists, J. and J. Tharaud. Her last letter, after she had been tortured for five whole days, contains the following moving words: "Tell my brothers to avenge me. No pity for the bandits—they had none for me. I cannot stand my suffering; and martyrdom any longer. . . . They want to send me to Damascus: there I shall certainly be hanged. Luckily, I have a little revolver. . . . My suffering is at its highest when I see them hurting my father, but all their tortures are in vain. We shall not talk. Remember that we died gamely and gave away nothing. . . . We sacrificed ourselves, but we saved our people and freed the country."

Her letter to her brother Alex, who was already working for Allenby in Cairo, contains a passage which makes painful reading at this moment, when the Palestine Conference threatens to deal a mortal blow to Jewish aspirations in Palestine: "The question which torments me," she wrote, "is to know whether our people will obtain anything real in exchange for the danger to which we are exposing ourselves for the English. You must know we are risking several heads together with our own." Alex was later awarded the D.S.O. for gallant conduct; an honour that was unique, for he was technically a Turkish subject.

Zichron Jacob will remain holy ground in the history of the Yishuv. First Sara Aaronsohn, then Baron Edmond de Rothschild and his wife, and now the aged patriarch, the father of a noble line, Ephraim Fischel Aaronsohn, is laid to rest, where surely he would have wished—a little distance from the hills of Gilboa, where Saul and Jonathan lie buried.



M449

Sandgate 78317.

Walter Harold Gibbon
(1881-1944)

46

Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

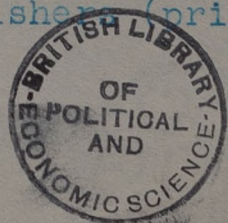
14/3/39.

Dear Mr. Lamburg,

At the risk of encroaching too much upon your time, I feel that I should confirm my telephone conversation of this morning by letting you know that it was on the 9th June 1936 that Aaronsohn wrote to Major Ormsby-Gore, telling him very straightly what a mess General Wauchope was making of things, and how he was being fooled by the Mufti. In his letter A. showed the steps which should be taken to restore the situation, explaining with the deepest sincerity that he had no animus against Gen. W. and the high motive which had actuated him in writing.

O.G., who knows A. personally, acknowledged this letter briefly on the 16th June, and on the 25th. August A. wrote again asking for an interview. O.G. replied to the effect that he was getting all the advice he required from Dr. Weizman, and that there was no need for A. to come to London.

A. replied on the 29th. August saying that he "had absolutely nothing in common with Dr. W. I consider him and the Zionist Leaders as responsible for the present troubles. They have spoken and acted for the last fifteen years as if no Arabs existed in Palestine. They encouraged and sponsored in Palestine a materialistic and perverted civilisation foreign both to the Jewish spirit and to Palestine.-----Not only Arabs and Jews are paying with their life for the stupidity and dishonesty of a few British officials, but also innocent young Britishers (privates and officers) are being daily their victims".



M449

Sandgate 78317.

W. H. Gibbon

14 March 1939
Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

47

2.

This closed the correspondence - I should imagine leaving A. not very popular with the C.O.

I had already, in May, been to the C.O. armed with A's information, after obtaining the goodwill of the W.O. under whom I was still serving. I had an interview with Sir Cosmo Parkinson and O.G.R. Williams, but found them quite satisfied with the administration of Gen. W., in whom they expressed their confidence, and asked me to write to A. to reassure him, which I did, (I was wrong).

I should tell you that during the inception of the Balfour Declaration and the Peace Conference period, I was to a great extent the War Office representative on Near Eastern matters, attending the Near Eastern Committee at the F.O. etc., and meeting all the Ministers and Officials concerned. I used to see a lot of Mark Sykes and Weizman who spent hours in my office. The General Staff were in favour of the Palestine Mandate for strategical reasons, and I helped Weizman a lot. But I did not realise what an exclusive, materialistic force I was assisting, I now realise my mistake; I thought in the terms of the Aaronsohns, thinking that the Zionists were actuated by higher motives. It is too long a story to explain here all the humbug connected with Arab claims to have assisted the British in the War - all the Lawrence cult. I have endeavoured to expose this in a recent paper I sent to

Sandgate 78317.

W. H. Gibbon

14 March 1939
Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

48
3.

the C.O., showing how the Turks have never looked back since they were freed from the Arab^s tentacles - I don't suppose this made me popular either, though my paper was acknowledged.

It is my firm conviction that only a British administration - but an administration conducted by officials of the necessary calibre - will suit Palestine for many years to come.

Since it fell to my lot to help General Harington negotiate the Mudania Conference at the time of the Chanak crisis, I have realised that altruism is not welcome in "practical" politics; but neither the results then obtained, nor subsequent observation, have ~~changed~~ changed my conviction that it is the best policy for England and the Empire.

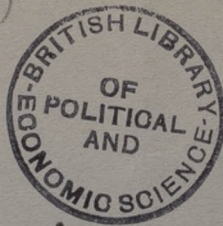
Finally I will say this; is it not extraordinary that the fact of having risked their lives and fortune should render the Aaronsohns incoherent, while non-Palestinians who "sat at home at ease" away from all personal risk or discomfort must be allowed their say!

Yours sincerely,

W. H. Gibbon

Walker Harold Gibbon
(1881-1944)

Sandgate 78317.



Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

49

15/3/39

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I hope you will forgive my inflicting one more letter upon you before you see Mr. MacDonald. I had a telegram from Aaronsohn, from Egypt, this morning, asking that I should explain the entirely idealistic motives of his family in rendering their service and should draw attention to the silence of those who could use such an asset for the benefit of Palestine. I don't think it is necessary for me to say any more about this.

But something you said on the 'phone to me about the nature of the service rendered invites me to offer the parallel case of Faisal, who was himself a spy in the service of his father, both in Constantinople and in Damascus. This is clearly established in Lawrence's writings, though much information which would have been of the greatest value at the time to British Headquarters was withheld, while the Aaronsohns were risking all to get this information to the British!

This did not prevent Faisal being made a King. I hope someday to reveal all this. In the meantime I think you will agree that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

In his telegram A. also asks me to emphasise that his work and hopes have always been for the treatment of Palestine as a "Holy" land in the true spirit of the word, affording complete security for all and a refuge in accordance with its capacity under Officials of High Standing. (This to my mind is the crux of the whole matter - we must have the best men obtainable.)

This ideal of A.'s, that the country should be developed on

Sandgate 78317.

W. H. Gibbon

15 March 1939

50

Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

lines of mutual good will, makes me think that it may help if I point out how little representative of the true feeling of Palestinian Arabs I believe the Arab Delegation to be. They represent true Arab feeling, no more than the Jewish Agency represent true Jewish feeling.

I have for the last eight months been sending to the War Office, who are in close touch with the Colonial Office, reports showing that the Mufti is deliberately organising Terrorism as a political weapon from Syria, as his own personal means of retaining power. Throughout the London Conference he has kept Terrorism alive, solely with the intention of impressing H.M.G. with the idea that Arab Nationalism can only be appeased by capitulation. The village Arabs, who are bullied by the Mufti's Gangsters, would be as glad to see the end of him as anyone else, who values law and order. I have obtained my information through sources at Aaronsohn's disposal, and this information has given a remarkably accurate forecast of events.

I do not think the time has passed when a moderating influence could be made use of, provided the facts are openly faced. I know you understand that A. himself is not desirous of office, or appointment. His only wish is that the past services of his family should not be wasted by failure to recognise the spirit which actuated them

Sandgate 78317.

W. H. Gribbon

15 March 1939.

Regency Cottage,
Sandgate,
Kent.

51

and that this spirit should be applied to the future development and administration of the Country.

(That is as far as I can interpret it).

Yours sincerely,

W. H. Gribbon

Rt. Hon. George Lansbury .P.C.M.P.

39, Bow Road,

London, E.C.3.