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United Jewish Appeal, United Palestine Appeal, Joint Distribution
Committee, 1940-1942.

UNITED PALESTINE APPEAL
41 East 42nd Street
New York, N. Y.

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

September 13, 1940

FROM: HENRY MONTOR

Attached hereto is a copy of a bulletin which
the Joint Distribution Committee issued to
describe its activities in Europe.

HM:BG

Enc.



Joint Distribution Committee
100 East 42nd Street
New York City

September 4, 1940

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

BULLETIN #9 - REPORT BY J.D.C. EUROPEAN CHAIRMAN

"The Jews of Europe have sent out their last S.O.S. Their salvation can come only from that group who can meet the challenge - the Jews of America. If we fail to respond we may never again have the chance to save them from perishing. One, five or ten years from now it may be too late."

This is the warning sounded by Morris C. Troper, European Chairman of the Joint Distribution Committee, in a report of the current activities of the Committee. Mr. Troper is now in America for consultation with J.D.C. officers on the present and future programs of the J.D.C. He shows that, in the three months following the invasion of the Low Countries on May 10th, J.D.C. overseas activities proceeded uninterruptedly and over \$900,000 was remitted in cash for work in Europe. The report follows:

Report by Mr. Troper

Frankly, it has not been easy for me to adjust myself to being in America. My eyes still see, and my ears still ring with the suffering and devastation in France. To be able to get a meal without standing in line, to be able to buy as much gasoline as wanted, to find trains not only running but on schedule, to be able to hear the drone of an airplane overhead with only casual interest -- these are things that I cannot quite believe.

But these are not the only things I have found it hard to believe. Most incredible of all have been some of the questions I have been asked, some of the assumptions I have listened to. When well-meaning, intelligent people express the belief that the J.D.C. cannot work in Europe today, or that there is no work to be done, or that there is too much work for a private agency, or that money cannot be spent, or even that money cannot be raised, - I am more confused than ever. Knowing how much the J.D.C. has been able to accomplish, the enormous problems which it is trying to meet today, and the stupendous tasks which face us in the immediate future, I am at a loss as to how to bring the facts home to our good friends throughout America. They ask me also: Does the J.D.C.'s work conflict with the Red Cross? How can the J.D.C. expend funds in Europe without aiding the German economy? In the face of the widespread general suffering, why should there be special help for Jews?

These are not simple questions, but I feel that we have valid answers to many of them. First and foremost let me state categorically: J.D.C. dollars do not go

into Germany or German occupied territory. No J.D.C. money has helped or is helping German economy. Our American funds are kept physically outside these territories and are utilized for transportation of emigrants, as well as education and maintenance of Jewish children in foreign lands. The equivalent of our appropriations, in local currency, is employed within the countries to finance relief and welfare programs. In effect, therefore, we perform a double service with our funds. Local currency provided by prospective emigrants in the countries comprising Greater Germany is used for indispensable internal relief work, and at the same time, thousands of refugees are enabled to emigrate through the payment of steamship fares, landing moneys, etc. with the dollars that we supply. Nor is any question of violating the British blockade of continental Europe involved in our activities. Because our work is conducted through local committees in each country, which secure the necessary supplies and commodities locally, we have never been - nor are we now - faced with the problem of shipping materials across the Atlantic. At present, our sole requirement is money to be made available to our affiliated committees.

The Job of the J.D.C.

Perhaps the best way to answer some of the other questions is to ask ourselves: Why was the J.D.C. founded? What is its reason for existence? Briefly stated, our job has been to relieve suffering which has been imposed upon Jews because they are Jews. Our concern has not been so much with the general problems which affect Jews in common with other people and on an equal level; it has been to repair the damage wrought by catastrophes aimed at Jews because of their race or religion; to mitigate the effects of the many waves of unbridled anti-Semitism which have swept through Europe in recent decades; to help our overseas co-religionists so to adjust themselves as to prevent, or at least offset, future discriminations and persecutions. That, basically, is the job of the J.D.C., and it is a job which no other agency in the world has undertaken.

Red Cross Activities

What about the Red Cross? Many people have asked me whether the Red Cross, with \$20,000,000 of privately collected funds and \$50,000,000 worth of American governmental food and resources at its disposal for war relief, will duplicate the work of the J.D.C. by caring for Jewish sufferers in the general course of its activity. Of course, many Jews have benefitted and will continue to benefit from Red Cross war relief work. But there is no overlapping between its activities and those of the J.D.C. Even if the Red Cross is able to ship food and supplies to Europe despite the British blockade, its traditional policy is to deal with first emergency needs only. It does not embrace emigration, or schooling, or retraining. It does not operate in every zone - in Poland, Germany, Austria, Bohemia-Moravia, Slovakia, in Switzerland, Italy, Portugal, in Roumania or Lithuania, in Central or South America, or even in certain sections of unoccupied France. In the dreadful days after the Red Cross has finished rendering its first aid, men and women hopelessly face a new, uncertain future. It is then that the J.D.C. is looked to for enormous tasks of reconstruction. The traditionally special status of the Jews in Europe, their arbitrary segregation, the particular disabilities which have been imposed upon them as Jews -- these factors do not concern the Red Cross. They represent problems which are on the shoulders of the J.D.C.

Jews of Europe look to America

One who has been in Europe during the past year is painfully aware that, today, the business of Europe is war. Little or no thought is given to relief or to refugees or to human misery. Under such circumstances, European Jews, even more than others, must look to American help. Non-Jews in Fascist-dominated Europe are able to make compromise with their status of the past; at least some remnant

of human dignity is left them. That is not true of the Jews of Europe. To them nothing is left - neither human dignity nor economic opportunity. For these basic human requirements, the Jews of Europe look to America. That means to the J.D.C. We have never failed them yet, and I doubt very much whether our American Jewish communities, once they understand the depth and breadth of the problem, will do so now.

Let us be clear about one thing: we are at a crucial, an historical juncture in Jewish history. Will Jews survive, or will they perish from the earth? The answer can come only from that group who can meet the challenge - the Jews of America. Either America's five million Jews will succor an equal number who have the misfortune to live on the wrong side of the Atlantic, or there is no salvation for them. The Jews of Europe have sent out their last S.O.S. If we fail to respond, we may never again have the chance to save them from perishing like rats in a trap. One, five or ten years from now, it may be too late. Today, it is still possible. True, we cannot possibly hope to solve the entire problem, to meet all the needs. But should that factor prevent us from doing that part of the job which is within our grasp? Europe today is like a sinking ship. Simply because we cannot possibly save all its drowning passengers is no reason for withholding our help from those whom we know we can reach.

The Record from May 10-August 10

What are the things we need to know and to do in the face of today's emergency? Let me begin by tracing briefly the course of events since I was last in New York. I telephoned our New York office from Rome the day before the Germans invaded Holland and Belgium to report that I was proceeding to Paris, and that I had ordered the closing of our Brussels office without delay. Events moved quickly after that; I need not go into the tragic story of the hordes of refugees who overran France from the Low Countries, clogging the roads to the accompaniment of ceaseless bombardment and machine-gun fire. A month later Paris fell; Italy entered the war. Ours was the last Jewish organization to evacuate from Paris; we did so only after consultation with the American Embassy, when Nazi guns were at the very gates of the city. The unforgettable journey from Paris to Bordeaux, where a J.D.C. office had been set up, and a few weeks later the trek from Bordeaux to Lisbon, belong more to the realm of fiction than of fact.

One of the gravest problems confronting me, as J.D.C. European Chairman, has been the declining scale of our appropriations for 1940. In 1939 the J.D.C. expended close to \$9,000,000. During November and December of last year, we were expending at the rate of \$1,000,000 monthly to deal with the numerous critical problems which confronted us. 1940 has shown a different picture. We began in the belief that this year's income would approximate last year's. As a precautionary measure, we slightly reduced our scale of operations and appropriated \$950,000 for January. But then events took a tragically ironic twist. The very circumstances which gave rise to unprecedented suffering and fantastic demands upon our funds in every area of need, at the same time operated to discourage and confuse our contributors and steadily to reduce the proceeds of the United Jewish Appeal upon which our income depends. Faced with the necessity of keeping our expenditures within the realistic bounds of our estimated income, we were obliged sharply to reduce our allotments to our affiliated committees, in many cases by as much as 75%. This means that, for July, our monthly appropriation was cut to \$350,000, representing almost a two-thirds reduction from our January scale. It is a reduction which was impelled not by lack of opportunity to serve, but simply by lack of funds. Nevertheless, the record is significant. From January 1st through May 9th, the J.D.C.'s European office expended in cash the sum of \$2,300,000. May 10th marked the German invasion of Holland and Belgium. From then until exactly a month later, when Paris was evacuated, the J.D.C. expended in Europe \$265,000. From June 10th until

July 10th, when the French Government capitulated, the J.D.C. expended \$320,000. In the month that followed, July 10th to August 10th, another \$325,000 in cash was drawn. I am speaking now only of funds drawn by our European office. I know, of course, that some \$340,000 has been expended for our work in South and Central America and in Shanghai since the beginning of the year.

What is the situation today? Without attempting to go into too much detail, or to peer into every nook and cranny, let us examine the picture country-by-country.

France, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg

I. In the first place there are the countries which form the western theatre of war - France, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg. In these countries the J.D.C. can and must continue to work!

FRANCE: In the unoccupied portion of France today, there are over 12,000 refugees congregated in makeshift camps of the most primitive nature. They include not only German Jews, but also Belgian, Dutch and even native French Jews, who are without funds, adequate food or possessions of any kind. Among the many thousands of refugees who are not in camps, a minimum of 20,000 are in desperate need of food and clothing. To obtain a realistic picture of the situation in unoccupied France, an American member of our European staff is now in that area. He has been able to contact a number of the personalities who had formerly directed refugee aid work in Paris. These men, although now refugees themselves, are willing and eager to undertake the responsibility of caring for their fellow sufferers. Refugee committees have been reconstituted in many cities. A minimal sum of \$100,000 monthly is needed to even begin the vital work of rescue. One committee alone is now caring for 3,500 hungry and homeless persons; it has the immediate problem of providing for an additional 4,000 Jews who were expelled from the Alsace-Lorraine region under tragic circumstances. Aid is needed for the 12,000 refugees in camps, for the large number of Jews among the soldiers now being demobilized from the Polish Army, and for many other categories of sufferers.

Insistent appeals have been received from the Ose, which has charge of 1,300 refugee children who were evacuated from Paris through the initiative and with the financial aid of the J.D.C. at the beginning of the war. To continue to feed and house these children, as well as to do essential medical work, the Ose requires a minimum of 400,000 francs (\$8,000) monthly, apart from a one-time grant of 250,000 francs (\$5,000) for indispensable equipment.

So far, these committees have operated with sums the J.D.C. advanced to them on or before June 10th. We are now seeking to effect a clearing arrangement in one form or another which will enable us to make fresh funds available for this urgently needed work.

It is too soon to know what can be done in behalf of the hundreds of thousands of Jews who remain in occupied France. Five of the relief kitchens in Paris, which we helped establish at the beginning of the war, are still functioning with balances remaining from J.D.C. grants. Their funds are running low. We will have to grant additional subventions to these kitchens, and possibly establish others, as soon as a method is evolved for clearing funds into occupied France in such a way as not to aid the German economy. Until approved by our Government, and until we can have a resident American representative to supervise actual distribution, we shall not conduct activities in the occupied zone.

HOLLAND: Our affiliated committee in Amsterdam has resumed its activities after a short lapse. Each communication from it has reflected a desperate situation, an immediate need for substantial funds. Emigration has been the

keynote of every appeal. For internal welfare requirements we have suggested that the committee borrow local funds, against eventual repayment by the J.D.C. in Dutch currency when and as we find it possible to obtain such currency without the payment of dollars in Holland. We do not know as yet whether they have been able to act on this suggestion. Emigration costs, however, will be paid in dollars outside of Holland. Some 500 Jews are ready for immediate emigration from Holland, via Lisbon, at a cost of \$250 each. Here is a requirement of \$125,000 quite apart from the internal welfare budget, which is at present unestimated.

BELGIUM: After a period of several weeks after the invasion, when we were completely cut off from our committees in Antwerp and Brussels, we received an appeal through the U.S. State Department for funds with which to carry on indispensable relief work. Here, too, our operations depend upon the development of a clearance method whereby funds may be made available without physically remitting dollars into that country. As a stop-gap measure, we have advised our local committees in Brussels and Antwerp, as in Holland, to borrow funds locally against eventual repayment by us. We have not yet heard whether they have been able to do this.

LUXEMBOURG: The Jewish welfare committee in Luxembourg has been re-constituted and requires \$2,000 monthly to conduct minimal relief activities. A financial clearance arrangement has been worked out for Luxembourg and can be put into operation.

Portugal, Italy, Switzerland

II. Then there are the other West European countries, whose soils may not have been stained with the blood of battle, but which nonetheless have been directly affected by the war - Portugal, Italy, Switzerland. In these countries the J.D.C. can and must continue to work!

PORTUGAL: Portugal has become a focal center for refugee aid since the fall of France. Lisbon is today the only neutral port remaining in Western Europe. As more and more refugees arrive in Lisbon from France, Italy and Holland in transit to overseas countries, the number of relief applications mounts. The importance of keeping the refugee situation in Portugal under control, in order that this country may continue to remain a gateway to the west, cannot be overemphasized. We are making increasingly larger sums available to the local committee. Here, of course, there is no difficulty in transmitting funds.

ITALY: In Italy, close to 3,000 German Jewish refugees are dependent upon our affiliated committee for their very existence. In addition, substantial numbers of East European Jews who were enroute to Palestine and other overseas countries, were trapped when Italy entered the war. They, too, must be fed and sheltered. The plight of the native Italian Jews, victims of racial legislation, has given rise to large-scale relief problems. Since the outbreak of the war, our transmissions to Italy have been in the form of blocked lira in order to avoid the sending of dollars into that country.

SWITZERLAND: The situation of 8,000 refugees in Switzerland, whose native Jewish population is no more than 18,000, has been considerably aggravated by the war developments. The exodus of wealthy local Jews who, in the past, had contributed a substantial portion of the local funds raised for refugee aid, has made the refugee committee increasingly dependent upon the assistance of the J.D.C. Dollars may be remitted into Switzerland without difficulty.

Greater Germany

III. Central Europe - Germany, Austria, Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia - fall into a special class. Here, too, the J.D.C. can and must continue to work!

GERMANY: The plight of the Jews in Germany has worsened considerably as a result of war. Restrictions on food are tightened constantly; the prohibition against purchase of clothing by Jews will have serious effects during the oncoming winter. 52,000 of the 200,000 Jews remaining in Old Germany are dependent upon the assistance of the Reichsvereinigung for their daily bread. The greatest part of the income of the Reichsvereinigung formerly came from contributions and taxes of wealthy Jews remaining in Germany. By this time, after more than seven years of Hitlerism, the largest number of people with means have emigrated. Many Jews remaining in Germany have been utterly pauperized. Whereas, too, prior to the outbreak of the war substantial assistance had also been rendered to German Jews by British Jewish organizations, this aid has now been cut off. The J.D.C. remains the sole agency to which the Jews of Germany can turn.

AUSTRIA: The Jews of Austria, like the Jews of Germany, have suffered as a result of war-time economy. In most respects their plight is even worse. The Jewish population of Austria has been reduced from 180,000 two years ago, to 50,000 today. 90% of the Jews remaining are dependent upon the Kultusgemeinde for their food, shelter and clothing. Here, too, the J.D.C. is the only source of assistance.

BOHEMIA-MORAVIA and SLOVAKIA: The J.D.C. dare not suspend its vital help to the 200,000 Jewish souls remaining in Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia. Emigration assistance to these people is of particular importance, since it has become all too clear that they cannot continue to exist in the lands of their birth or adoption. The J.D.C. daily feeds many thousands in both these territories, gives shelter and clothing to others, enables young people to be retrained in productive occupations which may serve them usefully in some land of asylum, and assists those who can, to migrate to lands of permanent settlement. Over 30% of the Jews of Slovakia are dependent on charity for their daily bread.

Poland and Lithuania

IV. Let us now examine the East European countries which have fallen victim to both armed and political aggression - Poland and Lithuania. Here again the J.D.C. can and must continue to work!

POLAND: Perhaps the most challenging demands on us come from German-occupied Poland, where 1,250,000 Jews lack life's barest essentials. Because of curtailed appropriations, the J.D.C.'s Polish office has already been forced to close the relief stations for adults which it operated in German-occupied Poland earlier this year. The threat impends that even the kitchens for children will have to be shut down unless adequate funds can be made available. We are straining ourselves to keep these open. Perhaps the most graphic summary of the needs is to be found in the text of a cable we received on August 8th:

"FOR AUGUST REQUIRE:

1. - \$50,000 ADULT FEEDING
2. - \$50,000 CHILD FEEDING, ORPHAN CARE
3. - \$50,000 PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND TRADE SCHOOLS
4. - a \$30,000 MEDICAL WORK
b \$10,000 CHALUZIM, AGRICULTURAL RETRAINING
5. - \$50,000 SEPARATELY FOR EASTERN UPPER SILESIA AND LODZ STOP

ABOVE \$240,000 MONTHLY BUDGET NECESSARY IN CASH AND FOODSTUFFS STOP URGE REMIT IMMEDIATELY OTHERWISE COMPELLED TO CLOSE OUR ASSISTED AID INSTITUTIONS."

The financial clearance arrangement which we employ to keep American

dollars out of Germany, Austria, Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia, applies to Poland as well. No dollar of J.D.C. funds goes physically into Poland.

LITHUANIA: The J.D.C. has been feeding 11,000 of the 15,000 refugees from Poland who had poured into Lithuania after the invasion of Poland. For a time the Lithuanian Government had contributed 50% of all foreign relief funds sent into the country. This has been discontinued in the last few months and the full burden of helping these refugees has been falling upon the J.D.C. The absorption of Lithuania by Soviet Russia has thus far not eliminated the need for our continued aid. Our American staff representative is still in that country and sends urgent cables constantly for increased funds. We are attempting to secure our Treasury Department's permission to send funds into Lithuania or to utilize blocked lits in that country. At this writing, it does not appear likely that permission will be granted.

The Balkans

V. The Balkans - Hungary, Roumania, Yugoslavia, etc. - have problems of a somewhat different nature. The J.D.C. can and must continue to work there!

HUNGARY and ROUMANIA: In Hungary and Roumania there remain 1,200,000 Jews, after deducting the 300,000 Jews who have become part of Soviet Russia through the absorption of Bessarabia and Bukovina. Discrimination and restrictions on Jewish participation in trade, industry and the professions, are rapidly throttling the existence of the Jewish population in these countries. One-third of the 600,000 Jews left in Roumania have been denationalized - deprived of the right to earn a living or to reside in the country. Some 250,000 Hungarian Jewish workers have already been thrown out of employment because of the anti-Jewish program. The welfare services conducted with J.D.C. aid in behalf of these displaced human beings include mass feeding, milk stations for children, medical aid, child care, economic help, emigration assistance and vocational training, especially for young people.

YUGOSLAVIA: Our chief problem in Yugoslavia concerns several thousand refugees who have been stranded on the Yugoslavian Danube for many months awaiting an opportunity to proceed to Palestine. Everything has militated against these unfortunates - first the limitation of Palestinian immigration, then the rigors of nature which froze the Danube at a time when the boat on which these refugees were lodged had almost reached the open sea, and now the European hostilities which have placed huge obstacles in their path. The J.D.C. has expended \$68,250 to feed and assist these unfortunates during the many months of their travail. Over \$7,500 a month is now additionally required.

Emigration Proceeds

VI. EMIGRATION: Emigration of Jews from Europe remains our largest financial and physical program. Emigration has not been halted because of the war. Although Italy's belligerent status closed the Mediterranean to shipping, new avenues of escape have been opened up. During the past two months hundreds of persons have arranged to leave Europe for the Americas and Palestine, using an overland route - via Russia, Manchukuo and Japan for the Western Hemisphere, and via Turkey and Syria for Palestine. Emigration continues, and we estimate, on the basis of authentic reports from our various representatives and committees in Europe, that no fewer than 6,000 persons are ready to leave immediately, provided transportation is made available. At an average cost of \$250 each, this would represent an immediate requirement of \$1,500,000.

South America and Shanghai

VII. I shall not detail the South American or Shanghai situations. Suffice it

to say that 125,000 Jewish souls in these areas look to the J.D.C. for continued support, in order that they may take firm root in their newly adopted countries. As an American I appreciate the circumstances which require us to continue our efforts in South and Central America. It is our patriotic duty to follow the line laid down by our government, of cementing relations with our Latin American neighbors. We must see to it that the Jewish immigrants are decently adjusted to their new surroundings and become increasingly regarded as assets, rather than feared as potential liabilities. In conducting our programs on our neighboring continent, we do more than mere relief work; we stem anti-Semitism at its source, we prevent it from making headway.

No Lack of Opportunity for Service

In times like this it is foolhardy to make long-range plans for the future. Much of J.D.C.'s future course of action is directly dependent upon the progress of the war. But I do want to make this one point: Many people felt sincerely, when the war broke out nearly a year ago, that the J.D.C. would not be able to continue its overseas programs. Facts and figures have disproved that beyond any shadow of doubt. Naturally, in some ways our activities have been handicapped and blocked by the war. Nevertheless, problems which seemed insuperable have been overcome in one way or another. In the final analysis, then, money has been and still is the chief factor determining the extent of our ability to render vital assistance to suffering Jewish victims of war and persecution in every part of the world. There has been and is no lack of opportunity for service.



SHIRER LEAF

RESEARCH CENTER

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December 1st, 1941

To the Membership Of

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc.

Supplementing the notice, dated November 24th, which was sent to you in connection with the annual meeting of the members of The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc., to be held at the office of the Committee, 100 East 42nd Street, New York, N. Y., at 10:30 A.M., Friday, December 19th, 1941, you are hereby further notified that among the purposes of the said meeting will be to consider and act upon a proposed amendment of the corporation's Certificate of Incorporation and its By-Laws, increasing the maximum number of its Board of Directors from 150 to 180.

The proposed amendment is regarded as important by the officers of your Committee. In accordance with New York law, if you do not plan to attend the meeting in person, and have not already signed and returned to us the proxy form which was sent to you under cover of November 24th, we would urge you to do so immediately.

Very truly yours,

Moses A. Leavitt

Moses A. Leavitt
Secretary

MAL:df

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J.D.C.'s Board of Directors and Executive Committee are elected by the National Council of the J.D.C. consisting of 2,850 Jewish community leaders from all sections of the United States and Canada. Officers are ex-officio members of the Executive Committee. The J.D.C. is supported solely by voluntary contributions.

INTER-OFFICE

From: Edward M. M. Warburg

Date December 14, 1941

To: Community Leaders

The officers of the Joint Distribution Committee have been in continuous session since the declaration of war. We have been in telegraphic and telephonic communication with most of our offices abroad, including Shanghai, effecting the necessary arrangements for continuance of vitally needed relief work and refugee assistance.

Over a year ago, anticipating the possibility of an emergency situation, such as we now face, which would cut communications between our office and the overseas committees, the J.D.C. made plans to insure that the work of relief would not be abruptly and seriously curtailed. At a recent Executive Committee meeting, an appropriation of \$1,500,000 was confirmed to be utilized for this purpose. This sum is to be charged to our 1942 receipts and constitutes a first claim on collections next year. Local Jewish committees overseas have been notified that they may borrow from local sources, with the assurance that we will reimburse these loans when feasible without aiding the enemy. This procedure follows the pattern set during the first World War when the Joint Distribution Committee operated in the face of identical conditions.

The Joint Distribution Committee has experienced and competent local committees operating in many sections of the war zone. We expect that the leaders of these local organizations will carry on the necessary work of assistance with the devotion and self-sacrifice which they have exhibited heretofore. Our 27 years of experience will now come into play. It is expected that, when the first shock of the present situation wears off, conditions will stabilize themselves sufficiently to enable the local committees to function effectively. Meanwhile, in other areas, such as unoccupied France, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, North Africa and elsewhere, the programs of the Joint Distribution Committee are continuing as heretofore.

In Central and South America where the J.D.C. has been working in 18 countries, our program will need to be very considerably augmented.

It need hardly be emphasized that now, as in the past, all J.D.C. work will be carried on subject to the policies and regulations of our Government. In no way will any funds be allowed to benefit the enemy either directly or indirectly. In addition, there are large new responsibilities in areas of Jewish need which the J.D.C. has now been called upon to meet, particularly in Russia. The terrible plight of a half million Polish Jews in Russian Siberia calls for immediate American help. We have worked out plans for the inception of such a program, for which we are ready to make an initial grant of \$100,000.

Let me assure you that the officers and staff of our committee, in constant conference with our colleagues, and with important agencies like the Red Cross, are dealing with these problems as they develop from day to day. As the American organization principally responsible for Jewish emergency relief and rehabilitation overseas, we confidently expect the support of Jewish communities in the United States for the tragic obligations we continue to assume in behalf of the victims of war and persecution.

E.M.M.W.

EMMW:RL

THIS INFORMATION MAY BE CIRCULATED AMONG INTERESTED FRIENDS • IT IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Joint Distribution Committee • 100 East 42nd Street, New York, N. Y.

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON WAR RELIEF AGENCIES

~~908 G STREET, N.W.~~
614 Washington Building
WASHINGTON

December 16, 1941

Mr. Edward M. M. Warburg, Chairman
Joint Distribution Committee
100 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Warburg:

As Chairman of the President's Committee on War Relief Agencies appointed in March, 1941, I have had occasion to confer with officers of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and to familiarize myself with its work. It has furnished us most comprehensive and thorough reports of its activities and we have been grateful for its cooperation. I have been given to understand that many good people naturally ask themselves today whether, in the light of the present emergency, they should limit their efforts to those activities which immediately support the war objectives of our Government, and whether they should not now discontinue or reduce their contributions for war relief abroad. I have heretofore stated that it seems desirable and indispensable to meet urgent war relief requirements overseas conducted by agencies whose policies and programs conform to the regulations and objectives of the United States Government, always on the assumption that such efforts should not impair, restrict or duplicate the program of the Red Cross or other American agencies in their domestic relief and welfare efforts.

I have been greatly impressed with the remarkable range of the operations of the Joint Distribution Committee and its efficiency in carrying on a program throughout the world. Its officers, members and supporters throughout our country represent the finest type of American humanitarianism. Long before the present conflict, the J.D.C. adopted as its own policy the principle that it would not in any way through its activities permit its funds to give aid to the aggressor nations. I have every confidence that the Joint Distribution Committee will, as always, maintain these American principles.

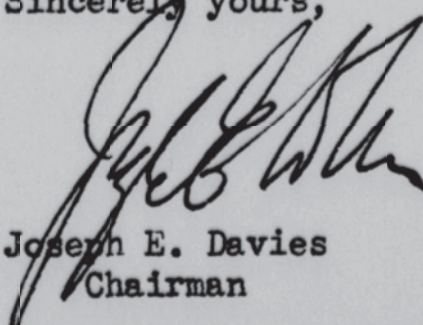
Although in some instances the J.D.C. does not operate directly in foreign countries associated with our own Government in the war effort, and extends relief, for instance, in Latin American countries to refugees who have sought a home there, all its activities are aimed at assisting many of those persons who have been the chief victims of Hitlerism and the chief proponents of democracy in Europe. It is inconceivable to me that anyone could question the necessity and desirability of continuing the Joint Distribution Committee's life-giving work so long as that work conforms to the policies of our Government.

Early this year, the President in a letter to the officers of the Joint Distribution Committee stated:

"Your cause is the cause of all Americans for democracy must begin with man's humanity to man. Through the activities of your organization and other American agencies of mercy, dignity, self-respect and hope for a better order of things have been restored to millions of men and women. They have thus been reminded that they are not alone in their travail and suffering; that free men and women of good will hope for their liberation and in the meantime are ready to come to their assistance."

I subscribe heartily to that statement which is as valid today as it has ever been.

Sincerely yours,


Joseph E. Davies
Chairman

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER BY EDWARD M. M. WARBURG TO A COMMUNITY LEADER

December 26, 1941.

... You will be interested to learn that the Joint Distribution Committee is continuing and augmenting its program of assistance to Jewish victims of war and persecution overseas. Arrangements have been made, in the light of new world conditions, to insure against the interruption of J.D.C. work in 52 countries on four continents. To effectuate these arrangements, the J.D.C. has already committed \$1,500,000 out of 1942 funds. This sum will enable any committee whose communication with us may be cut off, to proceed for a period of at least six months. Apart from this, substantial additional sums will, of course, be spent in those countries which are still neutral and where no difficulty of contact exists....

Born in war twenty-seven years ago, the J.D.C. has long been geared to meet emergency problems. In the course of its world-wide operations, it has developed a sufficient degree of flexibility to enable it to change its course when necessary. Uppermost among the J.D.C.'s present assets is the network of local committees and trained personnel in every country of operation. They have institutions, machinery, equipment and all of the other paraphernalia which it would take so long to build up today, were they not already in existence. It is because these committees are alive and functioning that we are assured that our work can and will go on so long as, with the backing of American Jewish communities, we can continue to supply them with funds. The United States Treasury Department, which has controlled the remittance of funds overseas for the past six months, has been extremely cooperative and has shown a genuine sympathy with our work. The J.D.C. has, in the past six months, received licenses from the Treasury Department totalling \$3,700,000 for overseas transmission.

Our appropriation record for the year just past shows a total of \$5,700,000. We were able to meet the cash requirements of these appropriations partially through receipts from the early Spring campaigns of 1941, and partially through borrowing from the banks in anticipation of our share of the sums raised by your city. We look to Jewish communities throughout America not only to make good the amounts which we have pledged in their name, but to furnish us the wherewithal for continuation and intensification of assistance in the many quarters of the world where the need is so dire.

That new problems arise almost daily may be seen in a cable received only today from our Lisbon office relaying a message from Beyoglu, Turkey. This is the text:

"PANAMA STEAMER STRUMA, CARRYING 748 ROUMANIAN JEWS WITHOUT VISAS, HERE. MOTOR SPOILED, WILL BE REPAIRED HERE. PEOPLE WITHOUT FUNDS OR FOOD. NEED URGENTLY \$7,500. PLEASE CABLE REMITTANCE IMMEDIATELY TO GRAND RABBINATE. DETAILS FOLLOW."

Hardly a day passes but that some new crisis of this kind arises, requiring the promptest sort of action. Sometimes the need involves a comparatively small group of people, such as these 748 human beings. At other times, the problem is a vast one, such as that of 500,000 Polish Jews who are refugees in Russia. Under arrangements which have just been completed with the Polish Government-in-Exile, the J.D.C. has made an initial grant of \$100,000 out of 1942 funds with which to begin to meet the large new responsibilities in connection with the dreadful plight of these Polish Jews who are scattered throughout Russian Siberia, Turkestan and other remote areas.

Examples could be multiplied endlessly, but these two will serve to illustrate the continued need for utmost support of the J.D.C. on the part of American Jews.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, Inc.

100 EAST 42nd STREET, NEW YORK CITY

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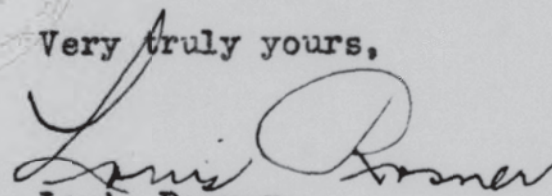
May 25, 1942

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
East 105th St.
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Enclosed herewith please find our receipt #6979 to cover your check in the sum of \$104.65, representing repayment of advances made to you by our J.D.C. Lisbon office.

Very truly yours,


Louis Rosner
Chief Accountant

LR:is
Encl.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE, INC.

100 EAST 42ND STREET

NEW YORK CITY

May 20, 1942

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

The Temple

East 105th St. at Ansel Road

Cleveland, Ohio

I. EDWIN GOLDWASSER

MARCO F. HELLMAN

TREASURERS

RECEIPT

No. 6979

We acknowledge with appreciation the receipt of \$104.65

for the following purposes:

In repayment of advances made to you by our

J.D.C. Lisbon office.

\$104.65

FOR THE TREASURER

BY

Morris Altman