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Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

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American Zionist Emergency Council, Jewish Brigade, 1944.

VOLUME XI — Number 125

Wednesday, September 20, 1944.

TO PERMIT JEWISH REFUGEES IN BRITAIN TO JOIN JEWISH BRIGADE

London, September 19 (Palcor) -- Certain categories of Jewish refugees in Britain and also volunteers from among the refugees in Italy and those interned on Mauritius Island will be permitted to join the Jewish Brigade Group whose formation was officially announced by the British Government, the Palcor correspondent learns. Conferences with regard to the Brigade are now in progress between Secretary for War Sir James Grigg, and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, president, and Moshe Shertok, chief of the political department of the Jewish Agency.

The official announcement of the War Office with regard to the Jewish Brigade Group reads:

"His Majesty's Government have decided to accede to the request of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine that a Jewish Brigade Group should be formed to take part in active operations. The Infantry Brigade will be based on Jewish battalions from the Palestine regiment, and a necessary concentration of forces is taking place for training them prior to their dispatch to the theatres of war. Supporting and auxiliary units to complete the group are based on existing Palestinian units, and on units under preparation and will join the Infantry Brigade as soon as practicable. Details of the scheme are being discussed with the Jewish Agency which has been invited to co-operate in its realization."

The Jewish Agency issued the following statement following the Government's announcement:

"We are deeply gratified at the government's decision that a Jewish Brigade Group be formed for taking part in active operations. The Jews throughout the world, enslaved and free, will welcome the announcement by Britain with satisfaction. The entry of a Jewish fighting force in battle against the enemy of the Jewish people for mankind's freedom will symbolize the status of Israel in the fight for a better world. The composition of the force will give concrete expression to both Jewish unity and the central place of Palestine in Jewish life."

After referring to the Jewish Agency's efforts since 1939 to have Britain form a Jewish army or Fighting Force, the Agency points out that "in the meantime the Jews did their duty. About one million Jews fighting in the armies of the United Nations and over thirty thousand Palestine Jews having volunteered to discharge their national responsibility, served in many campaigns, remaining, however, scattered and anonymous.

"The formation of the Brigade Group," the Jewish Agency states, "comes at a late stage of the war, but it is an acknowledgment of the services rendered and

(Continued on Page 2)

Zion Brigade

WORLD-TELEGRAM Approval Hailed

SEP 21 1944

British approval of the plan to put an all-Jewish brigade in the field alongside Allied fighting forces was hailed here today by leaders of prominent Jewish organizations.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver and Dr. Stephen S. Wise, co-chairmen of the American Zionist Emergency Council, voiced the hope that the "recognition thus accorded the Jews as a people in the armies of the United Nations will be a preliminary to Jewish representation at the peace conference and in the councils of the nations in all matters affecting the future of European Jewry and of Palestine."

Indorsement also came from the New Zionist Organization of America and Louis Lipsky, president of Bnai Zion and a member of the World Jewish Agency for Palestine.

At the same time the Mizrachi Women's Organization of America commended President Roosevelt and Secretary of War Stimson for the War Department's order prohibiting discrimination in the armed forces.

The American Jewish Conference appealed to Secretary of State Hull for the restoration of all rights formerly enjoyed by Jews as soon as European areas are liberated by the Allies.

Groups Here Jubilant Over Jewish Brigade

SEP 21 1944

Jewish groups here today congratulated the British government upon its announcement of the formation of a Jewish brigade for active war service.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver and Dr. Stephen S. Wise, co-chairmen of the American Zionist Emergency Council, said the move consti-

tuted recognition of "the justice of the Jewish claim to fight under their own flag against the oppressors of their people" and urged Jewish representation at the peace table.

Col. Morris J. Mendelsohn, president of the New Zionist Organization of America, said the

action had been first proposed by his group and added that the brigade should be enlarged to an army.



Here Hail British Approval Of Jewish Brigade

WORLD-TELEGRAM

Zionist Organizations

See Step as Move to
Seat at Peace Table

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JTA

VOL. XI. NO. 217 (26th year)

Wednesday, September 25, 1944

Daily News Bulletin

PUBLISHED BY THE JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

106 EAST 41st STREET, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

FORMATION OF JEWISH BRIGADE GROUP ANNOUNCED BY BRITAIN; WILL FIGHT ON WAR FRONTS

LONDON, Sept. 20. (JTA) -- The British Government announced today that a Jewish Brigade Group will be formed and will be assigned to active operations. The formation of the group follows repeated demands by the Jewish Agency for Palestine for a separate Jewish fighting force to participate in the liberation of Europe from the Germans.

(The British Information Service has said that the strength of a pre-war brigade was about 3,000, but that they have been greatly enlarged since the war. The present figure cannot be divulged for reasons of military security. A brigade is larger than a regiment, but smaller than a division.)

An infantry brigade, the announcement said, will be based on the Jewish infantry battalions now attached to the Palestine Regiment. The necessary concentration of troops for training is now taking place before the unit is sent to a theatre of war.

Supporting and auxiliary units which will complete the group are now being formed, the Government revealed, and they will join the new infantry brigade as soon as it is practicable. Details of the scheme are being discussed with officials of the Jewish Agency, which has been invited to cooperate with the military authorities.

ROSH HASHONAH SERVICES IN PARIS REVEAL JEWISH TRAGEDY THERE; SYNAGOGUES CROWDED

PARIS, Sept. 20. (JTA) -- The extent of the tragedy which has befallen the Jews in Paris was dramatically emphasized here on Rosh Hashonah during the portion of the synagogue services when the prayers for the dead were recited.

Almost every Jew of the 25,000 who survived the German terror grimly recited Kaddish, since there is not a single Jewish family in Paris today which has no lead. The Rosh Hashonah services were held in six of the larger Paris synagogues and in a number of tiny court-yard synagogues.

Some of the synagogues - especially on Rue Copernic, Rue Notre Dame and Rue de Nazareth - still showed the damages caused by bombs planted by members of the Doriot anti-Semitic Popular Party. But the great temple on Rue de la Victoire presented the same spectacle as in peace time, except for the fact that hundreds of American Jewish soldiers crowded the temple this Rosh Hashonah. The services were conducted by Chief Rabbi Julian Weill assisted by Rev. Henri Mandel.

No special services were held in Paris for Jewish men in the armed forces. All of them participated in the civilian services under arrangements made by Chaplain Judah Nadich of New York who preached in the six larger Jewish temples. In one of the military hospitals 500 wounded as well as the Jewish members of the medical staff,

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6 November 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR EXECUTIVE TO THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF WAR:

Subject: Enlistment in the Jewish Brigade Group (British).

1. In furnishing a statement of the existing policy in regard to enlistment in the Jewish Brigade Group (British), G-1 assumes that this Brigade Group is an integral part of the British Army. If this assumption is not correct, the policies stated below will not apply.

2. a. The answer to your specific question concerning the existing policy which would apply should individuals serving in the United States Army request discharge for the purpose of enlistment in the unit mentioned above is contained in subparagraph b below.

b. Any British citizen or a citizen of any cobelligerent nation with which the United States has reciprocal transfer agreements, if reasonably available and if acceptable by the Armed Forces of his nation, may be discharged from the Army of the United States to enlist in the Armed Forces of his country. However, unless the individual who desires to enlist in the Jewish Brigade Group (British) is a British citizen, discharge and enlistment would serve no useful purpose as he must, under the agreements, enlist in the Armed Forces of his country. The fact of Jewish ancestry would have no bearing on the matter. An American citizen of Jewish ancestry now serving in the Armed Forces of the United States would not be released to enlist in the Jewish Brigade Group (British).

3. Other policies in connection with the Jewish Brigade Group (British) are as follows:

a. Residents of the United States:

(1) American citizens, regardless of ancestry, subject to the Selective Training and Service Act are not authorized to enlist in the Armed Forces of any nation if they are within the age limits for induction and are acceptable to the United States Armed Forces.

(2) American citizens, regardless of ancestry, who are outside the present induction ages or who are not acceptable to the United States Armed Forces, may request permission to enlist in the Armed Forces of cobelligerent nations and may be so authorized by the War Department and the National Headquarters of Selective Service. Separate action is taken in each individual case.

(3) Non-citizens of the United States, regardless of ancestry, who are subject to the Selective Training and Service Act may, if citizens of cobelligerent nations with which this country has reciprocal agreements, request service in the Armed Forces of their own country. This is granted provided the individual is accepted for service by his country. If the individual is outside the present induction age limits or is not acceptable to the United States Armed Forces, he may request permission to enlist in the Armed Forces of cobelligerent nations and decision will then be made by the War Department and National Headquarters of Selective Service. Separate decision is made in each individual case.

b. Non-residents of the United States:

American citizens, regardless of ancestry, while subject to the Selective Training and Service Act, may enlist and in some countries are subject to compulsory military service, if acceptable to the country of residence, in the Armed Forces of that country.

S. G. HENRY
Major General
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1