

The World Jewish Congress Collection

Series A: Central Files, 1919-1975

Subseries 1: Organizational History and Activities, 1919-1970

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CONFIDENTIAL

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

FROM

THE DAY BOOK

OF

THE WORLD JEWISH
CONGRESS

A SERIES OF CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS TO

THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS
ON ITS ACTION ON BEHALF OF JEWS
IN THE WAR AREA

INTRODUCTION

The American Jewish Congress presents herewith a series of cablegrams, letters and reports received from the World Jewish Congress in the weeks which have ensued since the outbreak of the war. In the pages which follow, the World Jewish Congress discloses how through the connection which it established with various governments and its affiliations with Jewish populations of various countries since its foundation three years ago, it has been enabled to organize, with dispatch and efficiency, important activities during the present period of great emergency.

The work of the World Jewish Congress has consisted, during these weeks, of organizing the first relief action for refugees through the war area, and the laying of the foundations for work of a more enduring character, looking toward the eventual restoration of rights of Jews in Europe. It has also initiated the action which will enable thousands of German Jewish refugees in England and France, interned as enemy aliens, to be released for immigration and, where this is not possible, for useful services in the present lands of refuge.

Since the preparation of these reports, the World Jewish Congress has been able to report progress in the direction of the activities initiated. What is related in these pages is but the beginning of a great action for the relief and rehabilitation of refugees in the war zone, and the great effort of assuring to Jews once again those human and equal rights which are currently being denied them.

In all its activities the World Jewish Congress is dependent upon the support of the American Jewish Congress and, through it, of the Jews of America.

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C A B L E G R A M

GENEVA

SEPTEMBER 27, 1939

CONGRESS WISE NEWYORK

COMMITTEE FOR ORGANIZING RELIEF WORK FOR WAR STRICKEN JEWISH POPULATION IN POLAND FORMED CONNECTION WITH WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS IN GENEVA. TASK OF COMMITTEE OF WHICH NAHUM GOLDMANN, PROFESSOR GUGGENHEIM, DR. SILBERSCHN, AND OTHERS ARE MEMBERS. IS TO CREATE CENTER FOR ORGANIZING SOCIAL PHILANTHROPIC RELIEF FOR POLISH JEWISH REFUGEES AND JEWS STILL IN POLAND. COMMITTEE CREATED WITH CONSENT OF GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED, BRANCH COMMITTEES IN BORDERING COUNTRIES: HUNGARY, RUMANIA, LITHUANIA, LATVIA, WHICH SENT REPRESENTATIVES TO PLACES WHERE REFUGEES ARE STAYING. AT FIRST REPRESENTATIVES WILL REGISTER JEWISH REFUGEES AND SECURE INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR ORGANIZING APPROPRIATE RELIEF WORK. COMMITTEE, WHICH WORKS IN AGREEMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE, AIMS AT ESTABLISHING FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION OF ALL INTERESTED JEWISH RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS, WITH VIEW OF ASSURING COORDINATED EFFICIENT RELIEF WORK FOR POLISH JEWRY.

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

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C A B L E G R A M

GENEVA

SEPTEMBER 23, 1939

CONGRESS WISE NEWYORK

BAD NEWS FROM GERMAN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES POLAND ARE TRYING VERIFY

DETAILED FACTS STOP IN RUSSIAN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES NO PREJUDICIAL
PRACTICE KNOWN STOP ROSEMARIAN SCHWARZBART SZERESZOWSKI SAFE RUMANIA
STOP IN RUMANIA DIFFICULTIES BY BRITISH AUTHORITIES FOR POLISH REF-
UGEES EVEN PROCESSING PALESTINE VISA TO LEAVE FOR PALESTINE STOP
SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR WORLD CONGRESS START ORGANIZATIONAL FRAME-
WORK FOR LARGE REFUGEE HELP INDEPENDENT FROM LATER WORK THROUGH
CHARITY ORGANIZATIONS STOP NEED MONEY FOR THAT.

WORLD CONGRESS

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C A B L E G R A M

GENEVA

OCTOBER 2, 1939

CONGRESS WISE NEWYORK

REGARD ESSENTIAL CONVOCATION LARGE AMERICAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE
FOR CREATING EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR JEWISH VICTIMS WAR STOP WORLD
CONGRESS COULD SEND OVER DELEGATION SUCH CONFERENCE AND FURTHER
WORK CONSISTING PERLZWEIG SEJM DEPUTY SCHWARZBART AND TARTAKOWER
ALREADY EN ROUTE NEWYORK CABLE YOUR OPINION STOP REQUIRE IMMED-
IATELY BALANCE REGULAR CONTRIBUTION AND 2000 SPECIAL WORK OUR OB-
SERVERS AND DELEGATES NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES POLAND.

GOLDMANN

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C A B L E G R A M

RIGA

OCTOBER 9, 1939

CONGRESS WISE NEWYORK

BEING EXECUTIVE MEMBER AND CITIZEN OF NEUTRAL STATE GOLDMAN WANTS

ME VISIT OCCUPIED POLISH TERRITORIES CLOSE OURS IN CONNECTION WITH
OUR JEWISH AID WORK STOP SHALL APPLY PERMISSION RUSSIAN GERMAN LE-
GATIONS HERE STOP NEED OFFICIAL AUTHORIZATION BY AMERICAN EXECU-
TIVE ALSO YOUR DIRECT INTERCESSION WITH CORRESPONDING AMBASSADORS
IN USA CABLE REPLY.

MARKUS NUROCK

* * * * *



A REPORT OF THE WORK INITIATED BY
THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
FOR RELIEF OF POLISH JEWISH WAR VICTIMS

Geneva,
October 11, 1939

We beg to inform you that the Organization Department of the World Jewish Congress has been transferred to Geneva in order to facilitate the maintenance of contacts with affiliated national committees in the various countries. The Organization Department and the Legal and Political Department of the World Jewish Congress are now both located in Geneva; our London and Paris offices are being maintained, but on a reduced scale.

Aid to Polish Jews

Towards the end of September 1939 a committee was set up at the World Jewish Congress for organizing relief work for the Jewish population of Poland which has been affected by conditions arising out of the war. The task of this Committee is to create a centre for organizing social and philanthropic action to assist Jewish refugees from Poland as well as the Jewish population that has remained in that country. The Committee works in agreement with the International Red Cross in Geneva and hopes to create a general framework for the joint efforts of all relief agencies concerned with these problems with a view to organizing integrated and efficient action for the relief of the Jews of Poland.

On the suggestion of the Central Committee in Geneva, branch committees were established in the countries bordering on Poland, and

these committees have met with the approval of the Governments of the various countries concerned. At present such committees are actually at work in Hungary, Roumania, and Latvia, while in Lithuania a committee is in process of formation. The branch committees send delegates to the places where Jews from Poland have taken refuge and make a census of refugees preparatory to the organization of effective assistance. The Central Committee in Geneva has already received from its branches lists of hundreds of names of individual Jewish refugees from Poland. For these we endeavor to establish contacts with their relatives settled in other countries. On the other hand, we receive a great number of enquiries from various countries as to the whereabouts of Jews from Poland. We shall be glad to offer this kind of information service to members of your committee. For the time being we have not succeeded in establishing contact with the occupied area of Poland, but we are continuing our efforts in that direction.

Dr. A. Silberschein (formerly of Lwow and now in Geneva), an authority on Polish-Jewish problems, has put himself at the disposal of the Geneva Central Committee.

According to information received from our branch committees, about 3,000 Jewish civilians have fled from Poland to Roumania; only comparatively few civilians have taken refuge in Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania. The great bulk of refugees in the three latter countries are members of the Polish army and are interned in special camps set up by the authorities of the countries concerned. The percentage of Jews among interned Polish troops is about ten per cent in every case.

The Jewish communities of Roumania, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania have generously borne the cost of these preliminary relief activities. But it is impossible for them alone to assume the whole financial responsibility for relief work proper -- housing, food, clothes, traveling to further places, etc. We therefore urgently appeal to all national committees and organizations affiliated to our Congress to do all they can in support of the Committee for Relief of the Jewish Population of Poland affected by the War, and more especially to send definite contributions for this purpose, which we will forward to our branch committees according to the needs of the moment. We likewise request our national committees in overseas countries to take all necessary steps to prepare the way for the immigration of Polish-Jewish refugees, either by commending to the authorities concerned the requests of relatives of refugees who are already established in the country, or by creating possibilities for the immigration of persons belonging to certain economic branches, such as agriculture, handicrafts, etc. Any information on these points should be addressed to the Central Committee in Geneva, and any contributions in cash to the account of the Congres Juif Mondial, Special Relief Work Account, at Messrs. Bordier and Co., Bankers, Geneva, Switzerland. Even in the case of countries where the transfer of money is subject to restrictions, payments in favor of our relief activities should be permitted under present circumstances and if due explanation is given.

We shall keep you informed of the development of the further activities of our Relief Committee.

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WITH THE FIRST REFUGEES FROM POLAND

A REPORT BY DR. MARCUS KRAEMER

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS IN ROUMANIA

Cernauti

September 29, 1939

In accordance with your instructions, I came on September 17, 1939 to Vijnit to which a great influx of refugees crossed over the frontier Bridge of Kutty. There we met Dr. Schwarzbart. We were informed that Dr. Rosmarin had arrived by way of Zalsciki, and sent for him. But he came directly by some other route.

On September 18 the Jewish community at our instance called together about 50 important men and women, and I presented to this meeting my statement regarding the necessity for and the tasks of a relief committee set up by the Jewish community of Cernauti for Polish refugees, which was accepted as a basis. There was immediately collected at this session the sum of over 200,000 lei (\$1500) which was doubled the next day, and more money was collected later. Subsequent days were full of activity. We succeeded in arranging gratis for the maintenance of about 600 persons in the homes of local Jews. Although only some 600 persons could be registered, about 800 must have passed through the hands of the committee, and this is the number of those who were provided with articles of clothing, linen, etc., as a contribution of the Jewish community. A number of persons were fed in restaurants. Every refugee who applied for it received a sum of money as high as 6,000 lei. This was spent on travelling, gasoline for private

autos, expenses connected with official negotiations, etc. The committee also provided vehicles passing through and transporting refugees from the frontier into the interior with necessities. At our suggestion, this was likewise done by the Jews of Succava and other places. On the 23rd of September, the day of Yom Kippur, the police suddenly began arresting the refugees, and even entered the large synagogue in order to get them. I devoted the entire day together with the chairman of the committee to negotiations and we succeeded in obtaining permission to arrange in our own way for the transportation of refugees on the 24th. We sent about 150 persons with an escort in about 50 automobiles to Bacau, the others by special train with an escort to Roman, Bacau, Botosani, and Iasi. They were not permitted to alight but were directed to the village of Frumusica from which they were sent yesterday to Iasi.

Since there was no certainty as to the reception of the refugees anywhere, we sent a representative to Bucharest, who succeeded in centralizing this work. As in Cernauti, a committee was set up by the Bucharest committee with the inclusion of a representative of the committee established by Mr. Gutnik. This committee will handle all the necessary negotiations with the government. On October 1, I attended together with Dr. Gruenberg, chairman of the Bucharest committee, a meeting of the local committee for the purpose of organizing a central committee which would divide the work between Bucharest and Cernauti, and enlist the cooperation of all other communities. I shall bring your instructions to their attention in Bucharest as I have done in Cernauti, and will place myself

at their disposal in your name. In the meantime a thorough-
going registration will be carried out on the spot and this will
serve as a basis for future activity.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES



זכר אלה יעקב
ישראל

A REPORT OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN

THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES IN

LITHUANIA, LATVIA AND YUGOSLAVIA

Geneva

September 21 & 22, 1939

On September 21 we established telephonic communication with our friends in Lithuania, Latvia and Yugoslavia. We were unable to reach Cernauti (Roumania) on that day. The purpose of our calls was to instruct our friends in the countries bordering Poland into which Jewish refugees were streaming to collect the information which was essential for the organization of our relief work. For this purpose we sent on September 21 to our friends in Latvia, Lithuania, Roumania, Yugoslavia and Hungary extensive letters and a questionnaire. The most important parts of this questionnaire were communicated to all our friends over the telephone as follows:

Ask the following questions of as many Jewish refugees from Poland as possible.

- a) From what place do you come?
- b) What is the situation of Jews in the occupied areas?
- c) Are Jewish organizations, communities, institutions, co-operatives, etc. functioning in Poland?
- d) Where have the leading Jewish personalities remained or with which organizations or persons can one establish contact in Poland?
- e) What is the situation in the occupied areas with regard to:

1) The food supply

2) The issuance of Laws and decrees?

f) How many Polish Jews have already arrived in the given country?

g) Where and how are these refugees being maintained?

In addition an urgent request was made to collect names and addresses of refugees from Poland and of Jews who remained in the country and on whose behalf we may be able to establish contact with relatives or friends living abroad.

1. Conversation with S. Spitzer, Belgrad, September 21, 1939.

As General Secretary of the Federation of Yugoslavian Jewish communities, Mr. Spitzer was requested to aid us in the organization of our relief work. The questions given above were placed before him. He declared himself ready to help us. He was further requested to attempt to reach Dr. Kraemer at Cernauti and, if possible, to go there himself or send someone. Mr. Spitzer promised his help in the widest degree possible. He said that no refugees had yet arrived in Yugoslavia.

2. Conversation with Mr. Garfunkelis at Kaunas on September 21, 1939.

After being informed of the purpose of the call and taking note of the questions given above, Mr. Garfunkelis stated that the Polish soldiers who had crossed into Lithuania had been interned. He knew only that on that day fifteen Jews had arrived. These were members of the Central Committee of the Bund, who had left Warsaw two weeks earlier.

He promised to get in touch with our friends in Kaunas and to

have the refugees fill out our questionnaire. He complained that there could be no communication with London. He suggested establishing an office in one of the Scandinavian countries.

3. Conversation with Dr. M. Nurock, Riga, September 21, 1939.

Dr. Nurock stated that only a few Jewish refugees from Poland had arrived in Latvia. This he had learned only from the newspapers. He placed himself at our disposal and promised to do everything in his power to deal with the refugees and to submit a report to us. We informed him that we had talked with the permanent Latvian delegate to the League of Nations about our projected relief work and that this delegate had promised us to make a favorable report regarding our work to his government and that we had named Nurock as our representative. Dr. Nurock told us that he could obtain permission to take a plane to Stockholm or some other Scandinavian city and that he was ready to do so at our request. We asked him to await further instructions.

From these telephone conversations we learned that no refugees had yet arrived in Lithuania, Latvia or Yugoslavia. From our conversations on September 22 with Dr. Kraemer and Mr. Spitzer, who had established contact with the former at our request, we learned that only in Roumania had a large number of Jewish refugees arrived. Dr. Kraemer estimated their number at 2,000 to 3,000, not including the Jewish soldiers who had been interned together with the Polish soldiers. Most of the refugees came from the German area and had been on the road for fourteen days. They had left Poland before the invasion of the Russian troops. Some of the refugees would have liked to return to the Russian occupied areas but that was impossible at

that time.

In the Russian area there was apparently no danger for the personal safety of Jews. During the first hours a certain amount of plundering had taken place, but this was checked immediately by the Russian authorities. New local officials had already been established with due regard for the population ratio of the Jews. A Jewish commissar had been appointed at Kolomea and Rovno.

The reports from the German occupied area were much worse, particularly in Krakow where many persons had been shot on the charge that they had fired on the German troops. It is still impossible to say whether Jewish organizations and institutions are still functioning in Poland. Nothing has been heard of the "Joint" or the HICEM. The Roumanian offices of the "Joint" and of HICEM are at work and are in direct touch with America. Polish refugees at Cernauti, Jews as well as non-Jews, receive loans from the Polish Bank in Cernauti of 300 zlotys. Although the zloty in Roumania has no value, this bank pays 20 lei (15¢) per zloty.

Dr. Kraemer wished to establish an office to make the payments to Jewish refugees. He requested us to arrange with the appropriate offices in Paris and London, which control the loans to the Polish government, to place at the disposal of the refugee aid a portion of these loans.

Jewish committees for the immediate assistance of Jewish refugees were established at all points along the Roumanian border. The Roumanian Jews are assuming this burden with great self-sacrifice. In Cernauti the refugees were taken into the homes of Jewish families.

The Jewish community of Cernauti is preparing lists of Jewish refugees and the issuance of information would be permitted within eight to ten days. Dr. Kraemer was trying to establish cooperation with Roumanian authorities on behalf of the Jewish refugees in order to prevent them from being sent to camps, preferring rather that they should be sheltered by individual families in the interior. A central office was to be recommended to the government for the purpose of supervising the refugees sheltered by the individual families. The financing of this relief work could be covered by the Roumanian Jews only during the first weeks, following which Jewry in other countries must undertake to cover it. It was moreover urgent that the refugees should be able to leave Roumania as soon as possible, either for Palestine (there were refugees with means who could obtain a capitalist's certificate for Palestine and others who had relatives there), or elsewhere, wherever the refugees had relatives. The offices of the World Jewish Congress in London, Paris and New York were requested to take all the necessary steps to enable the Polish refugees to emigrate soon from Roumania. With regard to Palestine, Dr. Goldmann was requested to take the necessary steps. At present it is impossible to set out even with valid visas for Palestine from Roumania or Yugoslavia. For projected organizational work of the World Jewish Congress in Roumania with regard to the organization of relief, a sum of \$1,200 was immediately necessary. This could not be raised in Roumania, but must be placed at the disposal of the section of the World Jewish Congress as soon as possible.

Dr. Goldmann was further requested by Dr. Kraemer to support

his efforts for the establishment of a central office under the auspices of the Roumanian World Jewish Congress. Dr. Kraemer proposed the following members for this central office:

BUCHAREST: Philip Rosenstein, Dr. Horia Carp, Chief Rabbi
Dr. Niemerower.

CERNAUTI: Chief Rabbi Dr. Mark and Dr. Kraemer.

The main work would have to be done in Cernauti.

We arranged with both Dr. Kraemer and Mr. Spitzer to get in touch with one another and with us as soon as supplementary information was available. The work in Roumania conducted by Dr. Kraemer rests in good hands and this is true also of our friends in Latvia and Lithuania. In order to facilitate matters we asked Mr. Spitzer to call Dr. Buk in Budapest in order to place before him the same questions and to obtain his cooperation. At the same time detailed letters and questionnaires were sent out to Dr. Buk.

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REPORT OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION
BETWEEN GENEVA AND BUDAPEST WITH DR. BUK,
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

Budapest,
September 28, 1939

Inasmuch as there are no organizations in Budapest devoted to relief for Polish refugees, a Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Miklos, was established at the instance of the World Jewish Congress section. The members of the Committee include Dr. Nathan, Mr. Speer-mann, Dr. Cahan, Dr. Buk and representatives of the women's organization, W. I. Z. O. As early as September 25, representatives of the Committee went to the border stations of Hungary where refugees crossed the border from Poland in order to obtain answers to the questions sent by the Geneva Committee.

According to official Hungarian statements, thirty-two thousand refugees had crossed the border, but the Committee estimated them to double this number. This refers, however, exclusively to soldiers among whom the Jews constitute ten per cent. The Committee finds that few civilian persons were permitted to cross the border -- some fifteen to twenty. The influx of refugees came so suddenly that the Hungarian Government, during the first days could not register them. Consequently, soldiers have escaped from the temporary camps and have changed into civilian clothing. These include about one hundred Jews, some of whom are Zionists and would like to go to Palestine. Relief must be provided for these men. Since money cannot be obtained from Hungarian organizations, the Committee asks for a

thousand dollars to be remitted as soon as possible. According to information obtained from the refugees the following situation prevails:

After the rapid advance of the Germans, most of the Jews fled to Eastern Poland, now occupied by the Russians. The Jews seem to have been decently treated there. Contact with the area occupied by the Russians is still impossible. The influx of refugees is already ended for since September 25, no Polish refugees may cross the border.

According to information obtained through the refugees by the Hungarian Committee, it seems that the Jews who remained in the German occupied area have been placed in camps and compelled to do various kinds of hard labor. All attempts to communicate with inmates of the camps have failed. At some unspecified time these camps will be transferred to the interior of the country. The representatives of the Hungarian Committee visited the Polish Legation on September 28. They obtained some data there, but must report that the members of the Legation have no precise information.

Dr. Buk assured the World Jewish Congress that the Hungarian Committee would follow the situation on behalf of the Geneva Committee with the closest attention and would continue to maintain contact with Geneva and with the refugees. Practical results would only be possible after the official registration is completed. He asked what help the Geneva Committee could give the Hungarian Committee, and again called attention to the urgency of remitting the above mentioned sum as soon as possible since it was necessary to provide housing, food and clothing for the refugees. He gave us a list of names of Polish Jewish refugees gathered in Munkacz.

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A LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL BUREAU OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Geneva

September 29, 1939

We have been in telephonic communication with our friends in Hungary, Lithuania, Roumania, and Yugoslavia. On the suggestion of the Geneva Committee for Relief of the War stricken Jewish Population of Poland, a branch committee has been established in Budapest under the chairmanship of Dr. Miklos, chairman of the section of the World Jewish Congress. The Hungarian government immediately gave its consent to the establishment of this committee. On the same day the committee sent representatives to the border stations where the Polish refugees gathered.

In Lithuania Dr. Garfunkelis, member of the administrative committee of the World Jewish Congress, is working with our friends of the Lithuanian section of the World Jewish Congress. In Latvia Dr. M. Nurock, one of the friends of the World Jewish Congress, has established a committee. In Roumania a committee is to be established by the Jewish community of Bucharest on October 1, and it will include the leading friends of the World Jewish Congress as well as the chairman of the Federation of Polish-Russian Jews in Roumania, Mr. Gutwig, and apparently representatives of all parties. Among the persons close to the World Jewish Congress there will participate Dr. Kramer, Horia, Carp, Philip Rosenstein, and others.

The information which reached us since September 22 is that only individual refugees had arrived in Lithuania and Latvia (the reports of the J. T. A. are not correct and apparently deal with members of the military forces interred in the various states). In Lithuania there are only some 15 members of the central committee of the Bund regarding which we have already reported previously. According to Garfunkelis they are maintained in a summer camp of Ose. The reports regarding the feeding of children and public kitchens supposedly set up by Ose for the refugees must be incorrect because there are no Jewish civil refugees in Lithuania. It is possible that in certain Lithuanian and Latvian villages a few Polish-Jewish civil refugees are to be found. They cannot be more than a handful. From Hungary our committee reports the official estimate of 32,000 Polish Jewish refugees, while the committee itself estimates them at twice that number. This figure refers to members of the military forces among whom the Jewish ratio is 10 percent; civil Jewish refugees are very few. Our representative found only some 15 or 20 such refugees in the border town of Munkacs. It is possible that a handful of Jewish civil refugees may be found in some other border stations. The influx of Polish soldiers came so suddenly that the government could not begin to count and intern them during the first days, consequently some of the soldiers discarded their uniforms for civilian clothing, among those there are one hundred Jewish soldiers. Many of those men belong to Zionist organizations and would like to go to Palostino.

The Hungarian committee requires for its work, involving housing, feeding, clothing, etc., an initial sum of one thousand dollars. Since September 25 the influx of refugees to Hungary has completely stopped so that there is no question of an increase in the number of refugees.

The Jewish refugees in Roumania are mostly civilians. They have already been taken into the interior of the country and are being installed in twelve small places. Only when this settlement has been completed can the registration begin. During the early part of next week the representatives of our French committee will go through the various places in order to ascertain what the situation is. Dr. Kramer has told us that he has sent us a list of about 600 names collected in Cornauti. As soon as we receive this list we will send it on to you. The most important names will be cabled.

Dr. Kramer requires for the initial administrative work, including telegrams, long distance telephone calls to Geneva, travelling expenses, immediate relief, the sum of one thousand dollars. He reports that a Consul Imberger has gone from Roumania into the occupied region of Poland to look for the Rabbi of Ger. After the return of the Consul he hoped to have information regarding the situation in the occupied areas. With few exceptions there is no information yet regarding the Polish Jewish leaders nor regarding the operations of the Palestine offices, cooperatives, the loan offices, etc.

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EXCERPT FROM LETTER OF DR. NAHUM GOLDMANN
CHAIRMAN OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
TO DR. STEPHEN S. WISE

Geneva
October 4, 1939

Dear Wise:

As you know from our reports, we are trying to re-adjust the activity of the World Jewish Congress to the new situation. We have transferred the organization department from Paris to Geneva where K. will stay for the time being to maintain the contact with the different affiliated organizations and committees.

We have also started special activities in connection with the situation in Poland and in the neighboring countries. We have received the permission from the four neighboring States, Roumania, Hungary, Lithuania and Latvia, to send our observers from time to time to the frontiers to get reports about Jewish refugees from Poland in these countries and, what is more important, about the Jewish situation in the occupied Polish territories. We have received already the first reports from Roumania which are being forwarded to you.

Here in Geneva, we have enlarged our office too. I have invited Prof. Guggenheim to take part regularly in our work and he has accepted it to my great satisfaction. We have also asked Dr. Silberschein, who is one of the best experts in Polish-Jewish questions, to remain in Geneva and to help us with his special knowledge of Polish-Jewish conditions.

We have created a special committee for dealing with the question of Jewish war victims and I am trying to get a few leading Jewish Swiss personalities to take part in this committee.

We are in contact with the International Red Cross, which is willing to cooperate with us, insofar as the Jewish aspect of the Red Cross is concerned.

These new activities from the Congress require supplementary financial means. Our Rumanian and Hungarian committees asked for additional financial help. Will you and your friends in America do the necessary work in order to enable us both here and the American Jewish Congress over there to live up to the emergency situation.

Yours as ever,

N. GOLDMANN
(Signed)

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A LETTER TO THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

FROM DR. I. SCHWARZBART, FORMER DÉPUTY IN THE POLISH PARLIAMENT

Bucharest

October 10, 1939

Administrative Committee
World Jewish Congress
Geneva

Inasmuch as I am myself a refugee in Bucharest, I venture to give you a general picture regarding the situation of the Polish-Jewish refugees. I am working with Dr. Rosmarin in the Palestine office, which is doing its utmost to fulfill its duty insofar as the Palestinian aspect of this program is concerned.

1) The Palestine office has sent its representatives to all places harboring Jewish refugees. There are less than 10 such places in which the refugees have voluntarily chosen to stay within a region indicated to them. The representatives of the Palestine office have collected questionnaires filled out by all those who wish to go to Palestine whether as first or second choice.

2) As an estimate there are probably no more than 1,500 to 2,000 Jewish refugees from Poland in Roumania. Among these some 600 to 800 have expressed a desire to go to Palestine. Perhaps the Palestine office has not yet covered all the refugees. Among these there are 20 to 30 who possess the requirements for a capitalist certificate. All others have either little or no money.

3) There are few young people among them. The 30 certificates for the Polish youth received here would seem to be sufficient.

4) Among the refugees there are many veteran Zionists

whose names may be little known outside of their local circles but who can point to decades of self-sacrificing work in the movement. In addition to these there are other good Jews who can point to communal activity.

5) A special refugee committee is operating, to my knowledge in Cornauti and Bucharest. It distributes clothing and arranges shelter, but gives no money. Without this a large number of refugees would simply starve on the streets,

6) I do not know how many refugees fled to Lithuania, Hungary and Latvia. From a private telephone conversation with Budapest I learned that few had gone to Hungary.

7) The refugees here have limited right of sojourn. It is reported that the present period may be extended from 14 to 30 days. In individual cases the extension may be longer. I have the impression that these extensions cannot continue.

8) The attitude of the Roumanian authorities to the Jewish refugees is not only correct but humane, which I would emphasize.

9) A representative of the Polish YMCA who is here stated to a representative of the JTA that the funds of the YMCA are being distributed without distinction as to religion. It remains to be seen how this will work out in practice.

10) The Jewish population is dealing with the refugees in a manner which deserves the highest praise.

11) Among the refugees there are quite a few who come under Aliyah B, which will somewhat relieve the need for certificates. These persons range from 20 to 35 years of age. With few exceptions they have no money outside of 26,000 to 28,000 lei per

person (about \$200.00). Efforts are being made to raise funds. I do not believe that this can meet with great success here, because the emphasis here must be on charity for refugees on the spot.

Proposals:

1) The remaining unused certificates from Poland must be sent here as part of the schedule most recently assigned. This should also be acceptable to the mandatory government.

2) Efforts must be made to obtain 1,000 to 1,200 certificates for Polish refugees immediately.

3) The refugee committee in Geneva (the World Jewish Congress), the committee in London, and the committee in America must provide means for Aliyah B immediately.

4) About 50 certificates must be provided for especially meritorious Jews.

5) The efforts toward emigration to countries other than Palestine involving some 200 to 300 persons must be centralized in Geneva. Only the sea route through Beirut is to be considered at present. I do not wish to explain this here.

Please acknowledge the receipt of this report. I am to remain here another two or three weeks.

I remain at your disposal,

DR. IGNACZ SZWARZBAUT
(Signed)

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER BY DR. A. SILBERSCHIN
DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS COMMITTEE FOR POLISH RELIEF
TO DR. STEPHEN S. WISE

Geneva

October 11, 1932

Dear Dr. Wise:

Despite the necessity for relief action as early as the second week of the war, the appropriate organizations such as the Joint, HICEM, and the others, not only undertook nothing but apparently did not even begin to deal with the question how to provide relief. We were the first and for a time the only ones who not only were concerned with the question but attempted to do something concrete, and prepared a plan of work, so far as it went, for the establishment of a bureau, for this task for the setting up of committees in the countries concerned, and we began the work without delay.

Only after the lapse of some time did certain organizations such as OSE, HICEM and then the Joint report regarding their work on behalf of refugees. We were able to determine that at the time of those reports the statements issued were at least very much exaggerated, since they had little to do with work actually conducted. These circumstances have been the chief motive in all our negotiations. We undertook these at a time that was appropriate and favorable and, moreover, at a time when we were in the midst of the work, whereas the others had scarcely begun. This applies to the Joint as well.

The great catastrophe which has overwhelmed the Jewish population of Poland and has destroyed a community of $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions in the course of two weeks has confronted all the relief organizations with tasks to which they are not equal and for which they are in no way prepared. The problem is not only to provide thousands and thousands of refugees with help, clothing, food, and housing, but also to give them legal aid, as, for example, to arrange for their sojourn in foreign countries. Even more important was the work of searching for members of families who disappeared, to enable refugees to communicate with those who stayed behind, to establish contact with relatives abroad, to transfer money held by refugees abroad, and also to arrange for emigration. Not the least of the necessary tasks was to gather the documentation which would orientate us in formulating our attitude to the new political problems, and to serve as a basis for relevant demands regarding the safeguarding of Jewish rights during peace negotiations.

It is clear that no Jewish organization alone was and is in a position to fulfill these varied tasks. Yet, on the other hand, it is clear that all aspects of relief overlap, and that it is hardly possible to provide for individual fields of relief by special organizations working independently of one another.

A great concentration of all energies within Jewry for this activity is likewise absolutely necessary for the representation of the interests of Jews affected by the war. We can obviously gain much more if we appear before the International Red Cross, for example,

as a unity than if the Red Cross receives requests from various Jewish organizations at the same time.

To meet these tasks also requires large sums of money, even if many of these tasks cannot be handled by expenditures of money.

With these considerations in mind we strove for the unification of relief work involving all organizations. The idea was not to relieve the organizations from any activities but to have an appropriate division of labor so that organizations will be responsible for those tasks with which they have been dealing hitherto, while all the activities shall be carried out as an organized whole. This seemed important to us not only because of the momentary situation, but as a possible beginning for the establishment of a permanent Jewish relief agency, provided we could win the individual organizations over to the idea.

In order to make the establishment of such an organization possible, we decided to carry on our work as a committee set up by the World Jewish Congress. In this way we expect to build the framework for the federation of all organizations and to give them an opportunity to send their representatives to the committee in order to exercise control over the work.

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A LETTER FROM THE
CENTRAL BUREAU OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

TO THE
AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Geneva

October 11, 1939

Up until now, permission has not been granted for anyone to visit the Polish occupied territories either of Russia or of Germany. Nor has the representative of the International Red Cross, Mr. Junod, received permission to visit these territories. We are in communication with the Red Cross and we have given them the lists which we have received from various committees. Dr. Nurock had an interview in Riga with Mr. Davis, the assistant General Secretary of the Red Cross Societies and the representative of the American Red Cross. Mr. Junod explained to us that he is ready to have a conference with us, but asked us to postpone the conference for a week until Mr. Davis shall have returned to Geneva. At that time, perhaps, the Red Cross will have had more precise reports. Prof. Guggenheim, who knows Davis personally, will then confer with him.

Our committees in lands bordering Poland report the following:

Lithuania: There are in Lithuania in all 1000 Polish civilian refugees. Among these there are about 30 Jews. Fifteen of these are functionaries of the Warsaw Bund, and they have been taken to the summer colony of the Ose. The other Jewish refugees come from

various cities of Poland and are being housed in private Jewish homes in Lithuania. The stream of refugees seems to have ceased.

Hungary: The Jewish refugees from Poland to be found in Hungary are for the most part soldiers; the civilian refugees not having been admitted. They number 40,000 to 50,000, three or four thousand of them being Jewish soldiers. Our committee is registering these refugees. Only three civilian Jewish refugees have been registered, the other names are those of Jewish soldiers who are garbed in civilian clothes. The number of the latter group totals thus far about 100. But it is expected that these numbers will rise.

The refugees are kept in camps which have been established throughout the country. Our committee is registering the refugees, is helping to maintain them in Hungary, and will help them to eventual migration. Most of the Jewish-Polish refugees in Hungary are Zionists and desire to go to Palestine. In order to secure the necessary certificates and passage to Palestine, we have established relations with the Hungarian Zionist Bureau. The Hungarian Committee is urgently in need of money to maintain the refugees and the work of the committee. A minimum of 5000 pengos or \$1000 is required.

Roumania: In Bucharest, following the meeting of October 1st, (reported in our Report #6) a Central Committee for Polish Jewish refugees was established, calling itself the Union of Roumanian Jewish Communities. All groups and parties are represented therein. The World Jewish Congress is represented in this committee by Horia

Carp (Bucharest), Dr. Markus Kramer (Cernauti), Chief Rabbi Dr. Mark (Cernauti) and Dr. Meyer Ebner (Cernauti). The President of this Committee is S.M. Gutnic (President of the Roumanian Hicem).

Other prominent persons identified with the Committee are: Chief Rabbi Dr. Niemerower, Director Muehlstein and Karl Kluger (both representatives of the Roumanian Joint) and S. E. Mindlein of the Roumanian Ort.

The Committee has set up the following departments: Legal, Finance, Clothing, Housing, Contact with the Refugees. Dr. Kramer is identified with the last-named department. Our friend, Dr. Cotic has informed us that at the behest of the Committee he has undertaken the registration of the refugees. We have worked out the questionnaires which are being used in the registration and accurate lists are being sent to us. List No. 1 is going forward to you by the same post as our Report No. 6. The lists were gotten up by the Jewish community of Cernauti in the first days of the refugees' arrival. This list contains also the names of the thirty Polish Jewish refugees in Hungary.

The work of distributing the refugees to other countries will not be carried out by the Roumanian Committee alone. The work of migration to Palestine will be under the direction of the Palestine Agency, and migration to other lands under the direction of the Hicem. There is a special department - Relations with Foreign Countries, a member of which is our friend Horia Carp.

Dr. Kramer informs us that he represents the Geneva Relief Committee in the Bucharest Central Committee. He urgently requests funds for administrative work. The funds of the Bucharest Central Committee do not cover such activities, since their funds raised entirely inside Roumania are used for the necessary expenses in behalf of the refugees.

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A LETTER FROM THE
CENTRAL BUREAU OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Geneva,
October 14, 1939

We learned from a telephone conversation of October 10 with our friend Dr. Cotic at Bucharest who is conducting the registration of Jewish civilian refugees in Roumania that this registration is in full swing. We are informed that 450 persons stand ready to sail for Palestine. This requires large sums totaling about \$40,000. The refugees themselves command a part of this sum and the Roumanian Committee has raised some money for this purpose. The Roumanian Committee has also cabled Hias in New York for \$20,000 more. We have been requested to relay this matter to you so that by your intervention the necessary sum may be sent by Hias as quickly as possible.

The Committee in Roumania has received information regarding a serious famine in Lemberg, Warsaw and Stanislawow.

A few days ago Dr. Rosmarin left for Palestine. Dr. Schwartzbard is to receive a visa for Paris.

From the Hungarian Committee an additional list of 25 refugees has been received. I am enclosing the list available at present. You will find these names in the same form as the lists sent to you last week. I trust that these names will be useful in New York and, at all events, that you will publicize them.

The last-named person on this list, a physician, L. Fuchs from Wloclawek, is a member of the Central Committee of the Zionist

Organization of Warsaw and of the Board of Directors of the Jewish National Fund in Warsaw.

We also learn from Hungarian Committee that Dr. Adolf Rothfeld has remained in Lemberg.

You will find enclosed a very interesting report from one of our Jewish friends in Switzerland who had an opportunity to visit Berlin and Vienna in early October. We have distributed this report through Paris and London, so it is possible that you have already read it in your press. If it has not yet appeared in the American press, please arrange to have this done. The report must not be dated as from Geneva nor should the World Jewish Congress be mentioned in connection with it.

Representations to French Government

Nahum (Goldmann) reports regarding his second visit to Paris. He had two interviews with Baron Rothschild regarding the former German and Austrian subjects interned in France. At the suggestion of Nahum there is to be established a Committee consisting of prominent representatives of Jewish organizations, which is to assist the French authorities as an advisory committee in determining the loyalty of refugees. Appropriate negotiations with the French authorities have been conducted by Nahum. The establishment of this committee, however, will require some time.

To our conversation between Nahum (Goldmann) and Louis and Edward Oungre, Hicem is contemplating the establishment of a bureau in some neutral country. Brussels is being considered, but Switzerland is also a possibility. It is the view of the Hicem and ICA that

the time has come to make a united front of all Jewish organizations. The sole difficulty, in the opinion of Cungre, is the "Joint". The present relationship of Hias in New York with the "Joint" is making matters difficult for the representatives of Hicem in Paris. At all events, both Cungres are in favor of cooperation, including, of course, the World Jewish Congress.

Representations to Polish Government

Nahum Goldmann saw the Polish Foreign Minister Zalesky in Paris, who repeated to him a statement, which he had given Smolar.

Conversations with Former President Benes

Nahum also saw Benes. The conversation was chiefly informative. Nahum requested a declaration from Benes to be given to a delegation of Czecko-Slovak Jews who were about to visit him. This declaration would, in the name of the government, repudiate officially the measures against the Jews issued by the Czeck regime since September, 1938. Benes promised that at the appropriate time he would gladly issue such a statement to the Jewish delegation in question.

The financial situation is terrible. In addition, the Hungarian and Roumanian committees are making urgent requests for sums needed for the registration and immediate relief. If we do not send them money in response to their continuous requests, these committees will not work for us any more.

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THE SITUATION IN BERLIN, VIENNA AND POLAND

OCTOBER, 1939

A REPORT TO THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

A correspondent, who spent several days in Berlin and Vienna, has submitted the following regarding the Jewish situation:

Conditions in Berlin are somewhat better than in Vienna. In Vienna the Jews are completely impoverished, are living only with the aid of Jewish philanthropy. In Berlin about 30 to 35 per cent of the Jewish population are still self-supporting, although it is a matter of days before they too will have nothing. There is still to be paid the last installment of the penalty imposed because of the assassination of vomRath. A census of Jewish wealth is being conducted according to streets, which will facilitate confiscation. Already raids and searches have been conducted under the pretext of a search for weapons and money. The possession of more than 500 marks in the house of a Jew is judged anti-social. Money must be surrendered to the banks. The Gestapo is carrying out this job on its own regardless of the disapproval of the financial officials.

The correspondent also visited the public food kitchens and reports that it is a depressing thing to watch the Jews eat. They are only shadows of men.

Food supplies are rationed and technically the Jews also have food cards. They may make purchases, however, only between two and four in the afternoon, both in Berlin and in Vienna. This too is to be changed for it is believed in official circles that the Jews

have an advantage because of these special hours. Separate shops are about to be arranged. As a matter of fact, the special hours for shopping have worked out very poorly because in order to get anything one must stand on line from early morning especially at those shops where there are still certain stamp-free foods, such as fish and certain smoked foods. The resentment of the women peddlers and the small shopkeepers against Jews is mounting.

Even those Jews who still have means have great difficulty in obtaining food.

Clothing is obtainable only by those holding permits. The Jews do not receive these any more. Eviction from residences are the order of the day, particularly in Vienna. Court decisions, which give the Jews the right to stay for a period up to one year have no effect if a party-member decides that he wants a particular residence.

In Berlin there is yet some social life. The Jewish Kultur-Bund has not officially been dissolved. No performances, however, have been taking place. After eight o'clock in the evening Jews may not be out. In Vienna the social life of the Jews is much worse, for there has never been any Kultur-Bund there. In Vienna Jews no longer have a cinema theater. There are still synagogues in Berlin but none in Vienna. The last remaining synagogue in Vienna is no longer attended.

Emigration:

The pressure for emigration is very great and the Jewish emigration officers are practically besieged. Until now the authorities

have not expressed themselves against emigration. They permit Jews holding certificates and affidavits to leave.

In the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen there are about 14,000 Jews including 5,000 of Polish citizenship and 3,000 to 4,000 stateless. With regard to the Polish Jews, their connection with the Russian occupied area is ignored. The correspondent spoke to many women who received from the commander of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp the following message: "Your husband has died of apoplexy (or heart failure)". The correspondent also saw letters from the commander reading as follows: "As we have informed you by telegraph your husband has died of apoplexy. The body has been cremated and the urn may be removed." After the first two corpses were taken away the others were not available. By October 7th there were twenty-eight telegrams in Berlin and seven in Vienna, making a total of thirty-five cases of death in the Sachsenhausen camp reported to that date. There is no possibility of making an inquiry. Letters from wives of prisoners are not delivered. Wives who write receive from the commander the following report: "I have received your letter of such and such a date. The message to your husband which you say you enclosed was however not enclosed."

The Swedish Embassy has taken over the protection of Polish citizens in Germany, but nothing practical can be obtained through them.

The correspondent had occasion to hear the Fuehrer's speech in Berlin in a cafe (German Jews have been deprived of their radios). The sections referring to the Jews aroused considerable

comment. Apparently appropriate instructions were issued before the speech. People were saying: "The Fuehrer will regulate the Jewish question. He will show the governments who gathered at the Evian conference how incompetent they are to find imaginary countries. The Fuehrer will solve this problem at one blow". The speech was understood to mean that a Jewish state would be established in Poland.

Poland:

The correspondent had an opportunity to speak with a Polish Jewish officer from Katowice, who participated in the defense of Krakow. He reported that in the Polish areas incorporated within the German administration, that is, the former provinces of the German Empire, the Jews were subject to the same measures as in the Reich. The petty officials rob everything.

In other parts of Poland atrocities have been committed as for example in Bromberg. Although the correspondent does not know how much the Poles have suffered, all indications point to the fact that they have been incomparably better treated. The Germans pretend to have come as the liberators of the Poles from the Jews who are alleged to have sucked them dry for centuries. This pretext is apparently meeting with success.

The Jews are excluded from the distribution of food in Poland. One woman is reported to have lost two children who died of starvation.

In Poland proper the Germans carried on in the worse possible way setting fire to synagogues filled with worshippers, to ritual baths, etc. In Radom hundreds of Jews were thrown into the

river. Those who clung desperately to the bank were beheaded. In Lodz the Jews were seized as snipers. They were collected and carried off to face the firing squads by hundreds if not by the thousands.

At present an attempt is being made to productivize the Jews. Posters and placards are distributed bearing pictures showing how the Jews are being set to work sawing wood, etc. The caption reads: "The Jews are now developing better habits, the Jews who have been parasites for centuries, etc." There is talk of deportation but nothing concrete can yet be said.

Only those may flee who have considerable funds. The middle class cannot do so because their money will take them only as far as Warsaw or somewhat further east.

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A LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL BUREAU OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

TO THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS

Geneva

October 23, 1939

You will receive by the same post a new list of refugee names to replace the first list sent you. This list also has about eighty more names supplied by our Hungarian committee.

Attached is a copy of a questionnaire prepared by us to aid in finding refugees who are sought by friends and relatives. We ask you to use this form if you are receiving inquiries. Although the inquiries coming from you need not be on the same printed form, the text must correspond and for each person sought you should send us a form in quadruplicate.

Red Cross

Last week we were again in close touch with the International Red Cross and had a conversation with the active director of the central agency for prisoners of war, who has likewise been entrusted with searching for persons left behind in Poland and who is organizing the transmission of messages to such persons.

We informed her that we have already received hundreds of inquiries and have undertaken the technicalities involved. Those questionnaires applying to areas with which the Red Cross has already established mail connection are being turned over. It has also been arranged to submit a copy of every questionnaire received by us to the Red Cross. As soon as the Red Cross shall have established

communication with the occupied area the information will be transmitted by the quickest route. A duplicate of the questionnaire is sent to us by our branch committees in the various countries. At present mail connection in the occupied area has been established only with a small number of places in Posen and Upper Silesia:

Posen: Bojanowo, Rawitzsch, Krotoschin, Adelnau, Bralin, Kempin, Ostrewo, Schildberg, Reichthal.

Upper Silesia: Kattowitz, Konigshutte, Mislowitz, Laurahutte, Rybnik, Tarnowitz, Loblinitz, Chudow, Czerlitz, Pless, Emmagrube, Mikolai, Schrau, Czerwionka, Loslau, Paruschowitz.

With regard to other places we can only report that some letters from Lodz have arrived in Geneva. The Red Cross is attempting to establish communication by various means and has tried also to utilize the military post.

All persons sought by us who are of military age, with the exception of those listed among the refugees by our committees in Roumania, Hungary, etc., receive a distinctive mark. The Red Cross has undertaken to compare these names with the lists of war prisoners and to inform us soon.

We were thanked especially for the list of names of refugees in Roumania and Hungary, which was among the first lists received by the Red Cross. At the same time we were requested to turn over to the Red Cross all incoming lists. Inasmuch as our office is on the spot our technical cooperation with the International Red Cross is proceeding smoothly, especially since our staff enjoys the personal acquaintance of the leading workers in the Red Cross.

The discussion also touched on the centralization of activities and the representative of the Red Cross again hailed our efforts to coordinate the work of Jewish organizations. The Red Cross would be pleased to have all inquiries from Jewish sources collected by our committee and then transmitted to them in order to lighten their burden. The representative of the Red Cross recommended that our committee issue a notice to all associated Jewish organizations for the purpose of attaining such coordination.

Roumania

Dr. Kraemer informs us under date of October 9 that on October 3 and 4 he visited Jassy, where 166 refugees are being maintained and that their legal status has not yet been regulated. The refugees are receiving good care but are worried by the uncertainty of their fate and their lack of communication with members of their families left behind. The refugees are represented in the committee of the Jassy community, which has begun a campaign to raise funds and collect clothing.

According to various reports which we have received from Roumania there are at most 2,000 civilian Jewish refugees in the country. Dr. Kraemer, who has himself visited various towns where such refugees are to be found and is in constant contact with other members of the Bucharest committee which is registering the refugees, estimates their number at no more than 1,500. Most of the refugees would like to go to Palestine. A few have enough funds to obtain a capitalist's certificate. Transporting the refugees to Palestine is only a question of funds.

On the Polish border at Kutu all is quiet as is the Russian occupied area insofar as the frontier region is concerned, which is the only area from which a few reliable reports have reached Roumania. The president of the Kutu Soviet is a Ukrainian and the vice-president is a Jew. The militia which at first comprised ---- Jews and 50 non-Jews now has only 15 Jews. The stores are sold out. One zloty is the equivalent of one rouble and 350 zlotys are a young fortune. In Stanislawow 8 Jews and 2 Poles have been shipped to Siberia for boosting prices. Some persons have managed to smuggle themselves back across the border into the Russian occupied area. There will apparently be no official decision regarding the readmission of refugees before the end of October.

The anti-Semitic paper published in Roumania Tagespost in a dispatch from Warsaw writes: "350,000 Jews in kaftans are washing the streets. So at last there is some useful occupation for creatures who hoard even water in order to do business with it."

Ignacz Schwarzbart, who is at present in Bucharest and has obtained a visa for France, sends us the following report with certain proposals: From a report from A. Reiss of October 17, who at the request of the World Jewish Congress went from Paris to Bucharest in order to use the few weeks before his departure for Palestine to organize and coordinate activities there, he learns that the refugees from Poland are maintained in 31 small places in the old Kingdom, while Bucovina and Bessarabia are closed to the refugees. The Roumanian government has issued permits for a stay of two weeks and this period is being extended for another four weeks.

The government began on October 15 to pay to every refugee 100 lei (about 75¢) and 50 lei for every child. Reiss does not say whether this sum is for a day or a week. He adds that this sum covers the most modest requirements. As the chief need Reiss emphasizes making it possible for refugees to leave Roumania. Most of the persons registered until now wish to go to Palestine and, he, too, remarks that this is a purely financial problem. HIAS and HICEM have answered negatively with regard to the financing of Beth. Reiss again requests us to take the matter up with them and to use your influence with HIAS to reverse their decision. The problem could be solved with twenty thousand dollars.

Thousands of Jewish refugees were barred at the end of September from crossing the Roumanian frontier. Most of them have returned to their cities and villages now occupied by Russia. Until now nothing unfavorable regarding the Jewish situation has been heard. While at present there is a shortage of necessary supplies, the Jews are treated no differently from others. On the other hand, among the Polish refugees there are spreading rumors which may become serious; namely, that the Jews were the ones who invited the Russians into the country.

Hungary

Under date of October 10 we have been informed that our Hungarian committee has obtained from the authorities 15-day permits for refugees which may be extended if necessary. Most of the refugees registered; about 100 wish to go to Palestine. This, apart from

the certificates which the Jewish Agency has in view for the refugees in Hungary, is likewise a financial problem.

Yugoslavia

The secretary of the Union of Communities in Belgrade informs us, under date of October 13, that 3,000 refugees from Poland are to be admitted and that 1,000 have already obtained permits. In the instructions sent to Yugoslavian representatives in the various countries bordering Poland nothing has been said regarding any limit on the number of Jewish refugees. At the same time the previous restrictions regarding the entry of Jews from Poland have not been revoked. The secretary, S. Spitzer, also informs us that he has succeeded in arranging for the transit of 20 to 25 Jewish refugees between the ages of 25 and 45 through Yugoslavia. If entry permits for a larger number of Jewish refugees could be obtained during the next few weeks the Yugoslavian Federation of communities will undertake to provide for them so that no special committee need be established. The Federation will naturally operate as an affiliate of the World Jewish Congress.

Germany

From most reliable sources in Vienna we learn that the directors of the Palestine offices in Vienna, Prague and Berlin have been made to go to Lublin in order to make preparations for the settlement of Jews in Poland in accordance with Hitler's plan. At the time they left they were told nothing specific regarding the plan. They are to remain in Lublin about six weeks. On October 21, 1939 the first transport of 1,200 stateless Jews left Vienna for Lublin. The wives

and children of these men are to follow in a few weeks. Yesterday the Paris radio in a German broadcast intended for Austria announced that the emigration of Jews from Austria to Poland must be completed no later than March 1, 1940.

From the same source we have learned that there are various indications that Jews from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia are being put to forced labor.

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EXCERPT FROM LETTER OF DR. NAHUM GOLDMANN
CHAIRMAN OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
TO DR. STEPHEN S. WISE

Geneva
November 4, 1939.

Dear Wise:

I came back from Paris and London these days and want to write you about several urgent questions.

To tell you a few words about the general situation, I had the impression in Paris and especially in London, where I saw important people, that the outlook is very optimistic. I wouldn't go as far as some do to say that the breakdown of Hitler is already sealed, but it seems indeed that the Reich is in a terrible position. Italy is definitely no more on the axis' side and you know that nearly all the pro-German elements of the Italian cabinet have resigned. Italy's neutrality is assured with rather a benevolent attitude towards the Allies and it is quite not excluded that one day Italy may jump into the war to help the victors. The firmness of the Turkish attitude has increased the determination of the Balkan States to resist German invasion and negotiations are going on for the creation of a solid Balkan block under a kind of an Italian-Turkish protection, which will be able to resist German pressure. The real uncertain factor in the whole situation is naturally Soviet Russia. The Turks are convinced that the Russians will not help Germany actively except economically and the possibilities of Russia's

economic help are believed to be rather limited. If Russia keeps definitely out of the war, then Germany is perfectly isolated and practically lost. Next Spring the Allies will have twice or three times as many aeroplanes as Germany whose aeroplanes, by the way, seem to be inferior to those of the Allies. It is not believed that Germany will risk a frontal attack against France or violate Belgium or Switzerland. Holland is the most menaced of all, as Germany may try to find there a basis for air attacks against England. Most of those who still a month ago in France and Britain believed in a very long war, do not believe in it any more and very important people hold the view that by next spring or summer the war may be over. The internal situation of Germany seems to be very bad. It is the Germany of the end of 1917, both economically and psychologically. It is naturally possible and even probable that, before his end Hitler will try some mad act of despair, but nobody believes that he can succeed. There is naturally a fear of Bolshevism in Germany and even of Hitler himself turning Communist, but most people believe that the Army will intervene, get rid of Hitler and prevent Communism. These are naturally all guesses, but I am rather inclined to take this optimistic view and think that it is quite probable that by the next year war will be over and Hitlerism crushed. I wanted to transmit you these impressions in order that with all the terrible news about the Jewish situation in Poland you should also have this encouraging information.

As for the Jewish situation, it becomes worse and worse.

In Poland it seems to be worse than hell. Jews starving, driven from their homes, massacred by the Germans and at the time being no real help. You know that the Germans think of creating a kind of Jewish reserve near Lublin. Officials of the Palestine offices in Prague and Vienna have been sent there already to elaborate schemes for the transfer of the Jewish population. (The news about the Palestine Office officials should be kept confidential.) First transports of Jews from Czechoslovakia and Austria have been sent already there. I am of opinion that the time has come to think about some help for the Jews in the Polish territories occupied by the Germans. I know all the difficulties about getting the consent of the Allies to send food to Poland, but something must be done unless hundreds of thousands of Jews will be starved to death. I have reasons to think that the Germans would allow a neutral Jewish commission to go to Poland to organize such help and the question should be discussed and dealt with immediately. The problem of the Polish refugees outside of Poland is not of great importance, as their number is rather small.

As for the Russian part of Poland, the Jews are treated decently, but their bolshevisation and dejudaisation are being forced upon them by all means. I will try and get in touch with the Soviet Government about the possibility of some emigration of the Russian-Polish territory to Palestine, but I doubt very much if I will succeed.

I am awaiting anxiously for your news about the outcome of your negotiations with the Joint. All Jewish organizations in Europe are definitely in favour of creating a united Jewish front

for the time of the war and the coming peace conference. I informed you already that the Ica and Hicem favour it and you have probably read that even the Board of Deputies has announced that they are in favour of cooperation with the World Jewish Congress. Laski and Stein (who as the successor of Montefiore as Chairman of the Anglo-Jewish Association, is one of the two presidents of the Joint Foreign Committee) have had several conversations with Perlzweig in order to establish permanent cooperation. What is most important in this respect, is not only the actual relief work and political action, but also the preparation of our peace aims. You remember that months ago I sent you a memorandum of Dr. Jacob Robinson from Kaunas, who was for years an intimate collaborator of the Committee of Jewish Delegations and is one of the best experts on Jewish minority questions. His idea to create an institute to take stock of our experience since the Versailles Peace Treaty in order to be able to formulate our program of peace aims for guaranteeing Jewish rights, is now of an urgent necessity. As you remember, I thought then that this institute may be created in New York. I think today that it should be organized in Geneva, not only because it would be cheaper, but especially because Geneva is becoming rapidly a centre for the study of the peace aims and the new organization of Europe after the war. The institute of Rappard is beginning to deal with it on a scientific basis, backed by the Rockefeller Foundation. Coudenhove-Kalergi is trying to create a similar institute here. If we could organize our institute here in Geneva, we could through Guggenheim

(who is, as you know, Professor at Rappard's Institute) and through my relation with Coudenhove cooperate with these two groups. Robinson is fortunately now in France and would be ready to come to Geneva and direct this institute. If the United Jewish front could be created, this institute could act on behalf of all Jewish organizations, otherwise and for the time being it will be our institute. I regard it to be of the highest importance to create it as soon as possible, and Robinson is an excellent for it, a great expert and a man with scientific authority even in non-Jewish circles. (He has published many first class books on minority rights). The creation of the institute depends only on the possibility of financing it. It would cost \$500 a month which is certainly a modest sum. I urge you to provide this money and let me know it by cable, in order that I should try and get the visa for Robinson and he should begin to work. Robinson would naturally get in touch with all Jewish scholars in this field and distribute the work among them.

Please let me have your answer to all the questions raised in this letter as soon as possible, partly by cable and partly by Clipper-mail. We will naturally continue to keep you informed about all things happening here.

With hearty greetings,

Yours as ever,

N. GOLDMANN
(Signed)

CONFIDENTIAL

AMERICAN JEWISH

FROM

ARCHIVES

THE DAY BOOK

OF

**THE WORLD JEWISH
CONGRESS**

PART II

**A SERIES OF CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS TO
THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS**



INTRODUCTION

We present herewith PART II of the
Confidential Day Book of the World Jewish Congress.

This is a record of communications and re-
ports addressed to the American Jewish Congress
with reference to the work of the World Jewish
Congress in behalf of the rights of Jews in
Europe.

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INTERVIEW BETWEEN MARC JARBLUM,
MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
AND THE SWEDISH MINISTER IN PARIS

Paris

October 25, 1939

On October 24 Mr. M. Jarblum, member of the Executive Committee of the World Jewish Congress, was received by Mr. E. Hennings, Minister of Sweden at Paris. Mr. Jarblum described to Mr. Hennings the situation of the Jews in the German occupied areas of Poland and called his attention to the treatment inflicted upon them, the famine, the forced labor, etc.

Mr. Hennings listened with deep interest. He asked several questions, such as: Are the Polish non-Jews better treated than the Jews? To this Mr. Jarblum answered that they too have been cruelly treated, nevertheless the Jews have suffered doubly, as Poles and as Jews.

At Mr. Jarblum's request, Mr. Hennings promised to submit a report on this question to his government together with his recommendation that instructions be given to the Swedish representatives at Berlin to influence the German authorities as far as possible and to prevail upon them particularly to mitigate the harshness of the treatment of the Polish Jews.

The following day Mr. Jarblum submitted to the Swedish Minister the testimony and photographs in the possession of the World Jewish Congress relating to their conversation.

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INTERVIEW WITH MR. NICHOLSON,
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

BY DR. GOLDMANN

Geneva

November 3, 1939

After I gave Mr. Nicholson the details regarding our negotiations with the International Red Cross and our own activity, he gave me some important information regarding the work of the American Red Cross. He started by explaining the tremendous difficulties of a technical nature confronting the Red Cross and involved in their dealings with the German authorities. He stated that as a gesture the American Red Cross had placed a large shipment of sanitary and medical materials at the disposal of the German Red Cross with the stipulation that Mr. Nicholson go to the occupied area to supervise the distribution. He has made his departure for Berlin contingent upon (1) assurance of the cooperation of the German authorities; (2) guarantee that he would be in actual control. Negotiations have not been concluded, but he has been requested to go to Berlin. This he has declined to do thus far, in view of the fact that the matter has not been properly arranged.

With regard to the Russians, Mr. Nicholson reported that the Soviet Union had ratified the Red Cross convention, with the exception of certain clauses of lesser importance. Since the Russian Red Cross is recognized by the international committee, there exist legal connections with the Russian agencies. The actual situation is somewhat as follows: Upon receiving inquiries from the Red Cross, the Russian agencies answer either evasively or not at all; otherwise they say that they do not know,

a procedure similar to Molotov's answer to the American Ambassador in the matter of the American ship.

When I asked whether it were possible to send a representative to the Russian area, adding that we had an American citizen in readiness for such a mission, Mr. Nicholson answered that for many weeks the American Red Cross had requested Russian permission to send a representative but, despite repeated efforts, no answer has been received. The Red Cross would continue to make such efforts and he promised to inform me when it would be possible to go to Russia.

The conversation then turned to the question of effective relief in the occupied area. Mr. Nicholson stated that under the terms of the conventions, the Red Cross could only concern itself with aid for war prisoners and the military, but as far as the civilian population was concerned only the sending of medical and sanitary material was provided by the conventions. Nevertheless, in the past they had succeeded, by the use of moral pressure, in providing relief for the civilian population.

In this connection Mr. Nicholson told me of a talk he had with a high diplomatic figure of one of the Allies, who asked him what kind of concrete help Americans wish to provide for Poland. He answered that the Americans wish to contribute money for the aid of the civilian population. This activity depended on whether collaboration with the German authorities could be assured, otherwise distribution of foodstuffs, etc. would be impossible. The greatest difficulty lay in the fact that the view of the German government was that all relief work must be carried out by the National Socialist welfare organization, and it was not yet clear

whether the authorities would permit foreign relief. The work also depended on the amount of money that could be collected in America. Upon being asked how much they expected to raise in America, he answered that the collections thus far had had only a limited success. Apparently it was feared that the shipments would be confiscated by the German authorities. Besides, the general feeling in America was such that people wish to have as little to do with the war as possible. Thus far, they have been content to send over three representatives of the Red Cross. He figures on an eventual sum of 25 million dollars. The Allies' representative thereupon asserted that the Allies would not permit relief activity on such a scale. It is the purpose of the Allies to strangle Germany economically and as soon as possible. This involved making it clear to the Germans that the conquest of Poland would bring them no profit but rather a new burden, namely the feeding of Poland. No one was opposed to a certain degree of activity by the Red Cross in Poland, such as uniting families, but anything that would lighten the problems of the Germans due to their conquests would, in his opinion, not be permitted.

Mr. Nicholson told me that he was convinced that concrete relief could be carried out only on a modest scale. He could see that certain activity on behalf of the Jews would be permitted, since it was known that they had been excluded from the distribution of the available food supply. He advised us to establish contact with the various Red Cross societies in individual countries to provide for eventual arrangements. We should direct ourselves both to the neutral countries and to France and England.

Mr. Nicholson asked me if I believed that large funds could be raised by the Jews for the Polish relief. I told him that the campaign had not yet been started, and informed him of the efforts to unite all the Jewish organizations, which he considered most desirable and advantageous. I felt it possible to assure him that, considering the strong connections between the Jews of America and Palestine with those of Poland, considerable sums would be raised by the Jews. An organization like the Joint could, under no circumstances, withhold itself from relief work in Poland.

In conclusion, Mr. Nicholson again promised to keep me posted, particularly with regard to connections with Russia, and invited me to look him up at his hotel or his office whenever I wished.

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INTERVIEW WITH RED CROSS LEADERS

BY DR. REIGNER,

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS IN GENEVA

Geneva,

November 4, 1939

Prof. Guggenheim and I were received by the General Secretary of the League of Red Cross Societies, Malcolm Davis. Prof. Guggenheim is an old friend of Davis, with whom he had worked in connection with the Carnegie Foundation. After we told Mr. Davis regarding our negotiations with the International and American Red Cross, as well as our own activity, we asked him the following questions:

(1) Reports from Berlin had reached us to the effect that the

German authorities, particularly the Gestapo, were wondering why the Jews in other countries were not concerning themselves with the fate of the Polish Jews. The Gestapo was reported to be willing to have a neutral Jewish delegation go to Poland in order to organize the relief work. Since we could not investigate the accuracy of this report, we asked Mr. Davis whether he could verify it through the Red Cross representative in Berlin. He told us, confidentially, that his colleague, Nicholson, was leaving for Berlin the next day. He promised to telephone him and to ask him to make the necessary investigation in Berlin.

(2) We told Mr. Davis that reports from Roumania stated that the American Red Cross had sent \$10,000 for the refugees in Roumania. According to our information, this money was not accepted by the Red Cross in Roumania because the government refused to pay more than the official value of the lei, that is 610 lei per pound instead of 1500 which is the actual value. Asking Mr. Davis whether this information was correct, we informed him that large Jewish funds were blocked in Roumania and that there might be some possibility of placing this money at the disposal of the Red Cross in return for dollars to be transferred to Jewish funds abroad. Those in charge of the funds were ready to accept a reasonable rate of exchange, between 1200 and 1300 lei per pound. If this offer would interest the Red Cross, we said we would be thankful for the information. Mr. Davis answered that he had just returned from Lithuania so that he knew nothing about the matter. He promised to find out and inform us.

(3) We expressed to Mr. Davis certain thoughts regarding the aid extended to the Jewish refugees. We told him that in certain countries

the Jews were not represented in the Red Cross societies, and that in view of the hostile policy toward the Jews in these countries there was a danger that discrimination would arise in the distribution of relief. We added that we had received no actual complaints and that our reports were of a preventive character. We pointed out to Mr. Davis that in the forthcoming campaigns of the Red Cross they could appeal to the generosity of Jewish contributors, and it was necessary to avoid hampering the campaign by discriminating against Jewish refugees. Mr. Davis received this information with interest. Constitutionally, he said, the distribution of Red Cross funds must be carried out without distinction as to origin or religion. The authorities of the Red Cross would give this matter their full attention.

(4) We asked Mr. Davis whether he believed that concrete relief could be extended to the civilian population in the German occupied area. He answered that while no precise information was at hand, he could say that he and his colleagues hoped to carry out such action.

(5) Finally, we asked Mr. Davis whether he could give us some information regarding the refugees in Vilna. He answered that he himself had not reached the city, since he could not wait until communications would be established. He had been only in Latvia and Kaunas, where he found that the estimates regarding the refugees varied considerably, and no exact data were available. In Latvia he had several talks with Dr. Nurock, representative of the World Jewish Congress, and received an excellent impression of his work. Mr. Davis asked us to telephone him Monday afternoon, so that he could tell us what could be done regarding the sending of a delegation to German Poland and regarding the transfer

of money for Roumania.

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INTERVIEW WITH THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE RED CROSS

BY DR. RIEGNER

Geneva.

November 11, 1939

I had a telephone conversation with Mr. Davis, General Secretary of Red Cross Societies. I asked him whether he had any new information regarding the questions raised by us during our conferences and whether he was in a position to disclose it to us.

(1) Regarding the transfer of money to Roumania, Mr. Davis declared that no sums had yet been sent but only clothing and other commodities, so that the question of money transfer has not been raised. When I asked whether no money at all had been transferred until now, Mr. Davis again made inquiry and then told me that nothing had yet been sent. At the request of the Red Cross representative in Roumania, the money had been held up, since purchases can be made in other countries under much better conditions.

(2) Regarding the projected trip of a Jewish central commission to the German area, Mr. Davis stated that he had no report from Mr. Nicholson and his other colleagues. He added that at present he was completely without news from the Red Cross delegation in Germany, No one knew whether the members of the delegation had travelled into the occupied area, and telegrams had not been answered. When I asked him whether he expected the return of these persons in the near future, he answered that they were awaiting their return with as much impatience as we.

Mr. Davis asked me to remain in touch with him, and that he would gladly give us information.

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REPORT OF A. REISS, SPECIAL ENVOY OF
THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS TO ROUMANIA, REGARDING HIS NEGOTIATIONS IN CERNAUTI IN THE MATTER OF TRANSMITTING NEWS
FROM THE RUSSIAN OCCUPIED AREA

Czernauti
November 9, 1939.

In a series of conferences at the Polish Consul in Czernauti, Mr. Reiss succeeded in gathering the following information.

Since October 15, the Russian authorities have closed the frontier in principle to refugees. Nevertheless, daily some 20 to 25 men, chiefly Poles with a small percentage of Jews, continue to cross the frontier. In the beginning, the Jews would be arrested and brought before a military court which released them immediately. Later, all newly arriving refugees were arrested, following which the non-Jews continued to be released while Jews received a four-week prison sentence and were then deported, chiefly by way of Constanza. It appears that a new procedure has been introduced requiring all refugees to serve a prison term, but it is not yet known whether any distinction will be made in the severity of the sentence.

The Polish Consul in Czernauti assured Mr. Reiss that all refugees, without distinction as to nationality, would receive the same aid, that he himself would tolerate no discrimination. Judging from everything that he has heard in Czernauti, Mr. Reiss feels that this statement is sincere.

The Polish Consul in Czernauti likewise complained regarding the attitude of the Jews in the Russian occupied area. He claimed that the

Jews had not only subordinated themselves to the Soviet regime, but were supporting it in every way. He asserted that the Russian troops had been received by the Jews with rejoicing, that the majority of offices were given to Jews, that the militia consisted 80 percent of Jews and 20 percent Ukrainians. The Consul expressed the opinion that such an attitude must involve serious consequences, and proposed that we attempt to influence the Jewish population in that area in order to change the situation. He referred to testimony supplied both by Poles and Jews.

Mr. Reiss replied that the former district attorney of Lwow, Dr. Locker, who succeeded in crossing the frontier after having hidden in a cellar in Lwow for a long time, made similar assertions. Yet since Dr. Locker had been cut off during the entire time completely from the outside world in Lwow, he could have no information regarding the situation of the Jews and nevertheless he confirmed the Consul's statement regarding the reception of the Russian Army by the Jews.

Mr. Reiss also spoke with other trustworthy persons who had recently crossed the frontier from the Russian occupied area. These persons confirmed the report of the very cordial reception of the Russians on the part of the Jewish population, but this, they said, was true only in the earliest days. Thereafter a change occurred and relations cooled. The Russian military and officials are doing their utmost to win the Jews over and are promising them that it would go as well with them as in Russia and that they would be assured of the possibility of earning a livelihood.

On November 9, Mr. Reiss visited refugees in Roumanian prisons, some of whom had already been sentenced because of illegal entry, and

others who had been interned pending a decision. They numbered some fifteen, almost all young persons, most of whom belong to the General Hechaluz, others to Betar, and the rest unorganized. Some of these people were still in the interior of Poland in the middle of November, that is in Pinsk, Luck, Kowel and Rowno. From his conversations he learned that the members of the central committee of the Hechaluz, who are attending to the organization of transports are staying chiefly in the frontier places Horodenka and Husiatyn. There exists a competent organization handling transports which is directing the youth in accordance with a definite plan to the different frontier places.

A number of Hechaluz colonies were still active in the middle of October with the consent of local Soviet officials. In general, they were treated as labor collectives and were promised by the authorities that they would be provided with food and work. Whether these colonies were still operating could not be established. In Pinsk the leaders of the colony presented themselves to the Soviet commissar as a training group preparing for Palestine. The official replied that they could continue to work in peace, and that the local commissar could give no promises for the future until he received instructions from Moscow. At present, colonies are operating in Pinsk, Luck, Kowel, Rowno and Beresteczko.

Pupils attending Jewish schools had to undergo/^acomplete change of ideology in one day. The Hebrew schools adopted the Russian language and the children are suffering severely under this sudden transformation.

Mr. Reiss received the impression that an underground Zionist movement, at least among the youth, was in existence, and that the youth

were preparing a large scale emigration. In his opinion, in the immediate future we shall have to deal with hundreds and possibly with thousands of would-be emigrants. This problem is especially difficult because these people are not only without means, but in addition to maintenance must be provided with clothing and linen.

Information received by Mr. Reiss from Bucavenu indicates that a kind of economic transition system now prevails in the Russian occupied area. All reports indicate that trade has remained free. Proprietors of enterprises are being used as managers of these enterprises. The individual business commissars have announced that these proprietors may remain as employees in the management. No decrees regarding the appropriation of private enterprises have yet been issued. There was no famine, but a certain shortage of supplies and an extraordinary rise in prices. Large stocks of flour and other food supplies are either bought or requisitioned by the Russians. This also applies to textiles and leather. Horses and cows are requisitioned, and the farmers are promised that the animals will be returned when the season will require them. This requisition has aroused great dissatisfaction among the farmers. Apparently, the farmers have discontinued supplying food to the cities, and they do not have much confidence in the money paid for their wares.

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REPORT OF A. REISS, SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE
WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS TO ROUMANIA

Bucharest
November 17, 1939

Mr. Reiss obtained from Dr. Goldmann a letter of introduction to

the Roumanian Foreign Minister, Gafenco, and at the request of the latter, Mr. Reiss was received by the Minister of Public Order, Marinescu, at the beginning of November. The interview was a friendly one.

The matters requested by the representative of the World Jewish Congress were submitted in writing and the answers, most of which were favorable, were embodied in a statement from the Minister of Interior to Mr. Reiss. (Copies of the correspondence attached). The following concessions are to be emphasized:

1. Extension of sojourn approved. Refugees may remain in Roumania until arrangements have been made for their departure.
2. Assurance to facilitate the transfer of movable possessions to Palestine in accordance with directions to be issued by the Roumanian Government.
3. With regard to the carrying out of currency and jewelry which had been registered on the passport at the time of entry, a special permit will be issued by the Ministry of Finance. (This will involve many refugees in difficulty. These refugees crossed the border in large groups and in a great hurry so that there was no time to make the necessary entries on their passports).
4. Permit for courses in Hebrew and the study of Palestine under the auspices of existing organizations in Roumania.
5. Special permit is under consideration by the Ministry of War regarding the organization of special courses for learning a productive occupation. These courses are to be open to Jewish military refugees now interned in military camps directly controlled by the Ministry of War.
6. The representative of the World Jewish Congress, Mr. Reiss, received

permission to visit all places in which Jewish civilian refugees are staying.

Mr. Reiss obtained a promise from Minister Marinescu that the Jewish Central Bureau for Polish Refugees in Bucharest would receive official sanction. The Committee itself, despite all its efforts, has not yet been able to achieve this.

He held two lengthy conferences with the Polish Commissar for refugee questions in Roumania, former Vice-Minister Arciszewski, of whom he requested, in the first place, financial help for immigrants to Palestine, at least to the extent where the immigrants would be able to use their zlotys for travelling expenses. The Commissar stated that he could give a definite answer only after he had been informed of the decision of Minister Koc in Paris. He promised to support the request and assured Mr. Reiss that at all events certain aid would be extended by the Polish Government.

Mr. Reiss took the occasion to call attention to the anti-Semitic spirit among Polish emigres and received a promise that the matter would be investigated. In the second interview Mr. Reiss pointed out that in the opinion of Polish official personalities in Roumania this anti-Semitic spirit was flourishing because disturbing reports were coming out of Poland. It is being said that the Jews are in collusion with the Soviet regime and that they have gone so far as to serve the Bolsheviks as informers. Mr. Reiss was requested to give appropriate instructions to his Jewish compatriots in the Russian occupied area. Mr. Reiss thereupon stated emphatically that according to his information, the Jews are not participating and are maintaining complete reserve. The attitude of the Polish officials seems characteristic in this situa-

tion. Mr. Reiss notified the Polish officials regarding the situation and our intention of getting in touch with Jewish leaders in the Russian occupied area, asking their help. He received a letter for this purpose addressed to the Polish Consul in Czernauti, who is dealing with the matter of transmitting news.

Another question which was raised dealt with the so-called stamping of the passes of Jewish citizens of Poland abroad. In Roumania, for example, not one Jew, despite the promise of Foreign Minister Zaleski, had been able to obtain this stamp. He received a promise that this would be investigated and settled. He also received certain promises regarding a change of personnel in the Polish Consulates in Roumania since it had been admitted that the treatment of Jews, particularly in the Passport Division, was not good.

Information from the Russian-occupied Area

There has recently been instituted a special pass for travelers to and from the frontier places by the Russian occupation authorities. This has made the illegal crossing of the frontier more and more difficult. The Russian authorities have now become stronger. The local Communists who were appointed to the administration in the beginning have been displaced by officials from Russia. The local militia continues to consist of local residents. From refugees in Roumania, who have managed to come in lately, information has been received that persecutions have been directed against members of the Bund and against the Ukrainian nationalists. According to the most recent information, the report regarding a terrible shortage of food in the Russian area is highly exaggerated. It is true that certain shortage exists, but efforts are being

made to regulate this food supply.

In addition to Professor Schorr and E. Sommerstein, there have been arrested Dr. Leder, member of the Zionist Central Committee and leader of the Jewish community in Lemberg, and Dr. Rotfeld, leader of the Keren Hayesod in Eastern Galicia.

There is not yet any postal connection with the Russian occupied area. Letters from Lodz, Cracow and other places in the German area are arriving in Roumania.

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EXCHANGE OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE
WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS AND THE
ROUMANIAN MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER

Bucharest,

November 4, 1939

Excellency:

The World Jewish Congress and the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency for Palestine have sent me to Roumania to deal with the problems involved in the situation of the Jewish refugees from Poland who are now in Roumania.

I take this opportunity in the first place, Excellency, to extend to you the heartiest thanks of the World Zionist Movement and of the Jews everywhere for the exemplary hospitality and the civilized, humane and thoroughly satisfactory reception afforded the Jewish refugees from Poland on the part of the Roumanian government under your direct supervision.

It is the concern of the organizations which I have the honor

to represent to improve the lot of these unfortunates and above all to facilitate their immigration. For this purpose I intend to establish contact chiefly with the Zionist Organization and with the local committees for the aid of Jewish refugees from Poland in order to organize their migration to Palestine. It is self-understood that I am equally interested in the entire body of questions involved in the presence of these refugees in Roumania until their departure has actually taken place.

For the realization of the aforementioned purposes, permit me, Mr. Minister, to request you kindly to grant the following:

- a) The extension of the sojourn permits of these refugees in Roumania until their departure can be arranged within the resources at our command.
- b) The facilitation of the transfer to Palestine of the movable property of the refugees, including things which cannot be taken at the time of departure,
- c) Permission for the refugees to take out at any time the currency and valuables registered on their passports.
- d) Permission to organize courses for Hebrew and the study of Palestine, etc., in centers where refugees are staying for the purpose of preparing them for migration to Palestine.
- e) The organization of special courses for the Jewish military refugees for the purpose of teaching them a productive occupation so that they may be vocationally prepared for the time when their migration from Roumania will be possible.

In order to execute the important aforementioned commission, may I request you, Mr. Minister, to grant me permission to visit all places

where Jewish refugees from Poland, civilian and military, as well as other states where my presence may be necessary.

Again I thank you for the hospitality shown, Excellency, and request you to accept this expression of my highest esteem.

Signed - A. Reiss

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ROUMANIAN MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER TO MR. REISS

Bucharest,

November 4, 1939

World Jewish Congress
c/o Anselm Reiss
President of the Palestine Bureau in Warsaw

In accordance with your communication which has been registered as Number 1153 of November 4, 1939, we have the honor to inform you of the following:

1. The extension of the sojourn permits of the Jewish refugees in Poland is granted until their departure, to be arranged with the resources at your disposal.
2. The transfer of movable property to Palestine will be facilitated in accordance with the existing regulations of the Roumanian government, taking into account all obligations required by the existing laws.
3. The carrying out of valuables and currency which are registered on the passport will be permitted only by a special permit to be issued by the Ministry of Finance.
4. Courses for Hebrew, the study of Palestine, etc., are authorized under the auspices of existing organizations in Roumania.
5. The organization of special courses for training in a productive

occupation to be offered to Jewish military refugees from Poland is dependent upon a special permit to be issued by the Ministry of War inasmuch as the military refugees are interned in camps and are under the direct control of that Ministry.

6. You are granted permission to visit all places where Polish civilian refugees are staying with the exception of military camps.

Minister of Public Order

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THE JEWISH SITUATION IN LEMBERG

A LETTER FROM M. RICHTER, FORMERLY OF LEMBERG

Braila, Roumania

November 8, 1939

Regarding Lemberg I know only what I heard daily on the radio and have heard from refugees who still arrive daily by illegal entry into Roumania. These illegal refugees are usually sentenced by the military court in Cernauti to 30 days arrest and internment in camp. The news is not good. The farmers are not bringing any foodstuffs into the city. The larger and smaller landowners have either left or have been sent into the interior of Russia. The furnishing of foodstuffs has been undertaken by the Ruthenian cooperatives. Inasmuch as these are not equal to the terrific task, the population is suffering hunger, particularly in Lemberg. The cost of living has risen to an indescribable height.

As for other news, the wife of Dr. Schwarz, owner of the VITA Sanitorium in Lemberg, and her daughter are now in Floesti. Last October Dr. Schwarz journeyed to England with his son in order to place him in a high school. Mrs. Schwarz has a sister in Cernauti to whom she fled after the outbreak of war. Between September 18 and 25, this sister received a letter from Dr. Schwarz' son in England, telling that Dr. Schwarz had left for Lemberg by way of Sweden on September 3. On October 28 a letter from Dr. Schwarz in Lemberg was smuggled into Roumania. This is the first letter to arrive from Lemberg, all previous ingenious attempts to transmit letters and news having been futile. In this letter Dr. Schwarz does not say how he reached Lemberg but writes that he is staying there and is conducting his sanitorium, that he has a very large private prac-

tice and that he is getting along very well because 75% of the Lemberg doctors are missing. This letter had the effect of an electric shock on the refugees in Roumania, and on all who had left their wives and children behind in Lemberg, such as the lawyers Angstreich, Schlaechter, Gruess and Dr. Axelrath. They risked everything to obtain a permit to return to Lemberg legally. The Russian Consul in Bucharest is reported to have stated that in the near future the return will be possible. I am keeping my distance from this matter, for I have no faith in the assurance of the consul and do not believe that any employment in the liberal professions is in prospect. In addition numerous instances of imprisonment have been taking place in Lemberg, so I consider return as a risky undertaking.

However, if these or other persons should return to Russia, I shall endeavor to obtain news regarding persons on your lists.

There has now been established a normal postal service with Krakow and Warsaw. I have written there asking that I be supplied, if possible, with news from the Russian area by way of Warsaw.

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NEWS FROM THE RUSSIAN OCCUPIED AREA REGARDING LEMBERG
OBTAINED FROM A PROMINENT JEW WHO FLED TO ROUMANIA

Bucharest

November 10, 1939

Imprisoned in Lwow are: Chief Rabbi Dr. Freund; Emil Sommerstein, member of the Sejm; Dr. Salomon Leder, Vice President of the Zionist Central Committee and Financial Officer of the Jewish community in Lemberg; Hermann Axelbradt, an industrialist and part owner of the newspaper "Chwila." Dr. Damm, formerly on the staff of the "Chwila", is now serving as

a teacher in Lwow.

According to a prominent Jewish person now in Czoltkow close to the Roumanian border, who communicated with a Polish refugee in Bucharest, Dr. Leib Landau, a lawyer and former member of the Bund, declined to accept the post of commissar in Lwow. This post was accepted by Dr. Boleslaw Drobner, a lawyer, non-Zionist and a militant, extreme Left Socialist. Chief of Police of Lwow is Dr. Otto Liebling, a Communist and known as a tennis player. Under the Polish Government he spent many months in a concentration camp.

In Lemberg, which previously had 320,000 inhabitants, there are now 800,000 persons, thereby causing a great shortage in food supplies. The cost of living has, for the same reason, risen greatly. A kilogram of bread, which previously cost .30 Zloty, now costs 2 Zloty. One kilogram of butter, formerly costing 3 Zloty, now costs 16 Zloty. The cinemas, trolleys, railroads and cafes are doing business as usual. Cards enabling their holders to obtain necessities have been distributed to all persons holding labor cards. These cards may be obtained but are given to the middle class only with great difficulty. At present, business enterprises are operating on their own account and private funds and business funds have not yet been taken from proprietors.

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LETTER FROM DR. A. SILBERSCHN, DIRECTOR OF
WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS COMMITTEE FOR POLISH RELIEF
TO MR. MORRIS TROPER, DIRECTOR OF
JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE WORK IN EUROPE

Geneva

November 9, 1939

Dear Mr. Troper:

In our conversations on the 5th and 6th of the present month I explained to you in detail the extensive and varied field of work included, in my opinion, in the relief activity for Polish Jews, and came to the conclusion that no single Jewish organization, including the J.D.C., existed which would be in a position to undertake alone the fulfillment of all tasks. At the same time I pointed out that even if the individual branches of the work are so different, despite their diversity they overlap so that they all belong to one field and constitute an organic whole.

If the work is to be achieved with a minimum expenditure for administrative costs, and, what is more important, with the proper results, it must be carried out by the joint efforts of all interested bodies in accordance with uniform methods. It is likewise of no small importance to prevent the individual smaller or larger organizations from duplicating one another and consequently injuring fund raising efforts and lowering the prestige of all Jewish organizations in the eyes of the Jewish and non-Jewish public, for this would present a deplorable picture of our disunity. It is clear that there are difficulties blocking the collaboration of the organizations concerned, some of a psychological character, others of a more material nature, none of which, how-

ever are insuperable.

As was to be expected, Mr. Director, you pointed out the difficulties in the way of cooperation between the J.D.C. and the W.J.C. as a political organization. I thereupon explained to you that the W.J.C., which is above all concerned to have the work done properly and completely, had foreseen this obstacle and had therefore done its work through a committee which works under the W.J.C. This committee consists only of three persons, and has been so limited in order not to hinder cooperation with other organizations through too large a group. This committee calls itself "Committee of the World Jewish Congress" only for the present, since the W.J.C. has placed at the disposal of this activity not only its office and staff, but also its financial resources insofar as has been possible, and above all its connections. From the very outset, however, the Committee declared that it wished to establish only the framework for the cooperation of all Jewish organizations, and I am convinced that the W.J.C. will agree to the adoption of a new name when cooperation is established.

I propose the following name: "Joint Committee for the Relief of the War-Stricken Jewish Population of Poland." I can assure you that if you wish to call it by another name that will be no obstacle to cooperation.

As the result of our conferences, I am to submit to you proposals of an alternative nature which you may transmit to New York in the hope of procuring a decision as soon as possible. I am, therefore, submitting the following proposals:

I (1) The organizations concerned, particularly the J.D.C. and

the Committee of the World Jewish Congress, establish a joint committee for the purpose of comprehensive aid for the war-stricken Jewish population, in which committee all other interested Jewish organizations, such as I.C.A., HICEM, etc., shall be admitted. The committee's seat shall be in Geneva, for reasons which require no explanation, since it is the most suitable place in the neutral countries.

(2) This committee shall concern itself exclusively with relief problems for the war-stricken Jewish population. Beyond this, the activities of the individual organizations remain untouched.

(3) Within the committee the separate tasks shall be so distributed that the cooperating organizations shall continue to handle independently those fields with which they have concerned themselves hitherto. The arrangement mentioned above is to apply to new activities. Thus, for example, emigration is to be handled by HICEM, aid in the form of clothing, food and other social service by the Joint Distribution Committee, legal advice and representations by the World Jewish Congress, etc.

(4) The committee is to consist of representatives of all the organizations, and will have the following tasks:

- (a) The supervision of the entire field of activity, particularly with the view of maintaining a uniform direction.
- (b) Distribution of the individual activities to the different organizations.
- (c) Fixing the budget and controlling expenditures.
- (d) Administrative control of the office.
- (e) Representation before the outside world.

II (1) If the foregoing proposal is considered too far-reaching, I

would propose the establishment of a joint committee which is to supervise activities closely bound up with the war situation, and which have been evoked by it.

(2) The scope of the activities of the organizations concerned shall be defined in advance.

(3) The committee shall see to it that the various activities shall be coordinated along a uniform line.

(4) For personal matters, in the broadest sense of the word, including transmission of information, money, and legal aid, the joint bureau shall be established in Geneva under the control of the committee.

(5) The committee shall pass on the budget.

In either case, corresponding committees and offices shall be established in America. Of course, the raising of money for relief and its appropriation for different purposes must be reserved for an agreement in America.

In accordance with your wish, I have avoided going into details and have presented my proposals in broad outline. I believe that the general idea is clear to you, and that the two alternatives have taken into consideration the things you have told me. I wish, finally, to repeat what I have stated to you orally. The Joint Distribution Committee will earn a historical reward in Jewry if the collaboration of all the great political organizations should take place under its leadership, even if only within a limited degree.

Very truly yours,

A. SILBERSCHIN
(Signed)

A LETTER FROM THE
CENTRAL BUREAU OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

Geneva

November 10, 1939.

Dear Dr. Wise:

The summary of our negotiations with the representatives of the American Red Cross, Nicholson and Davis, is going to you today on the S.S. Savoia. There is also being sent a report regarding Warsaw received through Mr. Reiss.

REPORT FROM WARSAW: I am adding a report which we obtained from a refugee from Warsaw, now in Lausanne, and whom we had an opportunity to interview personally while filling out one of our questionnaires. This man is a Jewish banker, who left Warsaw on October 27. We consider this the best report so far. It may be published with the omission of sections marked in red.

REPORTS FROM THE RUSSIAN OCCUPIED AREA: From the letter of a refugee in Roumania who has remained in contact with persons who have smuggled themselves across the border to Roumania, we have learned that that situation is not everywhere the same. For one thing, there are complaints in the cities regarding insufficient food supply since the farmers are not bringing in foodstuffs into the city. The larger and smaller landowners have either fled or have been shipped into the interior of Russia. The providing of food has been taken over by the Ruthenian cooperatives who cannot, however, fulfill the need. Particularly bad is the situation in Lemberg, where prices have risen greatly.

Other reports state that a well known local doctor has reopened

his sanatorium and has a large private practice, since 75 percent of the local doctors are missing. Following this report, a group of refugees in Roumania, particularly lawyers and doctors, tried in every way to obtain a legal permit to return to Lemberg. No decision has yet arrived from Moscow.

As an interesting precedent, the case of Dr. Schwarzbart who was separated from his wife during his flight and whose wife is still in Tarnopol, filed an application from Bucharest to Moscow in order to arrange for his wife's departure for Palestine. This permit was granted and he is daily awaiting the arrival of his wife in Roumania.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH MR. TROPER: During recent weeks, Mr. Troper has spent about four days in Geneva. There took place a series of conferences with him in which the following participated: Goldmann, Silberschein, Guggenheim and Saly Mayer; at times all together and at other times individually. Mr. Troper was accompanied occasionally by Rosen.

Yesterday we telegraphed you as follows:

CONGRESS WISE
NEW YORK

HAVE NEGOTIATED TROPER GENEVA SILBERSCHN. SUBMITTED HIM OUR BEHALF PROPOSAL CONCERNING COOPERATION HELP JEWISH WAR VICTIMS FORESEEING CREATION UNITED JEWISH WAR VICTIMS AID COMMITTEE IN GENEVA WITH PARTICIPATION ALL GREAT JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS THIS COMMITTEE WILL EITHER CENTRALIZE ALL WORK OR COORDINATE ACTIVITIES DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS ALONG LINES AND PROGRAM FIXED BY COMMITTEE PARALLEL COMMITTEE SHOULD BE CREATED STATES STOP TROPER PROMISED SUBMIT PROPOSAL HIS EXECUTIVE NEW YORK URGING FOR IMMEDIATE DECISION INDEPENDENTLY YOUR NEGOTIATIONS JOINT ABOUT LARGER ISSUES.

GOLDMANN

Dr. Silberschein submitted to Troper before his departure a letter containing two alternative proposals for cooperation of a closer and looser type. Yesterday, November 9, Troper left for Paris with the intention of

immediately cabling these proposals to New York.

Lists of Refugees: We are sending by the S.S. Savoia a list of about 800 names of refugees in Roumania. These persons were registered in the Palestine office at Bucharest and most of them are looking forward to migration to Palestine. There have been added about 100 names of refugees now in Hungary and Latvia. A comprehensive registration of the refugees in Vilna is now being conducted. For the time being, the number of refugees now in Vilna has not been determined. It is believed that the figure of 15,000 given by the press is too high. The local emigration department of the Jewish Agency has received a telegram from Vilna stating that the Joint has sent money to Vilna but that this relief work until now has been thoroughly inadequate and that there is an urgent need of funds for feeding, housing, and clothing.

From the attached report from Warsaw, which is absolutely trustworthy, you will see that the reports spread by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the Joint Distribution Committee's agencies in Warsaw have been operating the entire time and have been maintaining about thirty kitchens in Warsaw do not correspond to the facts. Down to October 27, at any rate, these kitchens were not operating. The report spread by the J.T.A. was supposed to have come to the Paris office of the Joint Distribution Committee through some Consul from Warsaw who came to Paris.

During this week we shall complete additional lists from Roumania containing some five to six hundred names. This third list will be sent out about November 20.

The Lublin Plan: The reports regarding the compulsory settlement of the Jews from Austria and Czechoslovakia in Lublin are becoming

steadily more alarming. In Vienna anxiety and terror prevails among the Jewish population. I received directly from Vienna the "Instructions for the Transfer of Jews Residing in Vienna to the Polish Territory," which I am attaching. The wives and children of the Jews transported have remained temporarily in Vienna. The house furnishings have been sold through the Jewish community. The proceeds must, however, be turned over to the Winter Relief of the Nazis. On what the families are living is not known.

From Czechoslovakia we have learned through an absolutely reliable source that the Jews of the City of Bruenn have been shipped off in the same way to the Lublin region. Their house furnishings have been disposed of by the Jewish community in the same fashion as in Vienna, the proceeds going to the Winter Relief.

THE GERMAN OCCUPIED AREA: From a letter written at Bielitz on the German frontier, dated October 26, we quote the following: Bielitz has over night become a German city. All Poles and Jews up to the age of 60 must leave. No one knows whither they are being sent. All Jewish and Polish businesses, houses and factories are under the administration of a commissar.

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THE SITUATION OF POLISH JEWRY
A LETTER TO THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

Trieste

November 16, 1939

Dear Mr. Director:

I shall attempt to give you a most brief report regarding the present situation of Polish Jewry. I must point out that all my information goes down to November 9, the day on which I had to leave Warsaw.

In general, it must be said that the arrests among the Polish Jews did not have as much of a mass character as those at the time of the annexation of Austria and Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that many individual actions, to a certain extent involved in the military action, caused more serious losses among Polish Jews than in the aforementioned countries.

Polish Jewry insofar as it is under German rule is on the verge of complete destruction. The sacrifices which the Polish Jews, as a result of military movements, individual actions, epidemics and famine, have suffered in the course of the last ten weeks must be estimated without exaggeration at 250,000 persons. In Warsaw alone some 30,000 Jews fell directly or indirectly victims of the war. Many other cities inhabited by Jews have been burned, the men dragged off to labor camps, while the wives and children camped among the ruins or in the open air. The Jewish merchant and petty trader who has not managed to shift into street hawking, has no means of livelihood. As a result of various actions, the Jewish merchant has no goods in stock and even if some money remains, he can obtain nothing from the warehouses. In Lodz and vicinity trade with leather

and manufactured articles has been explicitly forbidden Jews.

The plight of the destitute population, easily 90% of Polish Jewry in the large cities, where the essential foodstuffs have risen fourfold, is very bad. A kilo of bread which formerly cost 25 groschen has risen to seven times that amount, as has the cost of potatoes. Jewish intellectuals are completely without employment. When it is considered that 25% of all houses in Warsaw were completely demolished during the war and another 25% badly damaged and that the reconstruction of these houses is to begin in the Spring, one will have a picture of the immeasurable privation of the Jews in the former Polish capital. Under such circumstances it is no wonder that the epidemic of typhus is reaching disturbing proportions in Warsaw and Lodz.

The catastrophe in Warsaw has been made even more serious by a Ghetto decree. By November 13, about 50,000 Jews will be compelled to leave the Christian streets and move into the Jewish neighborhood.

The Jewish press is no longer in existence in Poland. Jewish societies are inactive. The Jewish schools have not yet opened and many teachers have been arrested. But the existence of Polish Jewry is not fundamentally menaced by persecution. The chief danger is death from starvation. Such is the opinion of all the leaders left in Poland, who view the immediate future with the gravest concern.

It is most questionable whether in such a situation one can talk of any general rescue. It would be a great deal if the horrible poverty and the threatening dangers could be checked even to a slight extent.

All possible avenues of emigration must be used. The German occupation authorities should not cause any difficulties. One will have to reckon with emigrants who have nothing to take with them and who will be

unable to pay for their passage in currency. There is under consideration a Jewish body for emigration, apparently with the participation of Hartglas.

At least fifty certificates for Palestine are urgently needed in order to rescue those Zionist and other Jewish leaders who are threatened with immediate danger. When you come to Trieste, I shall give you their names.

A few hundred certificates for the Jewish youth in Poland will be no solution, but will have a tremendous moral effect. They will be a ray of hope showing that everything is not yet lost and that help may yet be expected. I received suggestions in Warsaw with regard to the practical execution of this matter. I will speak to you regarding this personally.

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THE WORK OF THE HUNGARIAN COMMITTEE
FOR POLISH JEWISH REFUGEES

Budapest

November 22, 1939

The Hungarian Committee in Budapest has thus far registered 194 civilian refugees. The number registered is so small because the committee is not in direct touch with the refugees who are interned in camps. The committee has been promised a list of all the Polish refugees in the camps, who are estimated at 45,000, and will have the task of selecting the names of the Jewish refugees from this list.

The refugee committee has sent a representative on a tour of the border area, in order to register the civilian refugees on the spot. The questionnaires sent by the central committee in Geneva have been fully filled out in most cases by representatives of the refugee committee. Including the space for the experiences of the refugee, and in many instances the answer to the question, "Regarding which other refugees or persons from Poland can you furnish information?".

The refugee committee tells us that a large number of the refugees wish to go to America, including those who have no relatives in the country. One group wishes to go to France, and a large number whose homes are now in the Russian area wish to return there.

The refugees have been registered by the committee, which obtains authorization for the sojourn of each one. Sojourn permits of 14 days are issued, and these have been extended in all cases thus far. The committee has promised the Hungarian authorities to do everything possible in order

to arrange for the migration of the refugees at the earliest possible date. The members of the committee are now very much worried, and request help so that they may keep their promise, otherwise they fear that they will encounter severe difficulties in applying for extension of sojourn.

The committee receives from the Budapest Community, a weekly sum of about four dollars per refugee. About four weeks ago, the community received an appropriation of ten thousand dollars from the Joint Distribution Committee for the support of the refugees. The actual work is carried out by our committee, while the Budapest community pays out the money, formerly daily and now weekly, for the maintenance of the refugees.

The dole of four dollars per week is given to the refugees in daily payments, to enable them to take care of their own needs, with the aid of employees of the relief committee. The committee tells us that this manner of individual arrangement in Budapest has shown itself superior to the collective system.

With regard to providing clothing, the committee makes note of the items needed, which it obtains from the community for the refugees. A certain amount of clothing is also provided with the help of the Wizo in Budapest, which turns over what it collects in the same way to the committee for distribution. Among the Jewish refugees in Budapest, as well as those who are still interned, it is generally known that the care of refugees is handled by our Budapest committee. As soon as a refugee leaves camp, he comes directly to the committee. The Hungarian authorities and the Polish Embassy likewise direct refugees to our committee in Budapest. This is likewise done with new arrivals.

Refugees are registered either by our committee in Budapest or by one of the branches of the Budapest committee in other cities under the direction of our associates.

New refugees cross the frontier almost daily. These are individual instances, for the crossing is illegal. Inasmuch as these refugees had left the Russian area some time ago, and were detained at the border, their reports give us no new information.

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REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE LITHUANIAN COMMITTEE
IN BEHALF OF POLISH JEWISH REFUGEES

Kaunas

November 22, 1939

The following organizations are concerned with relief for the Jewish refugees from Poland:

1. Joint Distribution Committee
2. HICEM office in Kaunas
3. Lithuanian Jewish Committee of the Red Cross

There is no possibility of uniting these organizations. The representative of the Joint Distribution Committee works in accordance with instructions issued by the European office. HICEM is guided by instructions from Paris and its own committee in Kaunas, including, among others, Rubinstein, Kelson and myself. As for the Lithuanian Jewish Committee, it is subject to the Lithuanian Red Cross.

From telephone conversations with Dr. Nurock and Dr. Kleinbaum, we learn that the present situation in Vilna is chaotic. Every organization is engaged in registering the refugees, but not one does so satisfactorily. A committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Chief Rabbi Dr. Rubinstein, and includes the following, who are our friends: Dr. Kleinbaum, Rafael Szerechowski, and Prilucki, Secretary. This committee has undertaken to procure statements from Polish Jewish refugees in Vilna and expects to obtain some 2,000. A telegram just received from Dr. Kleinbaum indicates that the Joint Distribution Committee wishes to participate in this committee. The World Jewish Congress is attempting to

contribute toward the costs involved in collecting these statements,
and has therefore turned to our American friends with the request, so
that we may obtain the use of this valuable material.

A complete list of refugees in Vilna is promised to us through
the good offices of Dr. Jacob Robinson, who is to receive a copy of this
list thanks to his influential connections, apparently from official
sources.

DR. GARFUNKELIS

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REPORT OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN
DR. W. A. V. 'T HOOFT, GENERAL SECRETARY
OF THE PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
AND MR. RIEGNER

Geneva,

November 30, 1939

Today I had a conference with Dr. W. A. Visser 'T Hooft, General Secretary of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches (in process of formation) and with Pastor Freudenberg, likewise a member of the Committee, and as such charged for some years with the care of the non-Aryan Christian refugees.

These men requested a conference in order to be informed regarding the situation of the Jews in the Reich. In this extensive conference, I gave all the important information to them which has reached the World Jewish Congress regarding the Jews in the Reich, and in Austria, in the Protectorate and in Poland, and I gave them for their confidential use our report of November 23 and the report regarding Poland of November 7th. The men showed particular interest in the plan for the transfer of the Jews to Lublin. Although only vaguely informed regarding the details of this action, they declared that the project had aroused grave concern and they had in view a campaign in the interest of non-Aryan Christians who would be affected by the plan.

They asked regarding the reaction which the plan has aroused in responsible Jewish circles and whether any counter-activity was under way or had been planned. I very frankly explained to them the reasons which, since the outbreak of the war, had led us to maintain a most reserved attitude with regard to the public, but that we had gradually realized

that the time had come for the launching of a great campaign directed particularly against the Lublin project. We still felt that the initiative should be taken over by interested circles other than the Jews. The Lublin project affects not only the Jews but also the Poles who are to be evacuated from this area, and we believe that from the Polish side a determined stand must be taken. We have accordingly established contact with influential Catholic circles who, we know, have intimate connections with the Polish authorities and we hope that a Catholic campaign will take place particularly in America. At the same time our own organizations in America were to open an attack on the project. We naturally welcome every ally in such a campaign and we would be very happy to see the American affiliates of the World Council of Churches leading its own campaign. The men stated that insofar as this information was not confidential, they would convey the information by the most rapid route to their representatives in America and in the Scandinavian countries and would urge those in America to undertake such a campaign. They stated that they were sure that such a campaign would result in a more liberal handling of the refugee problem and a stronger sympathy in American public opinion for the plight of the refugees.

At the conclusion of this detailed and friendly conference, the representatives of the Council expressed their satisfaction with the contact established between Jewish and Christian organizations. Freudenberg who was to return to London shortly, said he would visit the office of the World Jewish Congress before leaving in order to obtain further documentation.

PROTEST OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
ON THE LUBLIN RESERVATION

Paris,

December 4, 1939

The executive committee of the W.J.C., a large organization of the Jews throughout the world, met at Paris to deal with the horrible plight of the Jews now living under the domination of Nazi authorities, particularly in Poland where the population is treated with unusual cruelty and cold-bloodedly exposed to die of starvation.

The committee took note especially of the incredible measures decreed by the Hitlerist government designed to set up in the Lublin region of Poland a "Jewish reservation" in which the Reich plans to concentrate by force all the Jews of Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany.

The plan is in process of realization. Thousands of Jews coming from the Corridor, from Gdynia, Poznan, Katowice, and from other cities in Poland, from Czechoslovakia and from Austria, have already been transported like cattle to this "reservation". They have been torn away from their homes and have been permitted to take with them a maximum of 300 marks. At present they are stripped of everything, often without shelter and without the means of existence. It is the most cynical of the human transplantations which Hitlerism has attempted until now.

It is necessary to add that one of the evident purposes of this measure is to divide the Poles and the Jews belonging to the various countries occupied by Germany against each other, by driving out the one group from the territory transformed into concentration camps assigned to the other.

The executive committee of the W.J.C. raises a solemn protest against this act of barbarism. It particularly rejects with indignation the inadmissible pretense of the German government at solving the Jewish question in its own way. The civilized world, inspired by the immortal principles of the rights of man and nations, will undoubtedly view the decisions taken by the present government of Germany as null and void.

In a letter addressed to his Excellency, General Sikorski, the executive committee has informed the Polish government, which alone enjoys legal sovereignty in the Lublin territory, of the indignation provoked in Jewish circles throughout the world by this new example of Hitlerist barbarism, repeating to him the expression of its sympathy for the suffering which all Poles are experiencing, regardless of race or creed.

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A LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL BUREAU OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

Geneva,

December 5, 1939

Dear Dr. Wise:

I am herewith submitting some information regarding the internment camps for former German and Austrian subjects in France. This is for your own information and for our friends, but not for publication.

The chairman of the commission in charge of the camps, Socialist Deputy Marius Moutet, made an interpellation regarding the situation, following which the treatment of the refugees was improved.

Many invalids have been released, apparently because the state fears indemnity claims. The Hague Convention of 1907 ruled that all civilian prisoners who are interned for more than ninety days are entitled to indemnity for all diseases contracted, or for all diseases which become chronic in consequence.

With regard to the former Austrian subjects who did not exchange their Austrian passport for a German but surrendered the passport to the French authorities in exchange for a document issued to former Austrians, as well as those refugees from Austria who left that country on a German passport but who immediately upon arrival in France identified themselves as political refugees and likewise received the designation "former Austrian," a special arrangement has been made for such persons.

The Austrian committee which was set up in Paris two weeks ago is headed by Prof. Vasitzky. It consists of eight members, representing the various political groups among Austrian emigres, with the exclusion of Zernatto, Prince Starhemberg as too fascist, and the Socialists who

do not participate in the committee but support it. Vasitzky is a former Austrian, a prominent pharmacologist and honorary professor at the Sorbonne and Harvard. Daladier is to confirm this committee. As a prerequisite, this committee has demanded the release of all ex-Austrians and has temporarily received an oral promise to that effect. By the end of December, all former Austrians should have been released. It is, nevertheless, quite possible that this period will pass without the release of all the prisoners concerned.

An Austrian brigade has been established. Even those Austrians who before the issuance of this decree had joined the Foreign Legion and are already in Algiers or Tunis, are to be ordered back and included in the brigade.

In general, the following practice has been adopted: Men who are over fifty are released with relative ease, particularly because during the course of their internment most of these older folks became sick on account of the cold and bad accommodations.

Those interned who are under forty are not released unless they enlist in the Legion des Etrangers. This is not the old Foreign Legion, but a new one mobilized within France. The members of this Legion who are German subjects will apparently be used only for defense on French soil. The other foreigners who volunteer may be sent to the front.

The cases of those interned who are under forty who are not considered eligible for the Legion des Etrangers, as well as those between forty and fifty, are examined by a committee. The French government has given the assurance that all of these will be settled within the near future. It is, therefore, to be hoped that in a few weeks the interned

men will either be released or imprisoned as suspects.

I have already reported that the larger Jewish organizations, chiefly through the efforts of Dr. Goldmann with the French authorities, have obtained permission to submit lists of refugees known to them as absolutely reliable who are now in internment camps. Dr. Goldmann has received additional confirmation that the twenty-five names submitted by us will receive favorable and prompt action.

There has been set up in Paris at 8 Rue de Cirque a coordinating committee comprising all the organizations, Jewish, Catholic and Protestant. Baron Robert Rothschild has extended a large credit to this committee for the purpose of providing medical supplies, shelter, shoes, stoves and fuel, in short everything lacking in the camps. Every person interned may make an individual request and receive the things he needs from the committee.

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THE PRESENT SITUATION IN GERMANY

Geneva,

December 7, 1939

The following report comes to the World Jewish Congress from a highly esteemed German lawyer, member of the Party and intimate friend of Finance Minister Funk.

One cannot imagine to what degree, Dr. Funk confided to this person, Germany lacks raw materials. Even with the restrictions already imposed, the raw materials needed for military purposes which are still available will be depleted at the end of March 1940. Then will come the end of the rope and the imminent collapse of the state. Without the Polish spoils, they would arrive at this point at the end of January, but in Poland they have found materials for about another two months. In the opinion of Dr. Funk, the existing stocks would be sufficient for an offensive of four or five weeks, but after that they would be completely drained and if, in that short delay, a decisive victory does not come, then Germany will find herself unable to continue the war.

The informant states that it is among the leaders themselves that discontent is most marked. Hitler has already twice ordered the invasion of Holland, but General Halder refused to execute the order and declared that he did not want any meddling in military affairs under his jurisdiction. This resistance did not result in forcing the resignation of General Halder, as Hitler had intended, because the rebellious attitude increased greatly among the generals. Likewise, General Reichenau, who until recently had been an ardent militant among National Socialists, has now become hostile.

The generals in command are seriously thinking of revolution. In that case, there would be formed a Cabinet presided over by General Beck (retired) General Halder would be named Minister of War, and Bruening is considered for Foreign Affairs. This Cabinet would be inclined to evacuate Poland and Czechoslovakia immediately, and in these circles it is believed that if this revolution should take place very soon perhaps Austria could be restored, but that is not certain.

The organization of this revolt should already be more or less on the verge. The informant believes that it would be bloody because the persons responsible had decided on a large scale purge and to put to death their adversaries down to the lowest ranks of the S.S. and S.A.

General Halder did not wish to give the signal for the revolt stating that he had already taken an oath; he wished the retired General Beck to be in charge, but the latter still hesitated.

The person who provided these statements is very serious and enjoys great favor in Berlin, emphasizing his friendly relations with Minister Funk, he maintains close relations with the leading personalities of the Reich.

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A LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL BUREAU OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

Geneva,

Strictly Confidential

December 9, 1939

Dear Dr. Wise:

We are herewith submitting a report of the conferences of Dr. Goldmann during his trip to Paris and London (November 24 to 28 in Paris, November 28 to December 1 in London, December 1 to 4 in Paris), together with certain information which he gave us.

In London he attended a session of the British section which is to be reorganized. During the absence of Dr. Perlzweig, the chairmanship will be assumed by Lady Reading, particularly the negotiations with the Foreign Office. A political secretary is to be engaged. At this session a number of members were coopted, including Dr. Bienenfeld, former chairman of our Austrian committee and important jurist.

Perlzweig has established contact with the English blockade ministry, headed by Mr. Ashwin Gwatkin, who was with Runciman in Prague. The blockade ministry will maintain contact with the W.J.C. for the purpose of obtaining economic information in neutral countries. The British section has set up a committee for economic questions consisting of Dr. Bienenfeld, Prof. Ernst Cohn, Ernst Stern (the last named unofficially for the time being).

Dr. Goldmann proposed to this session, at the suggestion of the Paris and Geneva members of the executive committee, that Dr. Bienenfeld should assume the registration of the damages claims of the German Jews under the auspices of the W.J.C. and with the aid of the various national sections. Dr. Bienenfeld declared himself willing, and will make the necessary preparations. He requests, however, expressly that nothing be

published regarding this project at present, since he must first arrange a thoroughgoing card file, and will then proceed to get in touch with the national sections.

Perlzweig and Goldmann had a conference with Under-Secretary Butler regarding the invitation of a prominent British personality to attend the twenty-first anniversary of the A.J.C. in New York. The Under-Secretary had the opinion that this was not proper because it was the experience of the Foreign Office that the Americans were hostile against every prominent Britisher who appeared in America. As for the men recommended by Goldmann and Perlzweig, Amery and Morrison, he would look into the matter. For this purpose he introduced Dr. Perlzweig to the director of the American division of the Foreign Office, Balfour. Two days ago, we had a telegram from Perlzweig stating that the Foreign Office is also opposed to sending a prominent Britisher, but would be very happy to have Perlzweig undertake this voyage to New York and that the Foreign Office would extend every kind of assistance to him.

PARIS: The Paris members of the executive committee met to receive the detailed report of the Geneva bureau regarding the situation of the Jews in Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Lublin. After hearing this report, the committee issued a release embodying a protest against Lublin, copy of which is attached. At the same time, the release was sent to the Polish government addressed to Premier Sikorski, with a letter declaring that the W.J.C. recognized his government as the sole sovereign power in Poland and hence in the Lublin area. This release was submitted through the French foreign ministry to the important telegraphic agencies and broadcast over the French radio. It was also re-

leased over the radio of the neutral countries, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, etc.

Dr. Goldmann has arranged for the regular cooperation of the French section of the W.J.C. with the French ministry of propaganda. On December 4 he had a conference with the chief of the propaganda ministry, Jean Giraudoux. He was introduced by Grumbach, chairman of the Committee on Propaganda in the French Chamber. Giraudoux is to name an important official as liaison officer between the Ministry and the W.J.C. in Paris. The French section of the W.J.C. is to issue a bi-weekly bulletin devoted to information regarding the Jewish situation, which will be sent to our close friends and a few prominent personalities.

With regard to the proposal to set up a committee of prominent non-Jews pro causa judaica, which was discussed before Goldmann's departure in Geneva, Goldmann had a lengthy discussion with Leon Blum who showed himself very much interested. He suggested for the time being to draw in only unpolitical Frenchmen and then, after a period, political figures. Blum gave him a list of persons to be considered and we shall get in touch with these people during the coming week. For the present, nothing is to be published. This group of prominent non-Jews is to study, together with the W.J.C., proposals which are to be brought forward after the declaration of peace. This group must also be ready to discuss these proposals before peace is declared and to support them during peace negotiations.

The establishment of such a committee is also planned in England. Even before Dr. Goldmann had an opportunity to inform the London session, Perlzweig reported that Sir William Deeds had made a similar proposal to

him. Sir William has also declared himself ready to serve as honorary secretary of such a committee. Our English friends will turn to the circles in Oxford and Cambridge who are dealing with the question of war aims. At the present stage nothing regarding this English committee is to be published. With regard to similar committees in neutral countries, this question is to be considered.

Dr. Goldmann had several lengthy conferences with Troper in Paris. Troper gave the impression that he was ready to cooperate but made it clear that he could decide nothing because the negotiations in the United States had not yet been concluded and because he had little influence there.

With regard to the projected conference of European Jewish organizations, Troper stated that before he could take any position on this matter he would have to wait until the negotiations regarding cooperation in the United States had been terminated.

The Board of Deputies would be ready to participate in such a conference even if Lasky remained president. It is to be assumed that after the election of the new president this readiness will remain. The chief candidate for the presidency is Professor Brodetsky (since elected).

Louis and Edouard Oungre are as before willing to cooperate in general, but during their last conference in Paris with Goldmann expressed some doubts regarding the projected conference. These doubts were expressed when they said that if relief is to be extended into occupied Poland it would be a matter of many millions of pounds. No one expected the W.J.C. to put up such large sums, although the situation of the ICA was different. Unfortunately, the ICA is not in a position to expend

substantial sums. At most it could muster thirty thousand pounds, which, under the circumstances, could not go very far.

It is Goldmann's opinion that such a conference of European Jewish organizations is now more urgent than ever, because of the progress made by the non-Jewish organizations in their negotiations regarding aid in occupied Poland. Conferences held with the representative of the American Red Cross and the representative of the International Red Cross, M. Junod, after his return from Germany and German occupied Poland, have raised the following three questions:

- (1) Which Christian organizations are to conduct the work, and how will they divide the work among themselves?
- (2) What form will the cooperation of the Jews with the Christian organizations take? Are the Jews prepared to cooperate, and what guarantees will be demanded with regard to the distribution of the sums raised and foodstuffs, medical supplies, etc?
- (3) The question of negotiations with the Allies regarding the shifting of foodstuffs and other supplies for the relief activity. In the conversation with Junod, he suggested that the Jewish organizations sound out the Allies on this point. Goldmann, however, holds that without the intervention of the American government and of the International Red Cross, it would be impossible to obtain such authorization from the Allies.

In order to settle these questions, Goldmann considers the calling of a conference of European Jewish organizations as particularly urgent. One relief need must be handled immediately without waiting for a conference: Aid to the Warsaw Hospital in the Jewish quarter, and burdened chiefly with Jewish patients. The German occupation authorities are

supplying this hospital, like others at present, with foodstuffs and medical supplies, but have stated that on December 31 they would cease to serve this hospital. M. Junod conveyed the urgent call for help from the director Tscherniakoff, asking to supply this hospital beginning January 1, above all with medical supplies and linens, since the Jewish community itself could not possibly cover the expenses involved. Apart from the fact that in most countries there is a ban on the export of medical supplies, and especially since America is the chief source of aid in the form of these supplies, Dr. Goldmann found an item in the J.T.A. reporting that a few days ago the German occupation authorities had taken over this hospital. If, then, Jewish organizations are prepared to supply medical supplies and linen, Dr. Goldmann has asked the representative of the International Red Cross to determine whether this report is correct. Junod promised to make the necessary inquiry.

Junod further reported that he had spoken with the representatives of the German Red Cross, which is, together with the Polish Red Cross, to distribute foodstuffs, medical supplies, etc., in the occupied area. According to Junod's information, the distribution is to proceed in accordance with the population ratio in each city. Whether the International Red Cross is to take care of the civilian population is to be decided within the next few days.

With regard to the Institute for the Study of Jewish Peace Aims and Demands, Dr. Goldmann reported that the Board of Deputies was ready to participate but wishes to have the program in advance.

Regarding the question of a Polish Jewish representative with the Polish government in Paris suggested by some Polish circles, and recommended by the Jewish side, the report of this will have to wait until the

thing takes on a concrete form. In this connection, Goldmann is in contact with I. Gruenbaum, now in Budapest and shortly to continue to Roumania, as well as with Dr. Schwarzbart in Bucharest. On December 18 he will have another opportunity in Paris to talk with the Polish Foreign Minister Zaleski.

Please keep this strictly confidential and do not publish the foregoing matters in any form.

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