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Interfaith Committee for Aid to the Democracies, 1941.

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ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA

1720 - 16th Street, N. W.

Washington, D. C.

March 24, 1941.

TO MEMBERS OF THE Z.O.A. EXECUTIVE,
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE, CHAIRMEN
AND SECRETARIES OF ZIONIST DISTRICTS:

Dear Friends:

Aid to Britain has now become the established policy of the American people and government.

While our government is doing what it can to rush defense supplies to England, American citizens, individually and in groups, are called upon to provide aid for the British population. The most desired form of aid is mobile kitchens for the bomb-periled civil population of England.

The Jews of America must not and will not be found delinquent in doing their share, for it is well recognized that the future of the Jewish people everywhere is bound up with the fate of Britain.

As part of the Interfaith Committee for Aid to the Democracies, a Jewish Section of which I am a Vice-Chairman has been organized, sponsored by representative Jewish leaders. In cooperation with the British War Relief Society, it has adopted as its program the raising of funds to provide hundreds of mobile kitchens for the British population. The cost of one such unit is \$2,000.

While every Jewish organization will want to have a share in this humane undertaking so vital for maintaining the morale and physical welfare of the valiant British whose battle is our battle as well, Zionists should be particularly active and the Zionist record should be particularly outstanding for reasons which hardly need elaboration. True enough, whatever we do for Palestine is also a service to the cause of Britain, but in addition to whatever we are doing for Palestine, direct aid to England and its people would be greatly appreciated. While the British people are being pounded by bombs, we must keep sending aid.

Any individual or organization raising the full amount for a mobile kitchen is entitled to have its name inscribed upon the canteen.

We appeal to your District and Region to do its utmost. Let it not be said that Jews are unready to translate their sympathy into practical and desperately needed help. In addition to whatever other worthwhile endeavors in which you are engaged, the Aid to Britain project is a 'must'.

This effort must be completed within the near future. We know we can rely upon you to find the best available means for your District and Region making their maximum contribution. Please apprise us of your plans.

Enclosed herewith is a copy of the Resolution adopted at the last meeting of the Z.O.A. Executive with reference to this matter.

Checks should be made out to the British War Relief Society and sent care of the Jewish Section of the Interfaith Committee for Aid to the Democracies, 57 William Street, New York City.

With Zion's Greetings,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)

Edmund I. Kaufmann

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, JEWISH SECTION
INTERFAITH COMMITTEE FOR AID TO THE DEMOCRACIES,

Held Tuesday Evening, April 22, 1941,
at 270 West 89th Street, New York City,
at 8:30 P. M.

* * *

Present: Dr. Israel Goldstein, Chairman; Mrs. Bernard S. Deutsch; Mr. Louis Fabricant; Mr. Herman Hoffman; Hon. Carl Sherman; Irving Manacher; Mr. James Waterman Wise; Dr. Maurice L. Perlzweig; Mrs. Frank Cohen; Miss L. Shultz.

Regrets: Dr. Stephen S. Wise; Mrs. David DeSola Pool; Mr. Phillip W. Haberman; Mr. William Rosenblatt; Rabbi Irving Miller.

The Chairman called the meeting to order, and requested Miss Shultz to read the minutes of the last Executive Board meeting. The minutes were read and approved.

Miss Shultz made a motion to the effect that Mr. Louis Sturz be invited to be a member of the Executive Board. The motion was seconded and unanimously adopted.

Dr. Goldstein inquired what proportion of the Ten Million Dollars reported as having been raised by the British War Relief Society, might properly be said to have come from Jewish sources.

Dr. Perlzweig stated that Mr. Gehle had told him that between 1/2 and 1/3 of the money thus far might be said to have come from Jewish sources. Dr. Perlzweig went on to report that our invitation which had been extended to Lord Halifax to address a dinner under our auspices, would probably not be accepted, as he was declining further invitations to make addresses in the near future.

The Chairman proceeded to make the following reports:

- 1 - The establishment of our new offices at 57 William Street, which have been made available by the British War Relief Society.
- 2 - In accordance with the decision of the last meeting of the Executive Committee, he has engaged a staff consisting of Mr. Louis E. Goldstein, to act as the Chairman's assistant, and Mrs. S. E. Allen, to be in charge of the office work. He also reported that he had undertaken an arrangement with Mr. Yale Borkon of Pittsburgh to commence some time in May, concentrating his effort on the Long Island area where Rabbi Miller undertook to personally direct his activities.

He has made an arrangement with Mr. Harry H. Frankel of Cincinnati, who in the course of his traveling on his own business, will as a volunteer worker, make contacts for us in the communities that he will visit.

- 3 - Dr. Goldstein stated that the discussion at the last meeting with reference to securing administrative funds so as not to ask the British War Relief Society to pay the expenses of our effort, has thus far brought no results.

He was therefore obliged, in order not to delay the commencement of our activities indefinitely, to confer with Mr. Gehle to whom he stated that he would be willing to take the time to raise administrative funds if Mr. Gehle felt it advisable. Mr. Gehle, however, felt that the time should be used for efforts to secure direct contributions and authorized Dr. Goldstein to proceed to hire a staff and incur whatever other expenses are necessary.

4 - Additional contacts and endorsements:

- a. The Chairman reported that since the last meeting he has secured the endorsement of the Zionist Organization of America which has adopted a resolution and has sent it with a letter over the president's signature, to all of the Zionist districts. (Resolution and letter attached).
- b. Hadassah, which has adopted a resolution similar to that of the Z.O.A. but has not communicated it to its constituencies as yet.
- c. Union of American Hebrew Congregations.
- d. B'nai B'rith
- e. Federation of Men's Clubs of the United Synagogue of America has consented to invite Dr. Perlzweig to address their annual convention in Syracuse on April 27th.
- f. The Synagogue Council of America was requested to set aside a day of prayer which might be combined with stimulation of practical effort. They suggested that it would more probably come as an Interfaith day of prayer.
- g. Brooklyn Board of Jewish Ministers

The Chairman expressed appreciation to Dr. Perlzweig for his indefatigable efforts and stirring addresses; to Mr. Wise for his extremely effective representation of our cause during his recent visit to the West coast; to Mr. Fabricant for his splendid representation of our cause at the recent convention of B'nai B'rith in Chicago.

Mr. Fabricant reported that at the B'nai B'rith convention, he presented a resolution which was read and adopted. Action should now be taken to have this resolution sent to all of the lodges, so that eventually it should reach the entire membership of B'nai B'rith. Mr. Fabricant also stated that on the question of the administrative funds, the convention authorized the president to make an appropriation not exceeding \$2500 for administrative expenses contingent on a similar appropriation being made by the other members of the General Jewish Council. Mr. Fabricant stated further that at the meeting of General Jewish Council, this question did not come up because of other matters. In reply to Dr. Goldstein's question as to whether we could approach Mr. Monsky again on the subject of the \$2500, if we could get a similar sum from another source, Mr. Fabricant stated we might do this after we received the minutes of the convention, containing the official resolution. Mr. Wise suggested that we follow up the B'nai B'rith and the American Jewish Congress with regard to these allocations.

With reference to the raising of funds, the Chairman stated that in connection with trade campaigns, he felt that since the time was so short and the United Jewish Appeal was in the field, we are not equipped to cope with this phase of the work and should limit our efforts to cooperate with Mr. Gehle in his effort to approach the trades and industries directly on behalf of the British War Relief Society.

Perhaps it would be feasible to establish a Business and Professional Men's Council under the auspices of our Jewish Section. The Chairman referred to a suggestion made by Mr. Manacher with reference to sending out a letter to a large list of his clientele, adding that if two or three individuals in Mr. Manacher's industry would bear the expense of sending out the letter, it may be a very useful experiment. Mr. Manacher agreed that perhaps it could be done.

Mr. Hoffman reported on behalf of the I.O.B.A. that he had a check of \$2500, which he would deliver at the opening of our offices the following Monday. He referred to the national convention of the I.O.B.A. which would be held at Atlantic City shortly at which time he would make an appeal for a sum, a portion of which would go to the British war relief.

Dr. Perlzweig reported that Philadelphia and Boston have set up Jewish sections; that he has addressed the Philadelphia conference where 90 organizations were represented; that in Boston the work is headed by Dr. Shain; that in Detroit there was considerable activity; that St. Louis had a fine meeting and sent him a check for \$3000, promising an additional \$1500 in a few days. He reported further that the Bronx Section of the American Jewish Congress turned over a check to the British War Relief Society for \$1500 for which we are to be credited; that on April 20th, B'nai B'rith Lodge #1 of New York handed over the amount for one mobile kitchen; that the Mt. Sinai doctors have raised \$1500 for us; that the Beth Israel doctors promised a sum; that Rabbi Bernstein of Rochester has a check for \$1500, plus another \$200; and that on April 23rd, Cong. B'nai Jeshurun will turn over a check for \$2300.

Dr. Perlzweig reported the receipt of a letter from Mr. William Cohen of St. Louis who requested a permit to operate the fund raising effort there. Dr. Perlzweig suggested that since we are working under the license of the British War Relief Society, this same license would cover our efforts in St. Louis.

In acknowledging all these efforts, Dr. Goldstein expressed appreciation to the American Jewish Congress for having started the Jewish Section on its way and to the constant valuable cooperation of Miss Shultz.

Mr. Wise reported on his trip to the West Coast. He found Jewish groups eager to help. The reception accorded him in both Los Angeles and San Francisco was very fine. In San Francisco, he discussed matters with Rabbi Morris Goldstein who consented to take an active part, and to contact Rabbi Coffee and Judge Golden. Mr. Wise also secured a promise of cooperation from Dr. Hugh Talbott, head of the Church Peace Union in San Francisco. Dr. Atkinson, General Secretary of the Interfaith Committee for Aid to the Democracies has promised, on his trip to the West, to make some speeches for us. Letters should go out with request for funds. Each letter should contain the validation of our organization. Funds can be raised on the West Coast.

The Chairman stated that he had had a meeting with the Zionist executives earlier in the day and had gone over the map of the United States with a view to ascertaining the key men in all the important areas and that a list of these key men was being gotten up and that letters would go out to them shortly requesting them to assume responsibility for their respective areas.

Mr. Goldstein reported that we are prepared to send out between 5,000 and 10,000 letters to various organizations, requesting cooperation and contributions. We

are holding up these mailings for our leaflet, which is going to press, and which we are enclosing in each letter.

Mrs. Cohen inquired whether anything has been done about Dr. Perlzweig's suggestion with reference to the Youth of America. The Chairman reported that we are holding this matter in abeyance for the time being. Mr. Goldstein mentioned that we are addressing letters to various Youth Groups. It was further suggested that we contact other groups such as sororities, fraternities, etc., but that it is too close to the Summer to attempt to contact school children.

Dr. Perlzweig brought up the subject of binoculars, as part of the aid to Britain effort. American Jewish Congress started to collect these binoculars. They have 82 at the present time. The lack of binoculars in England is very serious. Because of the needs of our War Department, it is impossible to purchase new ones today, and used binoculars are becoming more scarce every day. For this reason Dr. Perlzweig thought we could ask for donations of binoculars in each letter we send out, and in every speech made on our behalf.

It was the consensus of opinion that it would not be advisable to make special appeals for binoculars at this time, but that we would use a portion of our unearmarked funds to help make good the pledge made by the Congress.

Mr. Manacher was requested to get estimates on the cost of binoculars.

The Chairman reported on the luncheon which was given to Mr. Gehle on the occasion of his birthday on April 9th at Hotel Pierre, when we announced the establishment of a children's home to bear the name of General Sir Archibald Wavell. The luncheon was extremely successful from the standpoint of publicity and the calibre of the attendants. He paid tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Cohen who, in behalf of Esco, contributed \$15,000 for the \$25,000 Wavell Home.

The Chairman welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Cohen as members of our Executive Committee.

A discussion followed, with reference to the proposal for a dinner to be held before the summer. The Chairman conveyed Mr. Cohen's suggestion to hold a series of dinners throughout the country and to undertake the responsibility of meeting a portion of the administrative expense.

It was felt that it would be enough to concentrate on a dinner in New York proper, and that we haven't the staff to cope with a series of out of town dinners. It was suggested that we invite as guests of honor, Vice-President Henry A. Wallace, Secretary Cordell Hull, and Mr. Wendell L. Willkie.

Mr. Sherman asked whether we had considered what forces or means we had at our disposal to make this a huge success. Are we organized to sell 1,000 tickets at \$50. per ticket?

Dr. Goldstein said that as of today, we are not. It would be necessary to engage a staff, which would be very costly. We would have to get several people who would be willing to cover this expense.

Miss Shultz suggested that in order to insure the success of a dinner of this kind, it would be necessary to get someone like John Block, who is President of Kirby Block, a large purchasing house, to take the Chair, and in this way large blocks of tickets could be sold. Or we could get organizations to buy tables and in this way raise money for us.

Mr. Sherman suggested that we try to get Mackenzie King from Canada as Guest of Honor.

A motion was made to adjourn. This was seconded and the meeting adjourned at 11 P. M.



Jewish Section
Interfaith Committee For Aid To The Democracies
IN COOPERATION WITH THE BRITISH WAR RELIEF SOCIETY

57 WILLIAM STREET

Telephone: BOWling Green 9-2547

NEW YORK CITY

*Officers of the British
War Relief Society*

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MRS. DAVID DeSOLA POOL
CARL SHERMAN
DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER
DR. STEPHEN S. WISE

May 1, 1941

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Rabbi Silver:

No doubt you will want to be apprised of the progress which we have made since the formation of our committee in which you were good enough to consent to serve as a vice chairman. This indication of your interest has been a source of great strength to us.

It is a source of regret to us that geographical distance prevents you from attending the meetings of our executive committee. If, in the future, however, it should happen that you will be in New York on a date fixed for a meeting of our committee, we should be delighted to have you attend our meeting. You will receive future notices of our meetings.

The enclosed minutes of the past meetings of our executive committee will indicate the lines of our activity.

If you have any suggestions to offer, we should greatly appreciate hearing from you.

We are particularly eager to know what can be done to stimulate the effort in your own community. Thus far, the only person in your community who has been contacted before the formation of our Jewish Section as such, is:

Judge Lewis Drucker

With cordial regards and best wishes, I am

IG/MG
Enc.

Sincerely yours,

Israel Goldstein
DR. ISRAEL GOLDSTEIN
CHAIRMAN

P.S. The meetings of the Executive Board will be sent to you under separate cover.

Make all checks payable to the British War Relief Society, Inc. and mail to Jewish Section.

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"Let the Jewish Part in British War Relief be as Great as is the Jewish Hope for British Victory."

R E S O L U T I O N

The Zionist Organization of America heartily endorses the purpose and program of the Inter-Faith Committee to Aid the Democracies and welcomes the establishment of the Jewish Section of that Committee which in cooperation with the British War Relief Society, is seeking to enlist the participation of Jewish organizations and individuals in the all-American effort to provide mobile kitchens and other forms of aid for the British population.

The Zionist Organization of America calls upon every Zionist District and Region in the country to respond generously to the appeals which will be made in behalf of the Jewish Section of the Inter-Faith Committee to Aid the Democracies.

Sharing the overwhelming desire of the American Government and people to come to the aid of Britain in this period of crisis for democracies, the Zionist Organization of America looks to its constituencies throughout the country to take a leading part in giving tangible expression to our sense of fellowship with the valiant British people and with the cause they are defending with their lives.

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(adopted E.C.mtg-3/19/41)