

President's Secretary's File  
Diplomatic  
Biddle, A. Box 24

PSF: Biddle

*file  
confidential*

Warsaw, November 10, 1938.

My dear Mr. President:

The plight of the Jewish populations as a whole in Europe is steadily becoming so untenable, and their hopes for some way out from their present and increasing dilemma becoming so dim with the passage of time, that I take the liberty of sending you this confidential outline of my recent observations.

First of all, it is steadily becoming clearer that you personally are the one to whom they all look more and more to take the lead in finding a solution for their unhappy situation. My impression on this score is daily corroborated by requests on the part of various Jewish factions here that I ask you to receive their representatives, should they proceed to Washington in the near future. Chief amongst those who have pressed me along these lines is one V. Jabotinski, leader of the Zionist Revisionists. He is now in the course of attempting to organize a Congress of Jews of this part of Europe, the total amount whereof he puts at about 7,000,000. In fact, he looks upon the Jews of this section of Europe as constituting the object of concern on the part of the Jews in the rest of the world - particularly in the United States.

You may recall that from time to time I have written and cabled regarding my conversations with Jabotinski. He has a brilliant mind, and an engaging personality, and has at his disposal a "grapevine" system for the gathering of information - hence, he is extremely well-informed. Moreover, he is diametrically opposed to the policies of Mr. Weisemann and at heart extremely anti-British.

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The President,  
The White House.

He correctly predicted (a) the British Government's scrapping the idea of partition in Palestine, and (b) a general disapproval amongst the Jews of the world to the idea of the Jews of Palestine assuming a minority position within the framework of an Arab State. He now informs me that as regards Palestine he felt the blackest of the menacing clouds of a month ago had been removed; it seemed now that the Jews were no longer faced with the prospect of a drastic and radical liquidation of the Balfour pledge. He felt that this intention had been frustrated and averted owing to your intervention. He believed that what is now likely to follow is a return to the status quo ante - meaning "ante the Peel reports" - only perhaps veiled by a display of "a few well chosen words" intended to save everybody's face. According to his opinion, most people in Britain would feel thankful in that event and would "rest" - and the moment for the big move would be lost; while the only thing that would not rest would be the "disease." Hence, he took another occasion to state his fears that there was only one factor left, one man who could prevent this half-way stagnation, and this was President Roosevelt.

Naturally, in reply to his repeated question whether there was any chance that you might be willing to receive him, I stated that you had never lost sight of the problem, and that you and your associates were constantly engaged in a search for a solution. I did not think this was the time to request an audience with you - in fact, the committee which you had appointed to study the problem, was in London, and diligently at work.

I am aware that Mr. Jabotinski, like many of his confrères, is concentrating his thoughts and energies in an effort (a) to engage your good offices in calling another world conference to consider territorial outlets for Jewish immigration and (b) to enlist your influence and pressure upon a "Britain, desirous of American cooperation", towards making a generous settlement in Palestine.

Of importantly pertinent interest, usually well-informed circles here impart to me that their reports from London indicate that Chamberlain, or perhaps a member of his Cabinet, might possibly accompany the

King

King and Queen to the United States for, among other purposes, discussing the Palestine question along the following lines: To retain Palestine as a Jewish homeland would be impossible, if immigration were increased. Hence, the British Government might be willing to consider favorably, offering territory at one or more points in their colonies for the purpose of setting up a Jewish State - and, provided the United States joined Britain in the guarantee of such a state. This proposal, according to my informants, might be expected to be a part of an envisaged plan for a colonial settlement within the framework of a general European settlement.

At the present moment the following are high lights on developments in connection with the current European Jewish problem (a) violent repercussions against the Jews throughout Germany as a result of the Jewish boy, Herschel Grunspan's murder of von Rath, Secretary of the German Embassy in Paris, (b) signs of an approaching storm over the community of Jews in Rumania, and (c) difficulties encountered by the Polish official representatives in their negotiations in Berlin regarding the individual rights and properties of the Polish Jews recently ordered out of Germany to Poland. (15,000 Jews recently crossed into Poland under 24 hours' notice from the German Government. From all accounts, German treatment of these unfortunate people was nothing short of brutal. On the other hand, the Polish Government went to great lengths in an effort to extend humane treatment under trying circumstances. See my cable No. 243 of October 29, 7 p.m.)

Hoping that the foregoing will prove enlightening on developments described, and with every good wish, I am,

Yours faithfully,

*Tom Biddle, Jr.*